

YVPP

YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP

2018 - 2023
Strategic Plan



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SAFE & THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Safe and Thriving St. Louis is a five-year strategic plan to reduce youth violence in St. Louis City, led by the Youth Violence Prevention Partnership.

YOUNG PEOPLE TOLD US:

- 1 They want more opportunities and spaces to connect and engage.
- 2 They aren't given enough opportunities to lead violence prevention efforts.
- 3 Their communities experience violence while struggling with disinvestment and deterioration.
- 4 Distrust between police and community is a barrier.



The Youth Violence Prevention Partnership is a multi-sector collaborative supporting the public health approach to youth violence reduction in St. Louis.

YVPP'S GOALS

- 1 Increase availability of safe spaces and positive connections for youth.
- 2 Increase opportunity, capacity, and resources for community-led efforts.
- 3 Improve coordination of efforts to address neighborhood conditions underlying violence.
- 4 Support positive interactions between law enforcement and the community.

HOW THE WORK GETS DONE:

- 1 **Mission St. Louis** is doing street outreach to engage disconnected young people in their Jobs and Leadership Training. **Homegrown St. Louis** is building the capacity of mentoring organizations to serve black boys in the Violence Reduction Zone, a section of North St. Louis that has disproportionately high rates of violent crime.

Better Family Life and **Alive & Well STL** are providing conflict resolution training to youth.

SLACO is training adults and young people to share leadership in community efforts.

- 2 **Better Family Life** is convening a youth advisory council to elevate youth voice on violence prevention efforts. **The Mental Health Board** and **North Newstead Neighborhood Association** are facilitating mini-grants for community-led events or neighborhood improvement projects.

The St. Louis Vacancy Collaborative is convening leaders and city agencies to address vacant properties across the City.

- 3 **Think Health STL**, a joint effort of the City and County Health Departments, will host a Community Safety Dashboard to highlight key indicators related to violence and community conditions underlying violence.

The Youth Violence Prevention Partnership is connecting to regional violence prevention efforts through the Violence Prevention Commission.

- 4 **SLMPD** is building relationships through Lunch With a Cop at elementary schools and through "Cuts, Cops and Conversation" at neighborhood barbershops.

OUR VISION All youth in St. Louis City are safe from gun & gang violence.

Youth Violence Prevention Partnership

Safe and Thriving St. Louis Plan – Executive Summary

Youth violence is a complex and deep-seated issue in St. Louis. It is also a preventable one. With this plan, the Youth Violence Prevention Partnership (YVPP) offers a path forward for preventing youth violence in St. Louis. By examining the nature of violence in St. Louis and centering the experiences of young people impacted by violence, the plan prioritizes intervention and prevention strategies that represent what the community needs right now to ensure that all young people in St. Louis are safe from gun and gang violence.

The YVPP, a 20+ member collaborative supported by the City of St. Louis Department of Health and Ready by 21 St. Louis, established guiding principles for the 2018 planning process. The principles are:

- The Plan must be informed and owned by youth who have a unique and critical perspective about their community and what it will take to ensure a hopeful and positive future.
- The Plan must include accountability for action. Previous plans have often articulated good ideas but left out the particulars of how good ideas are implemented to become good practices and policies.
- The Plan must not try to do everything but instead be focused and targeted to do a few things well. We all recognize the complexity and interconnectedness of the challenges in our community while also needing to see momentum in a few key areas that will begin to chip away at the seemingly overwhelming and immovable problems.
- The Plan must connect existing efforts and facilitate building infrastructure that breaks down silos in order to maximize the collective results. The Plan should be strengths-based and acknowledge that the residents of the City of St. Louis are resilient and long to build community and connectedness to impact violence.

These principles acted as safeguards to ensure that this planning effort is additive, impactful, and responsive—not one more plan written by “experts” that fails to lead to effective action. In adherence to the principle of “focus” and in the spirit of equity, the YVPP decided to focus planning on a section of North St. Louis that disproportionately contributes to violence in St. Louis. This area—known as the “Violence Reduction Zone” (VRZ)—had already been identified by the Chief of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department for focused enforcement.

The plan takes a public health approach to violence prevention. This means that it seeks to understand the contextual environmental factors that are contributing to (or could work to prevent) violence in communities. These *risk factors* are conditions associated with higher risk of engaging in or being a victim of violence, while *protective factors* lower the risk. Violence prevention strategies seek to reduce or mitigate risk factors while enhancing protective factors.

The community analysis highlights several key findings about violence in St. Louis. Homicides in St. Louis involve firearms much more frequently than the national average, and when the relationship between homicide victims and suspects has been

determined, the suspect is usually someone the victim knows. Black males aged 15-24 comprise less than 5% of the population; however, they constitute 20% of the gun violence victims and 54% of the perpetrators in St. Louis. This group accounts for over half of homicide perpetrators and nearly one-fifth of homicide victims. This data influences the strategies that we propose.

The analysis also highlights many other factors facing communities with high levels of violence: they have higher unemployment rates, higher poverty levels, high levels of segregation, and lower average levels of education. These neighborhoods have suffered greatly from disinvestment, and the built environment reflects this. Estimates on the proportion of lots that are vacant or contain vacant structures in the VRZ range as high as 62.5%. Violence does not occur in a vacuum. It is concentrated in the communities that have been (and continue to be) victims of structural inequality.

These were the communities where the planning process focused its youth engagement efforts. Through seven “youth cafés” held in the spring and summer of 2018, over 100 youth who have directly been impacted by violence or live in communities affected by violence shared their perspectives. In conversations led by trained youth facilitators, young people discussed topics like their personal experiences with violence, what makes them feel safe and unsafe in their communities, and what would help reduce violence in their communities. Some strong themes emerged: the pervasiveness of shooting and gun violence, not being able to access their entire community because of safety concerns, a desire for stronger relationships and trust within communities, and a need for more programming and structured activities.

Grounded in youth perspective and keeping in mind the unique context of violence in St. Louis, the YVPP determined five goals to guide the youth violence prevention effort toward the ultimate desired result that all youth in St. Louis City are safe from gun and gang violence:

GOAL A: Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth

GOAL B: Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to re-build social cohesion

GOAL C: Advocate for better coordination of city, nonprofit, and volunteer efforts to improve neighborhood conditions

GOAL D: Foster positive interactions between community and law enforcement (police, courts, etc.)

GOAL E: Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the VRZ

Each goal is operationalized through specific objectives and activities, some already existing and some new. The plan includes a two-year action plan that will allocate funding for some of these activities. However, these funded activities alone will not be enough to address youth violence in St. Louis. The plan represents an agenda for youth violence prevention that all concerned agencies, institutions, and funders can rally around. While the completion of this plan is a significant milestone, the true work is yet to come. This is what our community is calling for. This is what our community needs. Together, we can make a difference.

Safe and Thriving St. Louis: A Strategic Plan to Reduce Youth Gun and Gang Violence within the City of St. Louis

INTRODUCTION & HISTORY OF RECENT YOUTH VIOLENCE EFFORTS

"And how are the children?" That's the traditional greeting of the Masai people of Kenya.¹

Can we respond for St. Louis' children as the Masai people traditionally do: "All the children are well"?

City Focus -- Youth Violence Prevention Partnership

The City of St. Louis has been concerned about this question concerning the health of our children, actively working on the intractable problem of youth² violence. In the summer of 2012, the Mayor of the City of St. Louis; the St. Louis County Executive; and the East St. Louis Mayor³ convened a cross-sector regional task force to examine the multiple dimensions of the youth violence issue in the region. Meeting periodically for more than a year, the group, called the Regional Youth Violence Prevention Task Force, involved more than 200 service providers, youth, municipal officials, educators, faith-based leaders, funders, law enforcement personnel and concerned citizens. The Regional Youth Violence Prevention Task Force Identified nine priorities within the four concentration areas of PIER (Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement, and Re-Entry) with one meta-priority for the development of a "Safety Scorecard" in order to be data driven; understand cause, conditions and consequences of crime and violence; and to more effectively and equitably focus community resources and interventions. There were some 49 strategies to achieve nine priorities within the four concentration areas of Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement and Re-Entry.

That work came to be known as The St. Louis Regional Youth Violence Prevention Task Force Community Plan ("Community Plan") which was released in June 2013. It was comprehensive in scope and helped to provide a starting point for this Strategic Plan to address our community's current youth violence realities. However, it lacked accountability and implementation detail.

The intention of the Community Plan was to have a regional, bi-state cooperative solution to the youth violence issue. Yet, the only part that came to fruition was in 2014 when, at the direction of its

¹ "Among the most accomplished and fabled tribes of Africa, no tribe was considered to have warriors more fearsome or more intelligent than the mighty Masai. It is perhaps surprising, then, to learn the traditional greeting that passed between Masai warriors: 'Kasserian Ingera,' one would always say to another. It means, 'And how are the children?'

It is still the traditional greeting among the Masai, acknowledging the high value that the Masai always place on their children's well-being. Even warriors with no children of their own would always give the traditional answer, 'All the children are well.' Meaning, of course, that peace and safety prevail, that the priorities of protecting the young, the powerless, are in place. That Masai society has not forgotten its reason for being, its proper functions and responsibilities. 'All the children are well' means that life is good. It means that the daily struggles for existence do not preclude proper caring for their young. Unitarian Universalist Association. *Rev. Patrick T. O'Neill. "And How Are the Children?" Retrieved 11/22/18 From: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/and-how-are-the-children>*

² We use the term "youth" throughout to refer to individuals 11-24 years old.

³ In 2012 the Mayor of the City of St. Louis was Francis Slay, the St. Louis County Executive was Charlie Dooley, and the Mayor of East St. Louis was Alvin Parks. None of them are currently leading their communities.

Mayor, the City of St. Louis Health Department began convening the Youth Violence Prevention Partnership (YVPP).

Recognizing that multi-disciplinary partnerships are key, the City has continuously engaged a core group of State governmental agencies, St. Louis Public Schools, University of Missouri Saint Louis, City agencies, social services, child welfare, community groups, employment services, law enforcement, criminal justice, courts, and clergy.

*The vision of the YVPP has been to be a multi-sector multi-disciplinary collaborative partnership to support public health approaches to youth violence reduction in St. Louis with a specific focus on youth and young adults (11-24 years old) in the City of St. Louis. **Through our Safe & Thriving STL efforts we have added to that: All youth in the City of St. Louis are free from gun and gang violence.***

Collectively the partnership, supporting its partners, was successful in the creation of STL Youth Jobs, pursuing funding support for programs related to restorative justice, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (Byrne Grant); out of school suspension reduction; increased mental and behavioral health services for youth; supplemental supportive employment programming for youth; some limited routine data and information sharing; racial equity and trauma-informed⁴ training; support of Re-entry Community Linkages (Re-LINK; Re-Entry Health & Social Services grant from U.S. Department of Health & Human Services); support of Prison to Prosperity Program evaluation; and PIER Neighborhood Outreach with information about health issues in focus neighborhoods. It has had monthly meetings to pursue the PIER strategies and has supported the City's efforts around its PIER crime reduction plan that was issued in 2015. However, two of the lessons learned have been the need to focus on consistent, sustained backbone support for YVPP efforts, and the need for intentional focus on gaining youth voice and youth decision-making.

Regional Solutions – Regional Violence Prevention Commission/Community Health Improvement Plan

Following the 2014 death of Michael Brown, an 18 year old African American, as a result of a deadly encounter with Ferguson (a suburban municipality of the City of St. Louis in North St. Louis County) police officer Darren Wilson, and the ensuing “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot” and “Black Lives Matter” activism, law enforcement, prosecution, and the courts (including municipal courts) have forever been changed throughout St. Louis.

In 2016, again recognizing the cross-jurisdictional nature of youth violence, the St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Collaborative (now the St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Commission) (VPC) was formed to address overall violence in the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County. The YVPP has

⁴ Trauma-informed care is an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. It emphasizes physical, psychological and emotional safety for both consumers and providers, and helps survivors rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

participated in the St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Collaborative since its inception in 2016 and continuing through its restructuring as the St. Louis Area VPC in 2017.

In support of this regional approach, the City of St. Louis Department of Health has worked with St. Louis County Department of Public Health to operationalize a grant received by St. Louis County known as the Re-CAST (Resiliency in Communities After Stress & Trauma) Grant. The 5-year grant, received in 2016, is from the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration in the amount of \$4.7 million. It involves the “Promise Zone” (26 North County communities and 11 North City of St. Louis Wards: 1-5, 18-19, 26-27), whose residents and stakeholders help to draft Requests for Proposals (RFP) for services the community needs in each of 4 areas: 1) Violence Prevention; 2) Peer Support; 3) Mental Health; and 4) Youth Engagement through a participatory budgeting process. They also vote to help select the proposals in response to the RFPs that will be funded. Residents of the Promise Zone (about 40 each year with some repeats) are trained in racial equity, trauma-informed practices, and leadership, and meeting facilitation. Key partners are St. Louis County Department of Public Health (grantee), City of St. Louis Department of Public Health, St. Louis Mental Health Board, UMSL (Children's Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis), and Patient Research Advisory Board (PRAB).

Additionally, Re-LINK is a U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Minority Health \$1.4 million grant from August 2016 through July 2021 with Integrated Health Network as the point of contact. It is designed to create a health and social services network to improve health outcomes and reduce recidivism for those who are justice involved and are returning to the community. About 50 individuals are served each year. There is an emphasis on Community Health Workers to help the re-entrants to navigate the health and social service systems for access and continuity of care.

The City of St. Louis Department of Health also has a Maternal Child Health Services Block Grant for 2018-2021 to address violence by providing resiliency building interventions for those youth who have been exposed to violence and trauma in the Wells-Goodfellow, Greater Ville, and JeffVanderLou neighborhoods, utilizing visiting nurses, education and awareness, gun locks, resources, and trauma-informed practices for youth and families.

In 2017 a U.S. Department of Justice Diagnostic Center report was published and since that time the City of St. Louis has been working at putting into practice the recommendations contained in the report. For example, through its National Public Safety Partnership (PSP) Non-Fatal Shooting Assessment Initiative (formerly Violence Reduction Network (VRN)), Police Prosecutor Partnership Initiative (3 PI), and Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) the City is more aggressively investigating non-fatal shootings and picking up spent shells to process through the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NBIN). The City has also re-instituted its gang unit and is more intentionally collecting gang-related data after a hiatus of a number of years.

Additionally, the St. Louis region has coordinated its efforts within a regional Community Health Plan (CHIP) that includes the City of St. Louis Department of Health, St. Louis County Department of Public Health, private hospital systems of SSM, Mercy and BJC, St. Louis Mental Health Board, Regional Health

Commission and numerous community partners – including VPC as the champion for the Violence Prevention Action Team.⁵

The Violence Prevention Action Team, led by VPC has set the following goals for reducing violence:

- Improving community trust in police
- Improving community response to non-fatal shootings
- Increasing the capacity of communities to lead violence prevention strategies
- Advancing trauma-informed and evidence-based practices in systems and service delivery

In 2017, the YVPP in partnership with City of St. Louis Department of Health, Ready by 21 St. Louis and Washington University received a Safe & Thriving Planning and Implementation award from the U.S. Department of Justice.

Partially as a result of the Safe & Thriving grant activities and the restructuring of VPC, and the City and regional realities articulated here, the YVPP has been named a goal-oriented committee of VPC, focusing on youth violence prevention within the broader regional violence prevention efforts.

Learning Lessons

Law Enforcement in the City of St. Louis has tried innumerable evidence informed programs and strategies to address violence, including: Operation Ceasefire, Hotspot/Directed Patrols, Community Oriented Policing, Project Safe Neighborhoods, Problem Solving, CompStat/Action Research, and currently a form of focused deterrence. They have also considered Cure Violence and are aware of the implementation of a hospital violence intervention model. Non-Governmental organizations have engaged in cognitive behavioral therapy, art therapy, after school programs (awareness and control, self-esteem, conflict resolution, and teamwork), keeping juveniles out of the adult system, Early Home Visiting Programs (Parents as Teachers, Nurse Family Partnership and Early Head Start), parenting skills and family relationship programs, pre-school enrichment programs (Early Head Start), mentoring programs, physical environment improvements that foster positive social connectedness (increased lighting, cleaning, public space enhancements, increased security, remediating abandoned and vacant lots, sponsoring community events), conflict mediation, etc.; and non-evidence informed programs and strategies as well.

There is no lack of evidence informed strategies and programming in the City of St. Louis. As administrations change, because of lack of resources and for a host of other reasons, there frequently does seem to be a lack of focus and coordination, lack of fidelity or commitment to the essential elements of strategies and programs, often an assessment of adult needs rather than a concentration on youth needs, often a lack of youth voice and empowerment in decision-making, and a highly fragmented and decentralized approach to violence prevention. Perhaps part of the problem lies in what may be viewed as a positive Mid-Western ethos of not wanting to be rude or confrontational – preferring to try everything, rather than to say “no” to a program, an entity, or a person. But there are not enough resources to try everything, and everything doesn’t meet youth and community needs. Further, it isn’t possible to address the issues of youth violence without a more regional, less fractured way when neither the challenges nor resources are shared equitably throughout the region.

⁵ See www.thinkhealthstl.org

As previously noted, two additional lessons learned have been the need to focus on consistent, sustained backbone support for YVPP efforts, and the need for intentional focus on gaining youth voice and decision-making.

With all this in mind, we commit to a new reality with the Safe and Thriving St. Louis Plan.

The desired overarching outcomes for Safe and Thriving St. Louis being:

1. Increased safety, well-being, and healthy development of children, youth and families.
2. Prevention of violence and promotion of healing from victimization and exposure to violence in the home, schools, and community.
3. Reduction and sustaining of reductions in youth violence, specifically gun and gang violence victimization.

In the following page we document what this new, focused, coordinated, youth and community centered reality looks like.

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

The Safe and Thriving St. Louis plan is the shared responsibility of numerous individuals and institutions that make up the YVPP and the broader VPC. This section contains a summary of our goals, objectives and activities. Details on activities and performance measures begin on page 35.

Summary of Goals, Objectives and Activities

GOAL A: Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth		
Objective	Major Activities	PIER Alignment
A1. Build organizations' capacity to mentor youth, specifically in the VRZ, and link them and their families with services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage HomegrownSTL to convene mentoring organizations for best practice sharing and implementation Support Hospital Based Violence Intervention program to connect victims to supports long term 	P, I, R
A2. Provide street outreach ⁶⁶ to reach disconnected youth and connect them to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Mission: St. Louis to provide evidence-based outreach to teens and young adults 	P, I
A3. Enhance existing afterschool programming in the Violence Reduction Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and connect existing opportunities via the Afterschool for All Partnership (ASAP) and other community organizations 	P
A4. Improve school climate ⁷ through building trust and implementing alternatives to out-of-school suspensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate district leaders on when to call for police and promote MO School Violence Hotline Support trauma-informed training efforts in SLPS Advocate for student climate surveys 	P, I
GOAL B: Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion		
Objective	Major Activities	PIER Alignment
B1. Support residents (youth and adults) to plan and host neighborhood events or improvement projects in the VRZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with community organizations to fund community led projects 	P, E
B2. Provide conflict resolution training for residents (youth and adults) to engage in their own community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage a partner to provide evidence-based supports 	I, E, R
B3. Involve youth as decision makers and owners in preventing youth violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a youth advisory committee and support youth co-chairs of the YVPP 	P, I, E, R
B4. Train adults on how to work with youth to share leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage a partner to provide evidence-based supports 	P, I, R

⁶⁶ Street Outreach is a type of intervention that goes to youth and young adults in the communities where they live and connects them to basic needs and support services.

⁷ National School Climate Center defines school climate as the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life; it also reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.

GOAL C: Advocate for better coordination of city, nonprofit, and volunteer efforts to improve neighborhood conditions

Objective	Major Activities	PIER Alignment
C1. Convert vacant lots into clean and safe spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with the Vacancy Collaborative efforts to target the improvement of vacant lots. 	P, I
C2. Improve communication, collaboration, and transparency through the development of an online safety dashboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Violence Prevention indicators as part of the thinkhealthstl.org Dashboard Establish connections with the new Criminal Justice Coordinating Council 	P, I, E, R
C3. Clearly articulate the connection between the work of YVPP/VPC and other community efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Leadership of VPC and other community efforts to ensure violence prevention work is integrated and aligned across the region. 	Collaborative Infrastructure

Goal D: Foster positive interactions between community and law enforcement (police, courts, etc.)

Objective	Major Activities	PIER Alignment
D1. Connect social workers in the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (SLMPD) to help connect resources to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support SLMPD pilot in 6th district to embed social workers. 	I, E
D2. Connect law enforcement to community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support SLMPD Juvenile Division's outreach to schools in the VRZ. Support community oriented policing efforts. Educate community members on how to request SLMPD participation in events. Engage with Civilian Review Board. 	P, I, E, R
D3. Connect the work of the Juvenile Court's Deep End Advisory Committee ⁸ to YVPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide and enhance supports to young people already in the criminal justice system and at greatest risk of reoffending. 	I, E, R

GOAL E: Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the VRZ

Objective	Major Activities	PIER Alignment
E1. Develop, articulate, and implement a shared vision of success, and the scale and scope of that vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly define the desired results and measure the impact of the efforts to meet goals A-D. Nimble adapt to and strategically influence the changing context. 	Collaborative Infrastructure
E2. Create, implement and enhance multidisciplinary leadership. Governance structure and collaboration partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authentically engage youth in all aspects of the effort. Consistently and effectively engage community stakeholders in the collaboration. Effectively manage the operation of a multidisciplinary partnership. Secure and leverage a broad range of financial resources to support the capacities and functions needed to achieve and sustain the vision. 	Collaborative Infrastructure

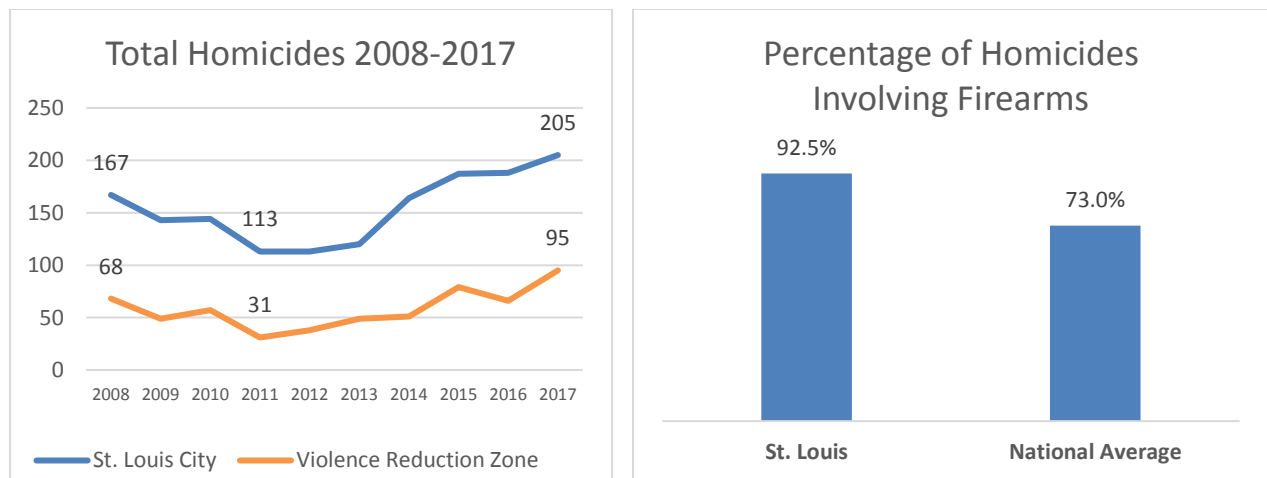
⁸ The Deep End Advisory Committee was created in 2012 working across criminal justice professionals to safely and significantly reduce out-of-home placements, especially for youth of color who have become court-involved.

CURRENT SITUATION

Violence in St. Louis

While the causes of gun violence are often officially recorded as unknown, several key themes emerge from the data. Homicides in St. Louis are almost always committed with firearms, at a rate far higher than the national average. These homicides show a geographically concentrated clustering in the poorest parts of the city. Homicide suspects and victims nearly always know each other, in cases where the relationship has been determined. Young black males are disproportionately caught up in gun violence, both as victims and as perpetrators.

We know that homicides are not random acts—they emerge in St. Louis’ most challenged neighborhoods, and typically arise from disputes between known parties. Interventions should account for the environment in neighborhoods experiencing high rates of violence and pay particular attention to those groups most likely to be involved with violence.

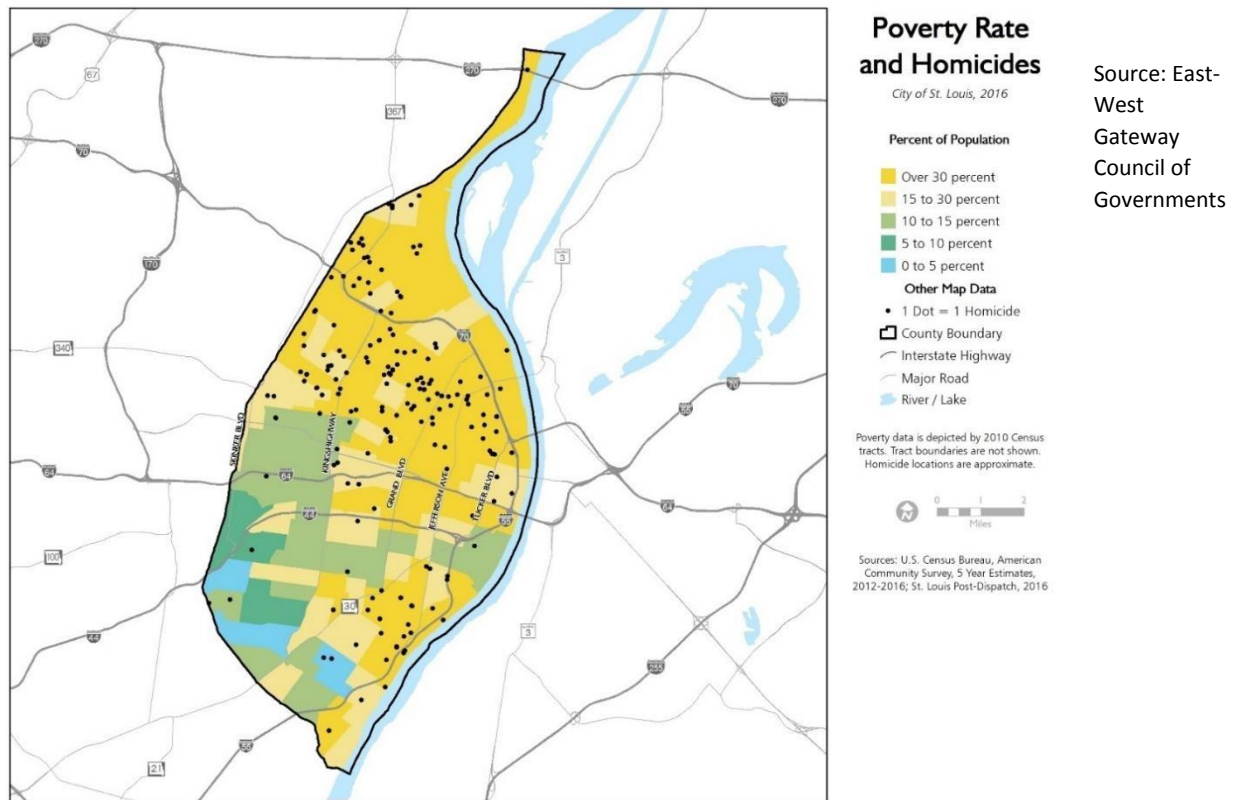


Source: St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department [Response to Data Request]; Federal Bureau of Investigation (2016). Murder victims by weapon, 2012-2016. Retrieved from: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2016/crime-in-the-u.s.-2016/tables/expanded-homicide-data-table-4.xls>

“You can see a baby with a Glock in their Pamper and that’s not illegal.” -SLMPD Officer commenting on the permissiveness of Missouri gun laws

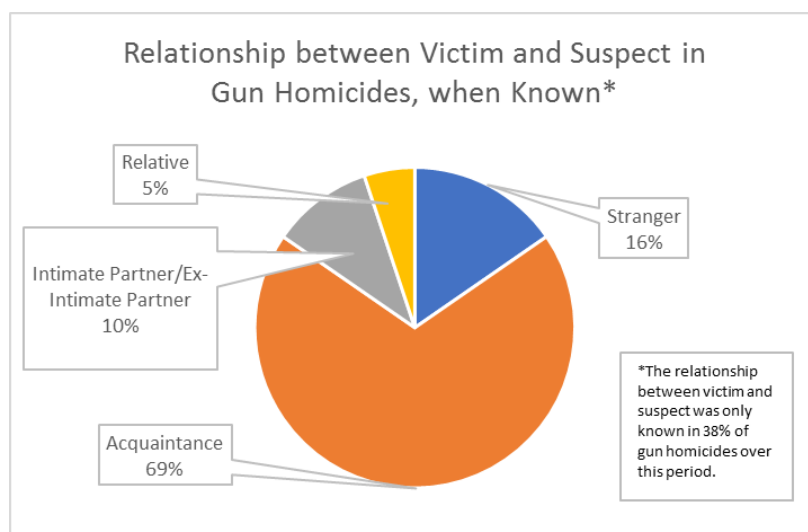
“[I] don’t blink when gunshots heard” -Youth Café Participant

Violence in St. Louis (Continued)



Young (ages 15-24) black males make up less than 5% of St. Louis' overall population, but nearly 20% of gun violence victims and over 50% of perpetrators come from this group.

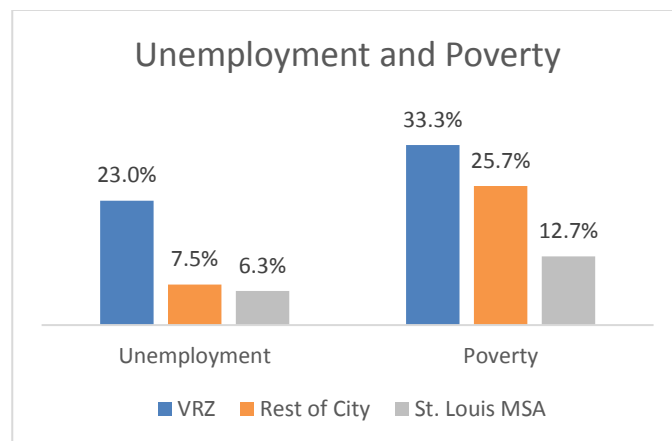
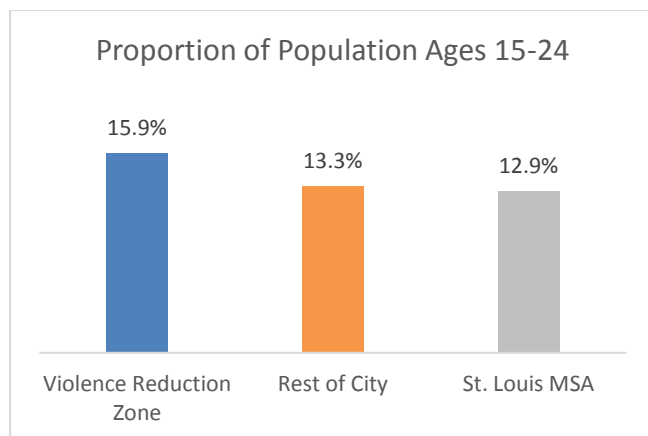
Source: Office of Justice Programs (2017). Diagnostic analysis for the city of St. Louis, Missouri



Source: Office of Justice Programs (2017). Diagnostic analysis for the city of St. Louis, Missouri.

Demographics in St. Louis and the Violence Reduction Zone

The City of St. Louis exhibits high rates of poverty and unemployment, and these rates are even higher in the VRZ. The racial makeup of the VRZ reflects its extreme segregation. While large forces like poverty, segregation, and lack of opportunity may seem beyond the scope of targeted interventions, it is important to recognize that they create the context for St. Louis' high rates of violence.



Source: Social Explorer (2018). Social Explorer Tables: ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

Population by Race

	Violence Reduction Zone	City of St. Louis	St. Louis MSA
Total Population	40,096	316,030	2,803,449
White Alone	1.6%	45.6%	76.3%
Black or African American Alone	97.1%	47.9%	18.3%
All Other Responses	1.3%	6.5%	5.4%

Source: Social Explorer Tables (SE), ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

Education Levels

	Violence Reduction Zone	City of St. Louis	St. Louis MSA
Less than High School	23.8%	15.5%	9.1%
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency) or Some College	65.0%	51.6%	58.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	11.3%	32.9%	32.6%

Source: Social Explorer Tables (SE), ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

Being Young and Black in St. Louis

Many young people living in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in St. Louis face an uphill battle to succeed. Although St. Louis Public Schools has made major strides in recent years, many students slip through the cracks. Exclusionary discipline practices can send the students who most need support away from what might be the safest place available to them, and police being called to schools can lead to early negative contact with the criminal justice system. Young people also lament the lack of safe and engaging out-of-school time options. Despite efforts to better coordinate and expand out-of-school offerings, options are still limited.

18 Years

A child born in the 63105 zip code in the wealthy suburb of Clayton, adjacent to the City of St. Louis, has a life expectancy 18 years longer than a child born in the 63106 zip code in North St. Louis.

“I joined a gang because of my big brother” – Youth Café Participant

“Always have to carry a gun to feel safe” – Youth Café Participant

“Nothing to do” - Youth Café Participant

“Home should not feel like a jail” – Youth Café Participant

Schools in St. Louis

100%

St. Louis Public Schools students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch

71.9%

St. Louis Public Schools Four-Year Graduation Rate

1,969

Police calls for service to St. Louis Public and Charter schools in the 2016-2017 School Year.

21

Out-of-school suspensions for every 100 students across ten St. Louis Public and charter high schools in 2015.

What would a safe community look like to you?

“People looking out for you”

“Children playing outside”

“Being able to walk around whenever you want to”

Neighborhood Conditions

Neighborhoods experiencing high rates of violence reflect the physical effects of disinvestment and concentrated poverty. Residents of these neighborhoods consistently name issues like vacant buildings and trash-strewn streets as more than aesthetic: they concretely impact quality of life and feelings of safety. Youth specifically called out trash, broken sidewalks, alleys filled with illegally dumped debris, and vacant buildings as problems that must be addressed to foster a less violent community.

Vacancy in Hayden's Rectangle (Low)

Urban Prairie

There were 9,838 parcels out of 22,715 (43.5%) that were identified by Prener et al. as being "urban prairie" lands as of January 2017.

27 %

of respondents named "vacant/dilapidated buildings/lots" as a concern during a community canvassing day in 2017 sponsored by the St. Louis Promise Zone. This was residents' most common concern.

"It's like time has forgotten us completely" -
Promise Zone Canvassing Day Participant

Map and data produced by Christopher Prener, Ph.D.

"I wish the hood parts would look better that makes violence easier to happen because of the environment"₁₄ -Youth Café participant

Law Enforcement

Police Chief Hayden, appointed by Mayor Krewson in early 2018, has prioritized rebuilding trust with the community and focusing police attention and resources on the neighborhoods experiencing the most crime. However, the SLMPD is not at full strength, which hinders its crime prevention work. To attract more officers, voters approved a sales tax for a \$6,000 starting salary increase, which is still about \$4,000 less than a 1st year St. Louis County police officer earns. The City of St. Louis has also temporarily waived its residency requirement for new recruits. The SLMPD now has a police cadet program, dormant since 1996, for 18-25-year-olds with a high school diploma or GED equivalent. Cadets receive training, attend community college classes for free credits, and are paid \$13 to \$15 per hour. They can enter the Police Academy when they turn 21 years old.

Police in St. Louis

130-150

The number of officers short of full strength the SLMPD was as of September 2018

\$6,000

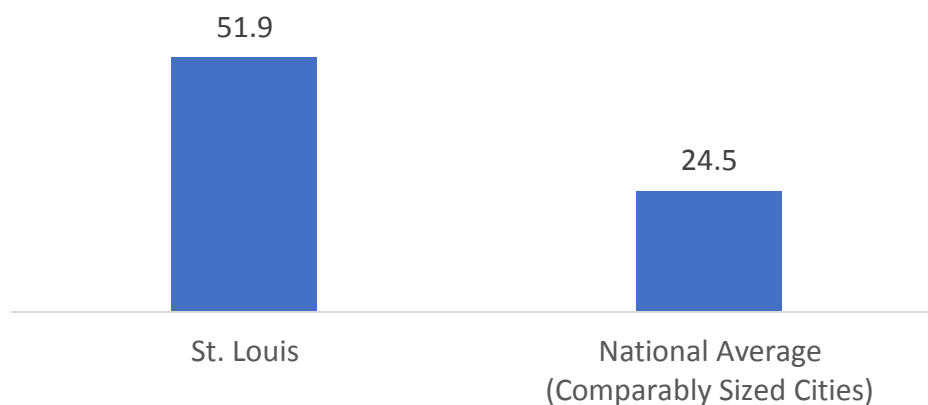
Annual pay increase for officers approved by voters in 2018

50

Number of police recruits for whom the City of St. Louis has agreed to waive the requirement that recruits be city residents.

“I see police, but a couple minutes after they pass something happens.”
-Youth Café Participant

Total Police Personnel per 10,000 Residents,
2016



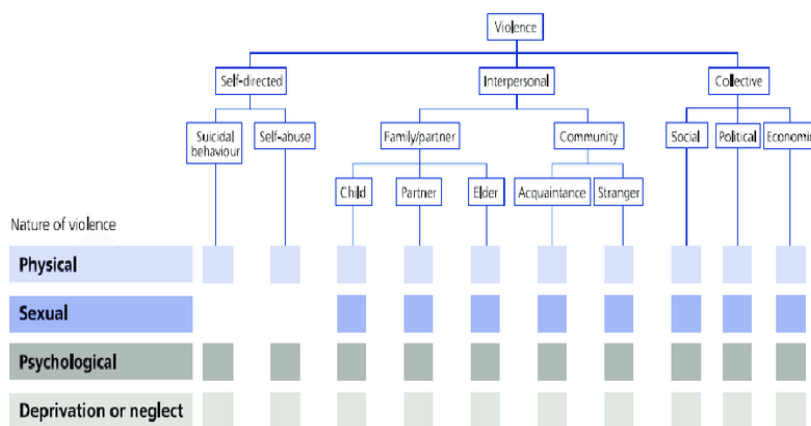
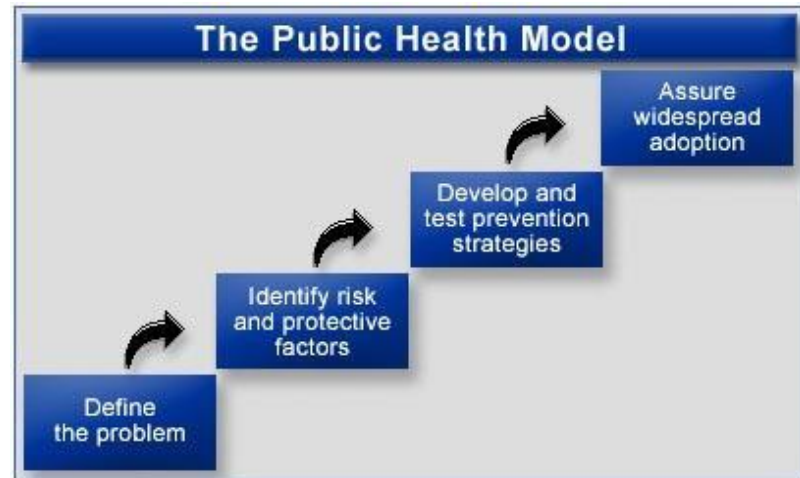
SLMPD have documented **127 gang profiles** and **3,193 gang members** in the City of St. Louis. The Department has recently re-formed its gang unit to better investigate and intervene with gangs.

GUIDING FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY

Public Health Approach

Violence is a public health issue that is preventable. Violence prevention and reduction can be accomplished “in the same way that public health efforts have prevented and reduced pregnancy-related complications, workplace injuries, infectious diseases, and illness resulting from contaminated food and water in many parts of the world.”¹⁰

“Public health draws on a science base that is multi-disciplinary. It relies on knowledge from a broad range of disciplines including medicine, epidemiology, sociology, psychology, criminology, education, and economics.”¹¹



The World Health Organization has defined violence as: “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 harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.”¹²

There are different types of violence that require different strategies yet are interconnected.¹³ The type of violence we reference primarily in this Strategic Plan is interpersonal violence in the community. In St. Louis that violence is primarily gun violence.¹⁴

¹⁰ Krug EG et al., eds. World report on violence and health. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2002. p.

3. Retrieved 11/19/18 from

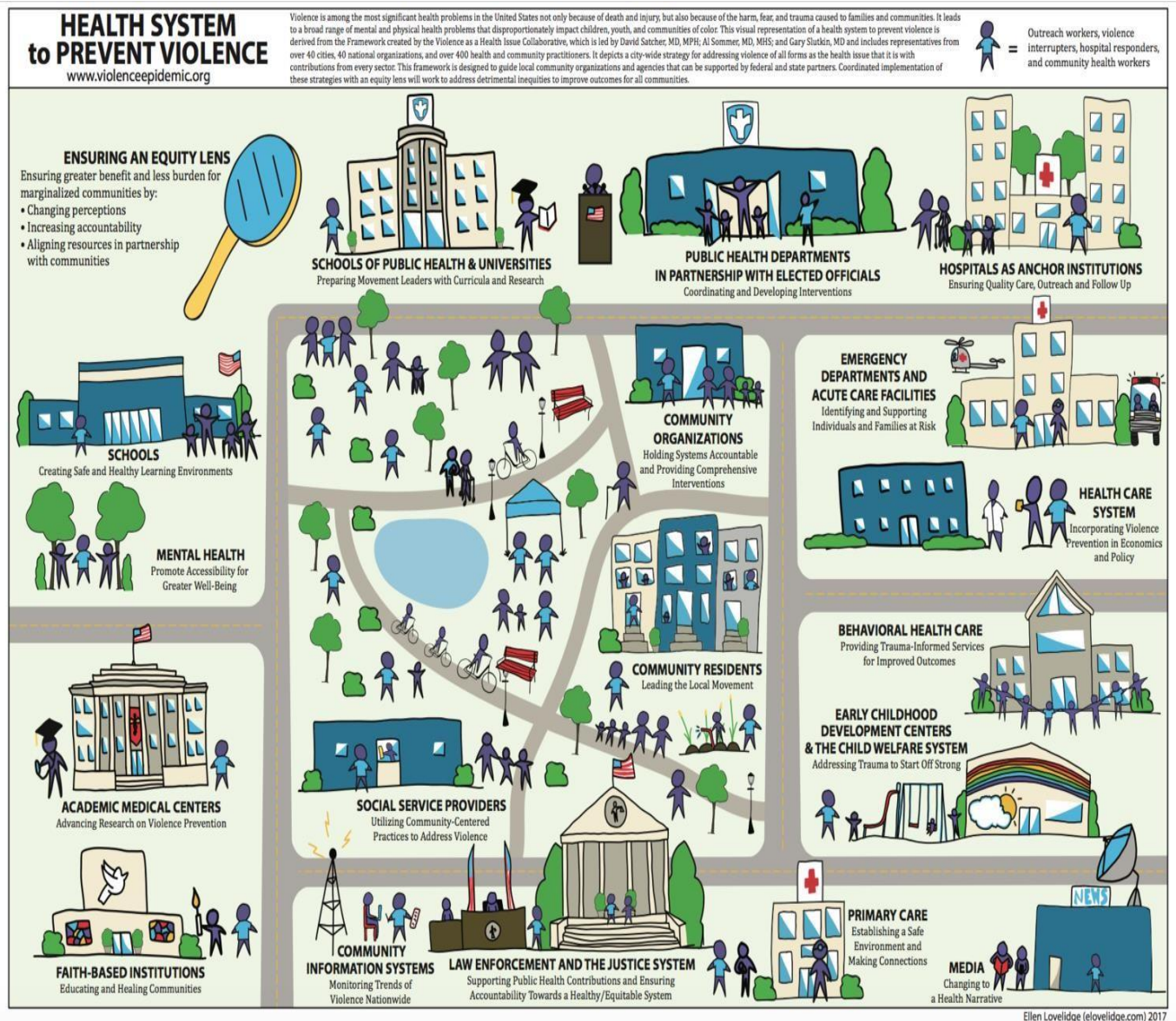
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¹¹ Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. “The Public Health Approach to Violence Prevention”. Retrieved 11/16/18 from: www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/overview/publichealthapproach.html

¹² Id. at 5.

¹³ Id. at 7.

¹⁴ OJP Diagnostic Center. Diagnostic Analysis for the City of St. Louis, Missouri. page 20. Retrieved 11/23/18 from: <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/mayor/initiatives/public-safety/upload/Diagnostic-Analysis-for-the-City-of-St-Louis-Full-Report.pdf>



Risk and Protective Factors-Oriented

Protective factors “[b]uffer young people from the risks of becoming violent. Conditions or attributes in individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that, when present, mitigate or eliminate risk in families and communities.”¹⁵ **Risk factors** are “those characteristics, variables, or hazards that, if present for a given individual, make it more likely that this individual, rather than someone selected from the general population, will perpetrate or be a victim of violence.” They “increase the probability that a person will suffer harm.” And, they are “[t]hose characteristics associated with violence, but they may or may not be direct causes.”¹⁶

“Individual and interpersonal **risks** for perpetrating violence include impulsiveness, youth substance use, antisocial or aggressive beliefs and attitudes, low levels of school achievement, weak connection to school, experiencing child abuse and neglect, exposure to violence in the home or community, involvement with delinquent peers or gangs, lack of appropriate supervision, parental substance abuse, and parental or caregiver use of harsh or inconsistent discipline. Depression, anxiety, chronic stress and trauma, and peer conflict and rejection are also associated with youth violence perpetration and victimization. Youth who are arrested, particularly before age 13, have a heightened risk for future violence and crime, school dropout, and substance abuse. In addition, unsupervised access to a firearm is a contributing factor for lethal youth violence. An increased risk for youth violence and crime is associated with many community factors, such as residential instability, crowded housing, density of alcohol-related businesses, poor economic growth or stability, unemployment, concentrated poverty, neighborhood violence and crime, lack of positive relationships among residents, and views that drug use and violence are acceptable behaviors.”^{17,18}

Protective factors include healthy social, problem-solving, and emotional regulation skills and a young person’s school readiness and academic achievement. Positive and warm parent-youth relationships in which parents set consistent, developmentally appropriate limits and demonstrate interest in their children’s education and social relationships are associated with healthy child and adolescent development and the prevention of violent behavior.”¹⁹ Additional factors that contribute to healthy adolescent development and decrease aggressive behavior include youth feeling connected to their schools, experiencing academic success, having positive relationships with teachers and other caring

¹⁵ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Shared Framework for Reducing Youth Violence and Promoting Well-Being. Updated May 22, 2016. Retrieved 11/23/18 from:

<https://www.ojjdp.gov/funding/Shared-Framework-for-Youth-Violence-Prevention.pdf>

¹⁶ Id.

¹⁷ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Division of Youth Violence Prevention. Centers for Disease Control. A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors. page 9. Retrieved 11/16/18 from: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/yv-technicalpackage.pdf> (emphasis added)

¹⁸ David-Ferdon C, Simon TR. *Preventing Youth Violence: Opportunities for Action*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014. page 14. Retrieved 11/23/18 from: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/pdf/Opportunities-for-Action.pdf>

¹⁹ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Division of Youth Violence Prevention. Centers for Disease Control. A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors. page 9.

adults, and interacting with prosocial and nonviolent peers. Physical environments of schools, parks, and business and residential areas that are regularly repaired and maintained and designed to increase visibility, control access, and promote positive interactions and appropriate use of public spaces are also buffers to violence. Additional community buffers against violence and associated risks include household financial security, safe and stable housing, economic opportunities, increasing access to services and social support, residents' willingness to assist each other, and collective views that violence is not acceptable.²⁰

²⁰ Id. at 9-10.

Planning & Accountability Framework: Results Based Accountability

Members of the YVPP participated in a Results-Based Accountability (RBA) process in order to develop our Safe and Thriving St. Louis Plan.

We chose RBA because it:

- Is a strategic planning process that supports groups of diverse stakeholders in determining how to work together to achieve population-level change.
- Focuses on moving the needle on a community-wide level.
- Begins with the condition of well-being we want to see in our community—the result—and works backwards to identify appropriate means.
- Emphasizes reaching a common understanding of what is preventing us from achieving that result and using that understanding as a foundation for collaborative planning.
- Has demonstrated effectiveness in similar settings in our community.
- Is designed to be used with coalitions and partnerships and builds consensus around key strategies.
- Is a simple process that gets to the work as quickly as possible, while still laying the foundation for long-term change.
- Aligns with our guiding principles.

Organizational Framework: Collective Impact

The guiding organizational framework for the YVPP's Safe and Thriving St. Louis plan is collective impact, which is a proven model to create large scale, complex solutions to community wide challenges. Collective impact refers to the coordination of efforts by organizations and stakeholders such as government, community groups, and businesses.

In their 2010 article, Kania and Kramer identify five conditions that communities must fulfill in order to get from isolated impact to collective impact²¹. These are: agreement on a common agenda; the development of a shared measurement approach; leveraging resources through mutually reinforcing activities; building continuous communications; and a backbone structure to mobilize the collective effort. In 2016, the Tamarack Institute offered the following upgrades to the five conditions to reflect the significant learning that had taken place in the field.

From	To	Explanation
The Leadership Paradigm		
Management	Movement Building	Would-be change-makers must tend to the day-to-day tasks of research, raising money, planning, and management. But the chances that their efforts will achieve scale improve dramatically if the work is undergirded with relationships based on a common vision and value – relationships that span diverse organizations, sectors, and political affiliations.
The Five Conditions		
Common Agenda	Community Aspiration	A true common agenda requires leadership to bring key stakeholders together; to review the key data which informs the problem or issue; to develop a shared vision for change; and to determine the core pathways and strategies that will drive the change forward. This is more than a simple planning exercise. Indeed, it requires would-be collaborators to find (or create) common ground despite their very different values, interests, and positions.

²¹ Tamarack Institute, Collective Impact 3.0 An Evolving Framework for Community Change, Mark Cabaj and Liz Weaver, 2016

Shared Measurement	Strategic Learning	A robust learning and evaluation process are critical in community-wide change efforts. Social innovators are trying to change the dynamic and complex systems that underlie social problems. They want measurement systems that (a) provide real-time feedback on the multiple outcomes expressed in their theory of change or strategy; (b) are manageable; (c) have robust processes for sensemaking and decision-making; and (d) can co-evolve with their ever-changing strategies
Mutually Reinforcing Activities	High Leverage Activities	CI participants must see beyond collaboration and instead focus on strategies that provide “high leverage” opportunities for change. They must commit to a systemic reading of the complex systems they are trying to change, and to making a realistic assessment of where local actors have the knowledge, networks, and resources to make a difference.
Continuous Communication	Inclusive Community Engagement	The case for authentic and inclusive involvement of a broad spectrum of system stakeholders, particularly those most affected by complex issues, is overwhelming. It creates a broader constituency for change – so critical in any effort to disrupt and change systems. It cultivates broad ownership and long-term commitment to the change process which is essential when the initial excitement begins to flag and the going gets tough. Most importantly, the idea that those most affected by an issue should participate fully in attempts to address it is a fundamental democratic and moral principle.
Backbone	Containers for Change	The success of the next generation of CI initiatives depend on the ability of backbone teams to create the strong containers for change that support participants to dig deep when tackling stubborn social challenges.

Strategic Framework: Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement, Reentry (P.I.E.R) Approach

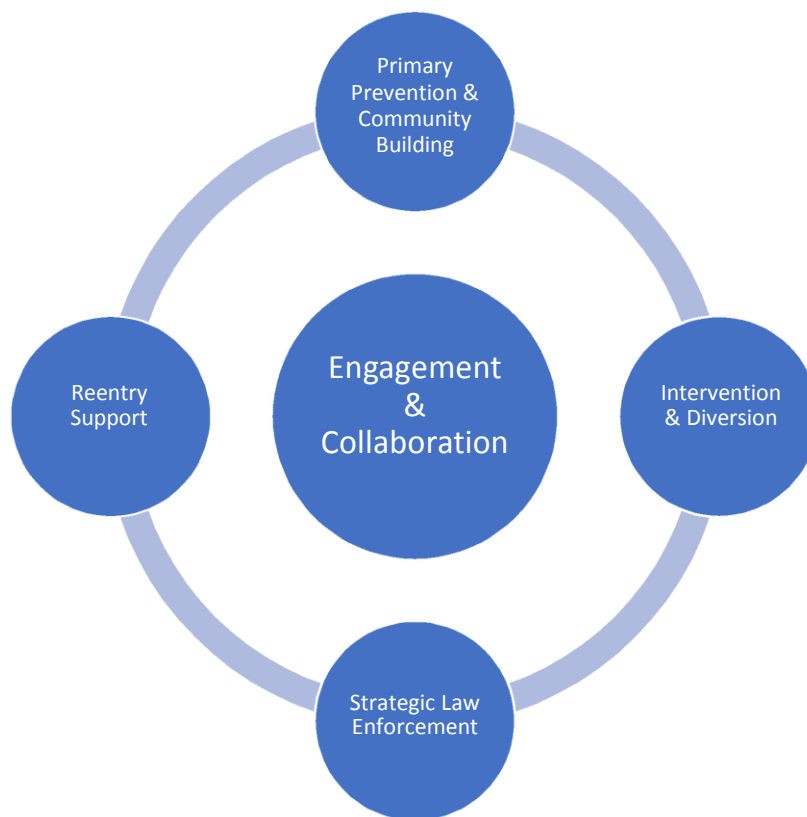
This framework conceptualizes violence and crime prevention as having four major pillars²²:

Prevention: Broad, population-wide protective supports to reduce community level risk factors that lead to crime such as poverty, unemployment, low levels of educational attainment, social fragmentation, neighborhood disinvestment and racial inequities.

Intervention: Targeted services and support to individuals at high risk of committing crimes or individuals with characteristics that are associated with criminal or delinquent behavior such as providing mental health services, diversion programs, and substance abuse treatment.

Enforcement: Law enforcement and criminal justice strategies and reforms to increase trust between community and law enforcement officers, increase alternatives to detention, reduce access to firearms, and increase rehabilitation opportunities within jails.

Reentry: Supporting individuals returning to their communities from detention or prison with resources such as supportive housing, employment opportunities, and mental health and substance abuse services.

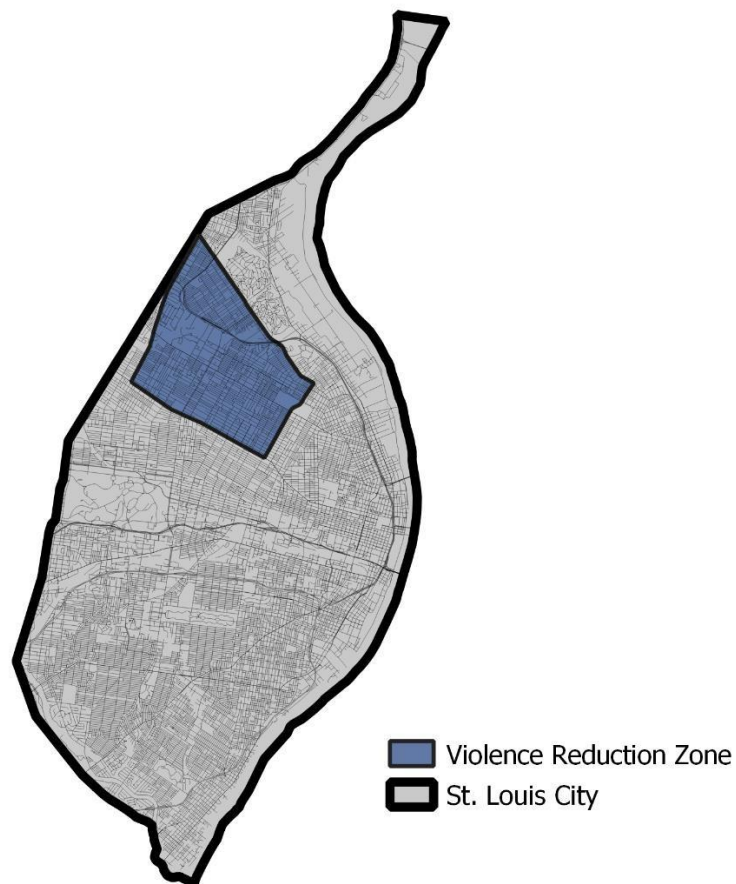


²² City of St. Louis 2016 PIER Plan, p 16-17

Violence Reduction Zone Focus

This Strategic Plan looks at the City as a whole; however, the Plan places a special emphasis on a high-crime section of North St. Louis that has been a focus of new St. Louis Police Chief John Hayden's enforcement efforts, referred to as the "Violence Reduction Zone (VRZ)."²³ The Plan focuses on this area because whenever possible it seeks to align with and build on existing efforts across the continuum of crime prevention efforts. It highlights disparities within the VRZ and the city and greater region. It does this, not to pathologize place or approach the issue from a deficit perspective, but in order to emphasize that there are structural and environmental conditions that contribute to high rates of violence. Furthermore, given the current conditions in which VRZ residents are living, we are likely to contribute to providing a measurable impact in the VRZ community.

Violence Reduction Zone



²³ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (2018). *Commissioner Hayden highlights his first 100 days*. Retrieved from <https://www.slmpd.org/images/First100Days.pdf>

Guiding Principles

Throughout this planning process members of the YVPP have been committed to ensuring this process and resulting plan are different than efforts that came before often resulting in beautiful documents but little action or change in community violence. As a group we have agreed that a few guiding principles would help ensure that this work does not end up on a shelf gathering dust but will truly connect the community and result in reductions in gang and gun violence for the City and the region.

The Plan must be **informed and owned by youth** who have a unique and critical perspective about their community and what it will take to ensure a hopeful and positive future.

The Plan must include **accountability for action**. Too often St. Louis plans have articulated good ideas but left out the particulars of how good ideas become good programs and policies.

The Plan must be **focused and not try to do everything** but do a few things well. We all recognize the complexity and interconnectedness of the challenges in our community while also needing to see momentum in a few key areas that will begin to chip away at the seeming overwhelming and immovable problems.

The Plan must **connect existing efforts and facilitate building infrastructure that breaks down silos** in order to maximize the collective results.

The Plan should be **strengths based** and acknowledge that the residents of the City of St. Louis and the VRZ are **resilient and long to build community and connectedness** in an effort to impact violence.

Towards a Solution

Governance Structure and Processes

To successfully move from strategic planning to plan implementation and ultimately achieve our goal of reducing youth violence, St. Louis recognizes the importance of strong leadership across all sectors, as well as ongoing accountability among all partners for our efforts. City of St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson, supported by her Director of Public Safety Judge Jimmie Edwards, is the executive sponsor of the Safe and Thriving St. Louis Plan. Craig Schmid of City of St. Louis Health Department and Marcel Scaife of Ready by 21, serve as the operational leads for the Safe and Thriving St. Louis Plan.

The YVPP is the decision making and accountability body that both developed and endorsed a strategic direction and will hold members accountable for achieving shared goals. The YVPP provides leadership and direction to the strategy teams and partners that will implement the Plan. The YVPP will secure impacted youth co-chairs for the YVPP in early 2019 to inform and lead this work.

The YVPP will form strategy teams during the implementation phase. Each strategy team will have a designated chairperson and will be comprised of representatives from partner agencies and other stakeholders indicated in the action plan, as well as youth and adult community residents. We believe that the inclusion of young people makes the collaborative body directly accountable to the members of our community most impacted by violence.

The roles and responsibilities of each strategy team will be to work collaboratively to:

- Own a set of strategy-level tactics, activities, and measurable indicators, and use the Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework to guide implementation and performance management.
- Keep abreast of, and analyze data, evidence, and youth feedback to continuously identify needs.
- Keep abreast of best practices and apply those as applicable.
- Identify opportunities for joint staff training, fund raising, and other ways to further coordinate implementation activities.
- Ensure that all the programs, services, and activities that comprise the strategy are implemented with fidelity and high quality.
- Report to the YVPP on progress and challenges.

The strategy teams, once formed, will meet regularly, communicate electronically as needed and ensure progress toward goals is shared with the full YVPP membership. Progress toward goals will also be shared regularly with the broader St. Louis community in coordination with the Mayor's office.

The YVPP's organizational members have adopted a membership charter to solidify participation expectations of individuals representing key organizations. Sixteen organizations have signed YVPP membership charters signaling their commitment to the collaborative work and to being accountable to the group for their piece of the plan including core partners identified in the Safe and Thriving solicitation City of St. Louis, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (SLMPD), Saint Louis Mental Health Board (MHB), Washington University, St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE), City of St. Louis Affordable Housing Commission, Missouri Department of Social Services and Juvenile Courts. We will continue to expand YVPP charter membership.

During YVPP's implementation phase, the VPC – comprised of high-level regional decision-makers from City of St. Louis and St. Louis County, law enforcement, economic development, higher education, victims' services, faith community, neighborhood associations, impacted community members, City Corrections and Fire Department, and youth– will convene quarterly. The VPC serves as the executive support team to drive communications and leverage support related to development of plans for fund raising, resource allocation, and regional sustainability. The membership of the VPC represents a commitment of regional stakeholders to convene regularly and to work together to promote and advocate for policies, a coordinated, well-resourced support system, and evidence-based interventions among area governments, institutions, and agencies that serve individuals most at risk of violent crime.

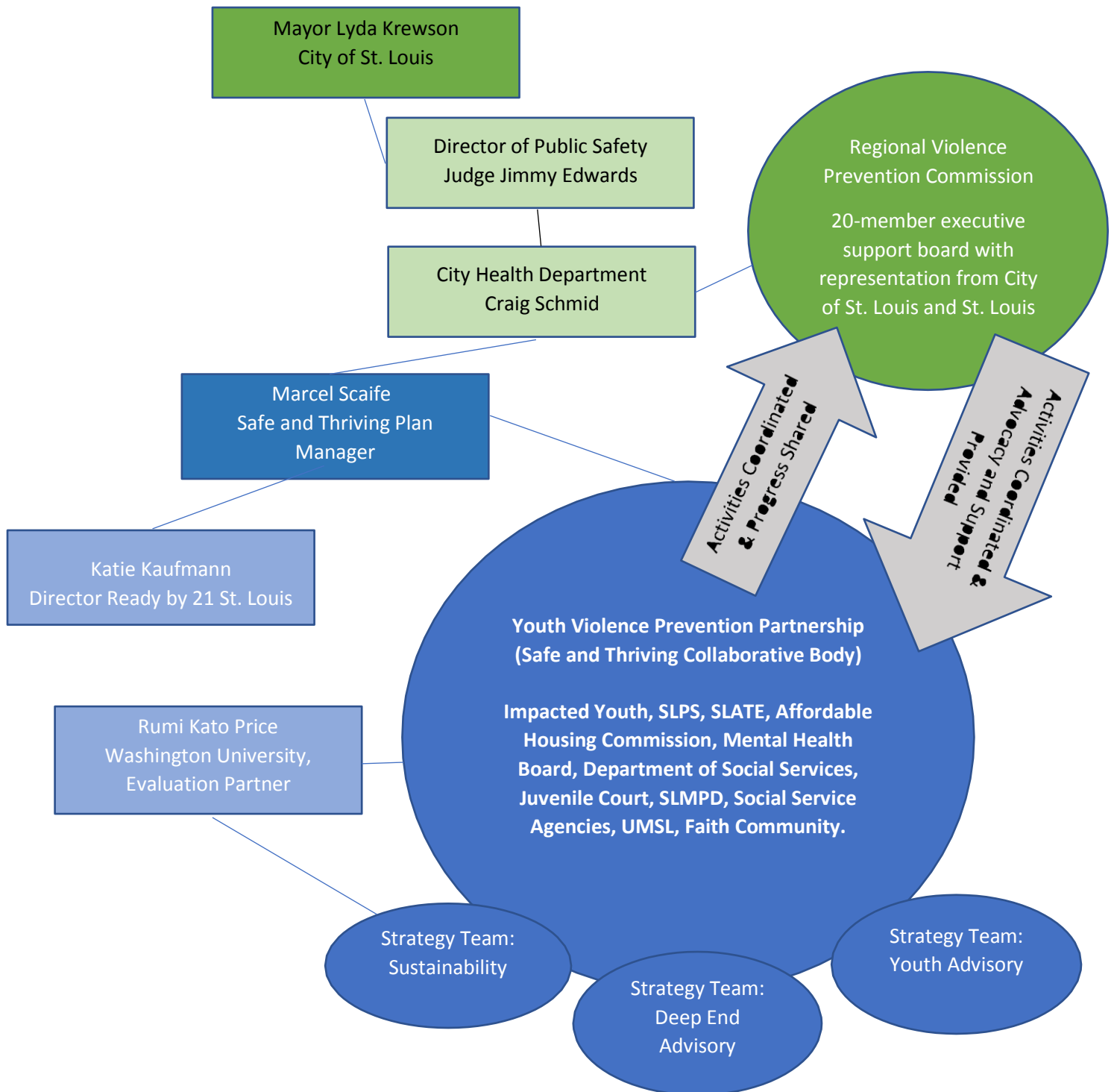
Project Management

The day to day management of the plan operations and implementation will be the responsibility of full-time Safe and Thriving Plan Manager, Marcel Scaife. The dedicated plan manager and other supporting staff from the Department of Health and Ready by 21 St. Louis, along with the YVPP members, YVPP strategy teams ensure the successful implementation of the Safe and Thriving St. Louis Plan. The Plan Manager will report to Katie Kaufmann, Director of Ready by 21 St. Louis and Craig Schmid City of St. Louis Health Department, and will have the following key responsibilities:

- Engage and support affected community members in implementation of the Plan's strategies
- Coordinate and integrate quality service delivery within and across the Plan's strategies
- Oversee the awarding and monitoring of subcontracts to fulfill prioritized implementation projects
- Help to coordinate and facilitate YVPP meetings as well as data and information sharing among the Strategy Teams and other members of the YVPP
- Organize partner training and technical assistance activities
- Serve as the liaison between the YVPP, the Strategy Team Chairs, the Health Department, and Mayor's office
- Facilitate the connection of YVPP's work to the regional strategies for violence reduction promoted by VPC and the City/County Community Health Improvement Plan.

The Plan Manager will also serve as the liaison to integrate efforts between the work of the Safe and Thriving St. Louis Plan, the St. Louis Area VPC and other youth and public safety initiatives to ensure leveraging of resources and expertise and avoid duplication of services.

Safe and Thriving St. Louis Structure



Goals and Objectives Implementation Timeline (5-Year Plan)

Goals and Objectives	Timeline									
	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
	M1	M7	M13	M19	M25	M31	M37	M43	M49	M55
	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
	M6	M12	M18	M24	M30	M36	M42	M48	M54	M60
GOAL A: Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth										
• Build organization's capacity to mentor at-risk youth and link them with services										
• Provide street outreach to reach disconnected youth and connect them to services										
• Enhance existing afterschool programming in the VRZ										
• Improve school climate through building trust and implementing alternatives to OSS										
GOAL B: Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to re-build social cohesion										
• Support residents to plan and host neighborhood events or improvement projects in the VRZ										
• Provide conflict resolution training for residents to engage in their own community										
• Involve youth as decision makers and owners in preventing youth violence										
• Train adults on how to work with youth to share leadership										
GOAL C: Advocate for better coordination of city, nonprofit, and volunteer efforts to improve neighborhood conditions.										
• Convert vacant lots into clean safe spaces										

• Improve communication, collaboration, and transparency through the development of an online safety dashboard										
• Clearly articulate the connection between the work of YVPP to the VPC and other community efforts										
GOAL D: Foster positive interactions between community and law enforcement (police, courts, etc.)										
• Connect social workers in the SLMPD to help connect resources to community										
• Connect law enforcement to community members										
• Connect the work of Deep End Advisory										
GOAL E: Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the VRZ										
• Develop, articulate, and implement a shared vision of success and the scale and scope of that vision										
• Create implement and enhance multidisciplinary leadership, governance structure and collaboration partnership										

Data Plan

Assessment of Available Data

Table A summarizes the availability of key data for understanding violence in St. Louis. The purpose here is to assess:

- If the information is sufficient, what evidence is provided;
- If the information is insufficient, steps can be taken to address data gaps.

This assessment was based on a review of the extensive Community Analysis conducted throughout 2018 (see Appendix 1 for the full Community Analysis). When the existing data and their availability were judged “insufficient”, activities in the relevant goals include the steps to obtain sufficient data.

TABLE A. Community Level Data Availability and Gaps		
Community Analysis Component	Data Availability	<p>If sufficient, what evidence is provided</p> <p>If insufficient, further work for additional data needs</p>
Demographics	Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevailing racial and geographic segregation • Concentration of African Americans in the VRZ
Economic factors	Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income and economic wealth disparity of the VRZ • Strong association of race and economic disparity
Education	Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lagged educational attainment in the VRZ
Employment	Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of employment opportunities in the VRZ
Housing	Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overwhelming evidence for deterioration of housing conditions and abandoned/vacant houses
Built environment	Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestive evidence of consequences, such as lack of neighborhood safety, residential instability and transiency
Violence	<p>Sufficient</p> <p>Insufficient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear evidence of higher crime rates in the VRZ • Association of economic factors and homicide rates • Obtain Youth-specific data on crime offenses and victimization
Gang activity	<p>Sufficient</p> <p>Insufficient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and the extent of crime impact by gang activities • Obtain data on the extent of gang behavior in the VRZ
Law enforcement capacity	Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLMPD’s attempt to meet the demand of crime control

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLMPD’s attempt to respond strained relations with the community • City’s effort to maintain strong police force
Juvenile justice	<p>Sufficient</p> <p>Insufficient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-representation of referrals of youth living in the VRZ • Obtain data on youth-specific victimization and offending for the City in general and the VRZ • Obtain data on Juvenile Court’s diversion implementation and its impact on crime reduction, both for the City and the VRZ
Schools	<p>Sufficient</p> <p>Insufficient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusionary disciplines data showing a wide range of discipline rates across high schools • Obtain data on youth perceptions of safety and support along with participation in risky behaviors
Trauma informed care	Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerable existing effort for trauma training and co-location of behavioral health in St. Louis Public Schools • Diverse community service providers involvement

The series of Youth Cafés, organized by Ready by 21 St. Louis, and facilitated by youth augmented and filled some gaps of quantitative information collected for the Community Analysis. These Cafés demonstrated the youth’s ability to serve as experts on their community and their lived experience.

Measuring Progress

Achieving population-level change that no single program or government agency could achieve on its own should be at the core of any cross-sector collaborative. Population-level change is difficult to achieve, takes time, and cannot be attributed to any one strategy or organization. However, we must be mindful that the ultimate goal of this effort is not to count outputs or policy changes, but to positively impact the lived experience of youth in St. Louis.

The planning process is grounded in Results-Based Accountability “Turn the Curve” thinking, in which the collaborative examined indicators related to violence in St. Louis and discussed what it would take to “turn the curve” and influence these indicators in a positive direction. The collaborative will monitor key indicators tied to the desired result—all youth are safe from gun and gang violence—as benchmarks to track progress at the community level, in addition to specific performance measures tied to strategies.

TABLE B. Goals and Key Indicators and Performance Measures

	Indicator	Frequency of Collection	Data Lead
Overarching Progress Benchmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of youth gunshot victims • Number of youths detained for aggravated assault • Number of youths arrested while in possession of a firearm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLMPD • SLMPD • SLMPD
Goal A: Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new mentors recruited • Number of street outreach referrals • Number of youths engaged in structured out-of-school opportunities • Number of 911 Calls to schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homegrown STL • Mission St. Louis • ASAP, SLATE • SLMPD
GOAL B: Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to re-build social cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of community events or improvement projects completed • Number of residents participating in conflict resolution training • Number of youths attending youth advisory group • Number of adults participating in shared leadership training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-CAST • TBD Training lead • Better Family Life • TBD Training lead
GOAL C: Advocate for better coordination of city, nonprofit, and volunteer efforts to improve neighborhood conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of vacant buildings demolished • Safety Dashboard Launch • Number of jointly marketed events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacancy Collaborative • YVPP • YVPP
Goal D: Foster positive interactions between community and law enforcement (police, courts, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of referrals made by social workers connected to police • Number of community events or trainings held by SLMPD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLMPD

GOAL E: Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the VRZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases in the 8 self-efficacy scales using the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early 2019 and annual follow-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washington University
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Community Safety Dashboard

One of the activities in our plan is to develop a community safety dashboard that will make publicly available key information related to violence prevention. This dashboard will be a tool to support more informed decisions regarding the safety and well-being of St. Louisans, especially youth. It can be used to:

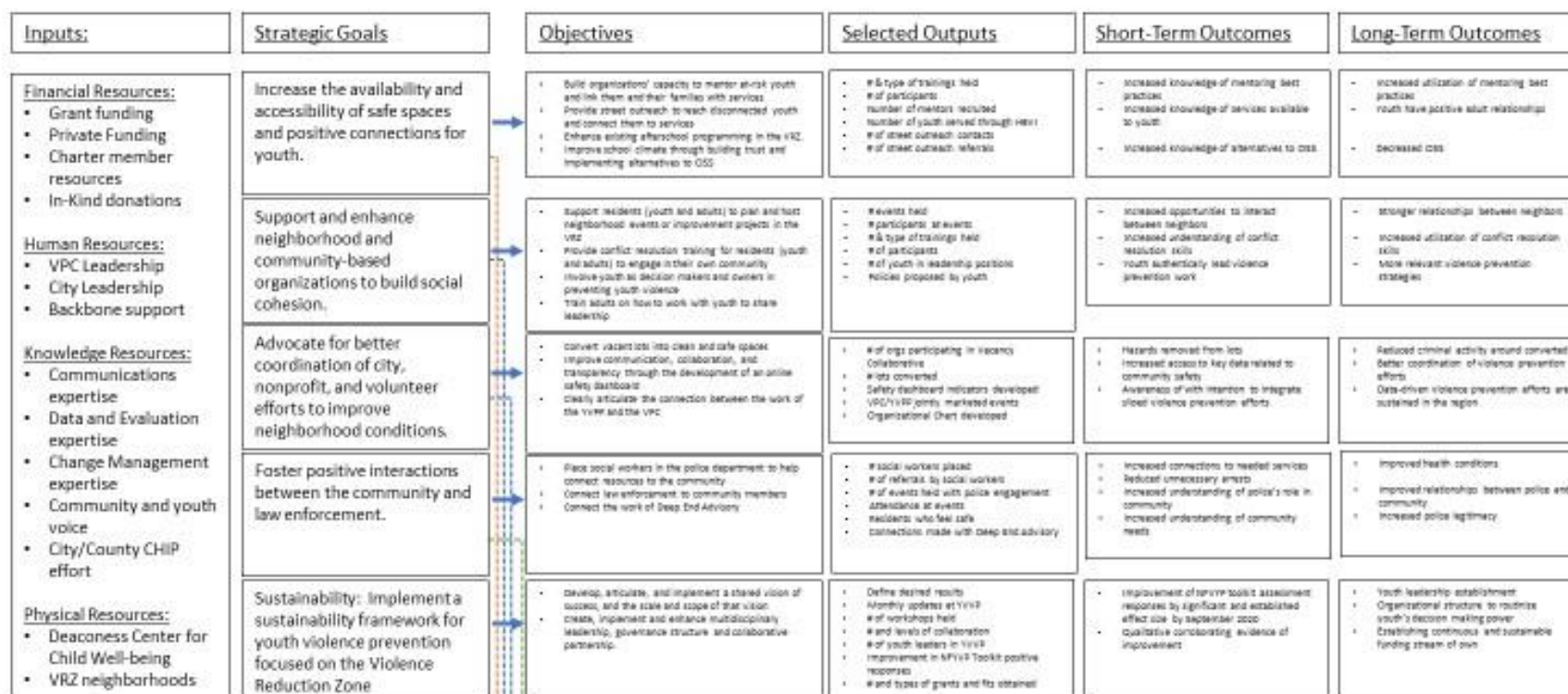
- Help to inform where violence prevention funding should be focused
- Identify opportunities for collaboration among community partners
- Understand how communities are changing over time
- Support conversations about violence that acknowledge structural issues and community conditions

Sustainability

To document the progress and the outcomes of Goal E, implementing the Plan's sustainability framework, both process and quantitative outcome measures will be used:

- Implementation activities: These activities mainly consist of monthly reporting and feedback sessions with the YVPP membership and a longer workshop specifically designed to facilitate "frameshift" regarding the deeper understanding and execution of the OJJDP sustainability framework. We currently plan to add biannual two-hour workshops per year in Years 1-3. The first workshop will be allocated to establishing definitions of desired results covering Goals A-D and finalizing impact measures to be approved by YVPP. Subsequent workshops will be designed for YVPP and other community partners to learn more about other resources and implementation of the sustainability framework
- Process measures are collected via documenting YVPP meeting materials. These include qualitative documentation of youth involvement and leadership development, policy change initiatives, protocol developing processes, information on future funding and collaborative development of additional youth anti-violence initiatives.
- Quantitative measures of perceived improvement in sustainability framework by members of YVPP and other community partners who will join the YVPP charter membership will be obtained by conducting the baseline and two follow-ups of surveys based on the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention Sustainability Self-Assessment Tools. The web-based surveys will be anonymous but responding organizations will be identified to track over-time improvement. Each question will include qualitative feedback from the respondent. Quantitative responses will be analyzed using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS); the qualitative feedback will be analyzed using semantic and content analysis techniques.

Logic Model



Desired Result:
All youth in St. Louis City are safe from gun and gang violence.

Community Conditions:
What are the conditions underlying high rates of violence in St. Louis?

Prioritized Factor:
Need for more recreation/activities

Prioritized Factor:
Lack of social cohesion in neighborhoods

Prioritized Factor:
Distrust between police and communities

Deeper Forces:
Disinvestment, segregation, lack of quality employment, transportation challenges, lack of quality housing

Five Year Strategic Plan Activities

GOAL A

Our community analysis and youth cafés revealed strong desires from youth for places where they can safely spend time and connect with others. Particularly in neighborhoods experiencing high rates of violence, structured safe environments and caring relationships are critical. City-supported Community Centers lack programming, transportation from neighborhoods to programming is complicated, school-based afterschool activities are limited, and hundreds of youth are on the waiting list for structured mentoring programs and youth employment programs. As a result, youth are often left to fend for themselves in the hours outside of school or work. While the influence of peers is a significant factor for youth choosing productive or criminal pathways, we recognize the importance of caring adult role models who can provide a vision of what's possible and encouragement to stay on a more positive path. Our City's youth are resilient and with supportive structures in place will be more likely to pursue a crime-free future.

GOAL A: Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth

A1. Build organizations' capacity to mentor youth and link them and their families with services

Ongoing Activities

- A number of mentoring organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Fathers' Support Center, and Better Family Life (BFL) will continue to provide high quality formal mentorship opportunities to St. Louis youth.
- Hospital Based Violence Interruption Program "Life outside Violence" will serve 600 residents ages 8-24 of City of St. Louis and St. Louis County over the next three years. This program, funded by Missouri Foundation for Health, seeks to connect victims of gunshots, stabbing or blunt trauma with a Case Manager and ongoing targeted mentoring for up to a year after being seen in one of four regional emergency departments.

New Activities

- A study of strength of mentor/mentee relationships for black boys in North St. Louis City is being funded by Missouri Foundation for Health and should surface learnings relevant to organizations providing mentoring.
- HomegrownSTL will launch a mentoring partnership to connect a number of mentoring organizations in the region for sharing of best practices.
- The mentoring partnership will work with YVPP members on a mentor recruitment campaign.

Performance Measures

- Number of organizations participating in mentoring partnership
- Number of educational sessions held for sharing mentor recruitment best practices
- Number of new mentors recruited
- Number of youths served by Life outside Violence program

A2. Provide street outreach to reach disconnected youth and connect them to services

Ongoing Activities

- City of St. Louis Department of Health and Integrated Health Network support community-based health workers who connect residents to resources.
- BFL Community Outreach Department will continue to knock on doors and connect with residents in their neighborhoods through efforts like Porches to Pulpits.

New Activities

- Mission: St. Louis will launch a targeted street outreach effort in the VRZ.
- Mission: St. Louis will recruit additional volunteer to provide support to new recruits to their programs through street outreach.
- Mission: St. Louis will recruit 30 residents of the VRZ to the Beyond Jobs program through street outreach efforts including door to door canvassing, open gym and community and criminal justice referrals

Performance Measures

- Number of street outreach contacts
- Number of street outreach referrals

A3. Enhance existing out of school programming in the VRZ

Ongoing Activities

- Afterschool for All Partnership ²⁴(ASAP) sites serve 350 elementary age children from 3-6PM on weekdays at schools in the VRZ.
- Blueprint4SummerSTL website lists hundreds of summer camp opportunities across the St. Louis region. Scholarships available to low income families with attention to residents of the VRZ and Promise Zone.
- A number of youth development organizations including Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis and YMCA will continue to provide high quality opportunities to youth outside of school hours.
- SLATE and St. Louis Youth Jobs will continue to provide hundreds of summer youth employment opportunities to City youth with a focus to employ youth residing in the City's most violence neighborhoods.
- Nearly \$1M is earmarked and allocated annually by the Board of Alderman through the Public Safety Committee to fund youth violence prevention programs for at-risk youth.

²⁴ Afterschool for All Partnership: a public/private funding collaborative administered by Area Resource for Community and Human Services with the goal of ensuring there is free, high quality afterschool programming provided in all SLPS elementary schools.

New Activities

- Strategically connect violence reduction programming to ASAP sites and ASAP staff training to enhance the offerings youth receive.
- Advocate for the \$1M allocated by the Public Safety Committee to fund activities indicated in this Plan.
- Advocate for use of the Prop P sales and use tax monies passed in 2018 to fund activities indicated in this plan that support afterschool programming, summer jobs, social and mental health, and recreation programs for crime prevention.

Performance Measures

- Number of youths participating in OST activities
- Number of enhancement programs shared in OST programs
- Number of youths served by summer job opportunities in partnership with SLATE

A4. Improve school climate through building trust and implementing alternatives to out-of-school suspensions

Ongoing Activities

- Support trauma-informed training efforts across St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) including the work of Shut it Down²⁵, Alive and Well St. Louis²⁶ and BJC Behavioral Health²⁷.
- Encourage parents and students to participate in the ACLU of Missouri's Know your Rights Workshops with attention to reducing exclusionary discipline in schools.
- Metropolitan Congregations United's Break the Pipeline campaign seeks to secure policy change commitments from regional school districts specific to exclusionary discipline, school resource officers and restorative practices.
- Legal Services of Eastern Missouri is providing legal representation to students harmed by exclusionary discipline practices.

New Activities

- Promote the Missouri School Violence Hotline (1-866-748-7047 or text "ReportIt" and include school name and city or "MOReportIt" App or <https://www.schoolviolencehotline.com>) with teachers, administrators and safety & security staff within St. Louis Public schools.
- In partnership with SLPS and the Juvenile Division of the SLMPD, educate building level and district leaders on when it is or is not appropriate to call 911.

²⁵ Shut It Down is a collaborative initiative of 9 funders led by Dr. April Warren Grise of Saint Louis University. This collaborative project provides education on racial equity and implicit bias for school personnel to address the rate of suspensions for youth attending Saint Louis Public Schools grades K-8.

²⁶ Alive and Well STL is a community-wide effort focused on reducing the impact of stress and trauma on our health and well-being. Alive and Well STL offers trainings about the impact and prevalence of trauma and stress on health. One of several partners in SLPS.

²⁷ BJC Behavioral Health provides and coordinates an array of mental health services for citizens residing in St. Louis City and the broader region. One of several partners in SLPS.

- Advocate for the implementation of a district wide student climate survey such as the Gallop Student Survey or other recognized tool with information that can be shared broadly with the violence prevention community.
- In partnership with SLPS and the SLPS Foundation, provide trauma-informed care and cultural responsiveness training for school staff.

Performance Measures

- Number of trainings held
- Number of SLPS staff trained

GOAL B

Our community analysis indicates that violence in St. Louis is not typically random, but rather the result of personal conflict that has escalated. Interventions should seek to equip individuals with conflict resolution and de-escalation skills. Building or reviving a sense of community connectedness means ensuring that all residents are equally valued as part of that process. We recognize that youth have not historically been invited into the places where decisions about their neighborhoods and their City are made. It is imperative that they are part of creating solutions in order for them to be hopeful about their own future and the future of our community as a whole.

GOAL B: Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to re-build social cohesion

B1. Support residents (youth and adults) to plan and host neighborhood events or improvement projects in the VRZ

Ongoing Activities

- Promote city-wide efforts such as National Night Out specifically in the VRZ.
- Promote the VPC's "It Starts with Us" grant to increase youth led projects in the community.
- The City of St. Louis Neighborhood Stabilization Team serves as a catalyst bringing together stakeholders to identify solutions to neighborhood problems.
- The Urban League will provide community workshops in an effort to help the neighborhoods work together. The Community Development Programs will also build the capacity of the Federation of Block Units, a unique grassroots volunteer support auxiliary of the Urban League focused on assisting St. Louis residents to improve neighborhoods and the quality of life through leadership training opportunities and neighborhood development.

New Activities

- Partner with Re-CAST to solicit and fund community-identified and led projects.
- Document and promote community projects through traditional and social media to highlight positive community efforts.
- Develop simple instructions for residents on how to request proactive SLMPD participation in community events and projects such as the Polar Cops ice cream truck.

Performance Measures

- Number of events or improvement projects completed by residents
- Number of participants at community events
- # of media hits

B2. Provide conflict resolution training for residents (youth and adults) to engage in their own community

Ongoing Activities

- Conflict Resolution Centers funded by City
- BFL is operating Gun Violence De-Escalation Centers at three churches in St. Louis City.

- BFL Neighborhood Alliance convenes adult residents for training on conflict resolution and Youth Leadership Academy provides conflict resolution and other skills to teens.

New Activities

- Contract with a community organization to provide conflict resolution training for residents of the VRZ.

Performance Measures

- Number of trainings held
- Number of participants at training
- New skills in conflict resolution learned

B3. Involve youth as decision makers and owners in preventing youth violence

Ongoing Activities

- Deep End Initiative is partnering with BFL to research Youth Advisory Team models in other jurisdictions.
- BFL is designing a youth and family advisory group to inform ongoing youth justice reform efforts in the city in partnership with Deep End Advisory.

New Activities

- Deep End Advisory and YVPP will assist BFL in establishing a Parent and Youth Advisory Group, recruiting from individuals who are both court involved, and non-court involved.
- YVPP will work with Youth Advisory Group to identify youth co-chairs for YVPP.
- Parent and Youth Advisory members will receive stipends for their work on behalf of Deep End Advisory and YVPP.

Performance Measures

- Research on models conducted
- Number of youths recruited
- Number of meetings held
- Youth co-chairs of YVPP
- Number of policies/practices proposed by youth advisory group

B4. Train adults on how to work with youth to share leadership

Ongoing Activities

- St. Louis Family Court has received extensive training in the Full Frame Initiative well-being orientation model to identify assets that youth bring to the table.
- St. Louis Family Court implementing a Team Support Approach model for referred families in partnership with BFL.

New Activities

- Contract with a community organization to provide youth development training for residents of the VRZ

Performance Measures

- Number of trainings held
- Number of participants in training

GOAL C

City Government and leadership has directed significant resources at violence prevention and intervention efforts. Public Safety is the Mayor’s top priority for the City. Our community analysis found that vacant buildings and lots are a prominent source of complaints from area residents and are highly visible nuisances that contribute to a sense of social disorder in the neighborhoods. Taking a public health approach to violence requires integrating efforts across departments and organizations that might traditionally work in their own silos, so that they can together impact the environment in neighborhoods experiencing violence. The YVPP, and the broader VPC, envision building collaborative infrastructure within the City and its many partners to increase the impact of efforts happening to maximize taxpayer investments, reduce violence, support resident leadership, and improve neighborhoods.

GOAL C: Advocate for better coordination of city, nonprofit, and volunteer efforts to improve neighborhood conditions

C1. Convert vacant lots into clean safe spaces

Ongoing Activities

- BFL’s Clean Sweep Program, an intensive large-scale neighborhood cleanup initiative to address the physical conditions and environment of challenged neighborhoods, is targeting four North St. Louis neighborhoods for cleanup, which includes demolishing vacant buildings, cleaning up trash, and clearing plant overgrowth.
- The St. Louis Land Reutilization Authority is running a “Mow to Own” program, in which residents can take ownership of a City-owned lot that’s next to a property they own by agreeing to maintain it.
- The St. Louis Development Corporation’s Neighborhood Commercial District Improvement Program offers façade improvement grants of up to \$20,000 for improvements to the facades of commercial or mixed-use properties in selected Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas, including most of the VRZ commercial areas.
- Project Connect seeks to leverage the relocation of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency’s West headquarters to North St. Louis to promote neighborhood stability and reinvestment.
- Green City Coalition is working with students to paint murals on wood for boarding up vacant buildings within the VRZ.
- Green City Coalition is engaging residents within the VRZ for neighborhood-based planning efforts to convert parcels with vacant buildings into vibrant and sustainable green spaces.
- The Vacancy Collaborative is a coalition of community representatives, private and non-profit stakeholders, and City agencies that brings existing vacancy efforts under one umbrella and encourages the public and private sectors to work together toward vacancy solutions in a comprehensive and coordinated way. Two committees and six working groups advance the priorities of the Collaborative. Recent highlights of those efforts include:
 - The St. Louis Vacancy Portal (<https://www.stlvacancy.com>) is a publicly accessible comprehensive vacancy data portal, created by the data working group, that will guide efforts to address vacancy.

- Block-Ops is a program of St. Louis City's VacancyStat that aims to coordinate multiple operating departments around the cleanup of high-vacancy blocks that are prone to illegal dumping and crime, and that pose significant maintenance challenges.
- Several partners helped develop support to bring resources to a new Neighborhood Vacancy Initiative housed at Legal Services of Eastern Missouri to provide pro-bono support to community groups and neighborhood associations to use the legal tools to address vacancy
- The St. Louis Association of Community Organizations has co-hosted several vacancy events to share resources to address vacancy, engage community members on priorities, and highlight City-owned properties for purchase through its "Finest 15" program.

Performance Measures

- # organizations/departments participating in the Vacancy Collaborative
- # of vacant buildings demolished
- # lots cleaned

C2. Improve communication, collaboration, and transparency through the development of an online safety dashboard

Ongoing Activities

- The City of St. Louis has obtained a FUSE fellow for a one-year fellowship to develop a City data warehouse and establish appropriate information sharing across City departments to support better communication of services provided and gaps.
- As part of the City/County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), the www.thinkhealthstl.org dashboard was launched and monitors many publicly available data points specific to public health priorities, including structural determinants of health (including violence) and demographic information.

New Activities

- Develop a Safety dashboard as an extension of the www.thinkhealthstl.org web platform.
- Promote Safety dashboard with stakeholders.

Performance Measures

- Indicators developed
- Safety dashboard launched
- Visits to web-based dashboard

C3. Clearly articulate the connection between the work of YVPP/VPC and other community efforts

Ongoing Activities

- VPC and YVPP share best practices, information, activities, and staffing resources to ensure coordination.

- VPC is identified as the lead entity with the City/County CHIP specific to violence reduction efforts in the region, and YVPP is a goal-based committee of VPC for youth violence prevention efforts in the City of St. Louis.

New Activities

- Establish clear roles and responsibilities and a clear organization chart that includes staff and volunteers of VPC and YVPP.
- Provide regular updates on work happening across efforts to ensure awareness and further promote alignment.
- Work with Criminal Justice Coordinating Council being created by FUSE fellow.

Performance Measures

- Number of YVPP progress updates shared with VPC
- Number of progress updates provided to YVPP by existing efforts such as Deep End Advisory and FUSE Fellow
- Number of jointly marketed events
- Development of organizational chart

GOAL D

It is widely known that the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (SLMPD) is below full strength. Leadership is working to provide more Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), de-escalation skills, and more positive community interaction capacity. It is believed that the SLMPD will be better positioned to engage in more proactive policing and community engagement activities when it is at full strength. Yet cafés reveal the desire by residents, especially youth, to connect with the officers currently serving our community. Simple changes are being made by SLMPD to allow for better connectivity between officers and residents. VPC and YVPP partners seek to be a strong, data-driven, research informed support for improving the community's perception of and interactions with law enforcement.

Goal D: Foster positive interactions between community and law enforcement (police, courts, etc.)

D1. Connect social workers in the SLMPD to help connect resources to the community

Ongoing Activities

- 2 Mental Health related Social Workers, funded by the State of Missouri, will continue to be embedded in the SLMPD.
- The Crime Victim Center offers crisis intervention for victims of aggravated assault via staff embedded within the SLMPD.

New Activities

- The SLMPD's 6th district²⁸ will pilot the use of social workers specifically to address juvenile issues, based in part on the Cops and Clinicians model of New Haven, CT or the Police Assisted Referral Program model of Cleveland, OH.
- A program called Community CompStat will connect residents to services that can address crime.

Performance Measures

- Number of referrals made

D2. Connect law enforcement to community members

Ongoing Activities

- SLMPD Juvenile Division conducting Elementary School visits in three SLPS school buildings in the VRZ where they eat lunch, read, and work on homework with students.
- Structured conflict resolution program being implemented by SLMPD in SLPS elementary and middle schools.
- Cops, Cuts, and Conversation events provide opportunities for residents to speak with SLMPD officers at their local barber shop.
- SLMPD "Park and Walk" program encourages officers to get out of their cars and interact with residents.

²⁸ The 6th district covers the northernmost part of St. Louis City. Over half of the Violence Reduction Zone falls within the 6th District.

- The Missouri Department of Corrections runs a Gang CPR program in partnership with the SLMPD, which provides intensive supervision and support for gang-involved individuals upon their release.
- SLMPD Cadet program will ramp up recruitment efforts with attention toward a police force that reflects the demographics of the community.

New Activities

- VPC will identify communities in the City with an interest in strengthening police and community relationships and assess readiness of both parties to make change.
- Community meetings will help define performance measures for effective community policing.
- Education sessions will be conducted on procedural justice to improve the cooperation of residents with police investigations.
- Create external accountability measures to monitor the effectiveness of community policing efforts.
- Assist law enforcement in implementing and sustaining community defined performance measures through community policing strategies to restore community trust and increase cooperation.
- Engage with Civilian Review Board.

Performance Measures

- Number of events/trainings held by SLMPD in VRZ
- Number of community residents who feel safe using social observation tool from OJP Diagnostic

D3. Connect the work of Deep End Advisory to YVPP

Ongoing Activities

- Deep End Advisory group has identified performance measures and developed a stakeholder presentation highlighting data specific to their reform efforts over the last six years.

New Activities

- Provide regular opportunities for Deep End Advisory to share progress with YVPP members

Performance Measures

- Progress updates provided by Deep End Advisory

GOAL E

Carefully planned long-term sustainability goals and objectives are one of the most important ingredients for long-term successes of youth violence prevention initiatives in any city or state. The sustainability strategies need to be extended after the award period of the Safe and Thriving St. Louis grant funding period in part because the 3-year grant activities are mostly designed to jump-start implementation of action plans proposed based on our uniquely local public health approach.

The extant research has shown at least nine common characteristics to create an effective and sustainable collaborative, according to the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention's²⁹ Sustainability Framework Briefing,³⁰ commissioned by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Department of Justice:

- Strong, visionary leadership
- Open communications
- Trust among partners
- Broad range of funding
- Inclusive stakeholder engagement
- Flexibility to changing environments
- Efficient operating structures
- Ongoing internal and external capacity building
- Accountability for measurable outcomes.

The National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention (NFYVP) subsequently identified eight capacities that help ensure long-term sustainability:

- Develop and articulate a shared vision of success and the scale and scope of that vision.
- Clearly define the desired results and measure the impact of their efforts.
- Authentically engage youth in all aspects of the effort.
- Create a leadership and governance structure to support the multidisciplinary partnership.
- Consistently and effectively engage community stakeholders in the collaboration.
- Effectively manage the operations of a multidisciplinary partnership to achieve shared goals.
- Secure and leverage a broad range of financial resources to support the capacities and functions needed to achieve and sustain the vision.
- Nimble adapt to and strategically influence the changing context in which they operate.

²⁹ The National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention is a network of communities and federal agencies that work together, share information and build local capacity to prevent and reduce youth violence. Established at the direction of President Obama in 2010, the Forum brings together people from diverse professions and perspectives to learn from each other about the crisis of youth and gang violence in the U.S and to build comprehensive solutions on the local and national levels. <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/preventing-youth-violence/national-forum-for-youth-violence-prevention>

³⁰ A Sustainability Framework for the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention. Retrieved 9/2/18 from: <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/preventing-youth-violence/sustainability>.

We list six activities as part of Objectives E1 and E2 as well as outcomes or performance measures, output or process performance measures and types of tracking data. Some of these activities are interwoven with the objectives of Goals A-D (for example, Goal B3 and B4, “involving youth as decision makers” and “training adults to work with youth to share leadership”, respectively).

GOAL E: Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the VRZ.

E1: Develop, articulate, and implement a shared vision of success, and the scale and scope of that vision

Activities

- Commit to a shared vision
- Form a Sustainability Subcommittee of YVVP, which includes youth representatives who reside in or close to the VRZ
- The Subcommittee will hold a Sustainability Workshop at least twice a year to train YVVP members and other participants from affiliated organizations on selected aspects of youth anti-violence sustainability framework

Performance Measures

- Number of Sustainability Committee meetings/trainings
- Activities accomplished by Sustainability Committee
- Scores on the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention assessment over time
- Updates provided to YVPP

E2: Create, implement and enhance multidisciplinary leadership, governance structure and collaborative partnership

Activities

- Include active youth representation in decision-making processes.
- Strategically expand YVPP membership to include more affected populations and multi-sectoral stakeholders.
- Shifting of logistics and frame of the coalition members to include youth

Performance Measures

- Number of collaborations with City policy makers to advocate for and coordinate youth violence reduction
- Policy briefs developed

Two-year Action Plan for Funded Activities

Goal A Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth Objective A1. Build organization's capacity to mentor youth, specifically in the VRZ, and link them and their families with services.				
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number of youths to be served	Comments
12-29 As an organization HomegrownSTL has prioritized this age range	HomegrownSTL partner agencies	Dr. Sean Joe will articulate cohort criteria	Dependent on reach of mentor organization partners. Minimum 60	HomeGrownSTL Network was launched in 2015 at Washington University and serves as a catalyst for improving the upward mobility of black boys and youth men.
Activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify mentor cohort criteria that advances the goals of the VPC, YVPP, and HomeGrownSTL to impact black males living in City of St. Louis 2. Recruit cohort of HomegrownSTL partners with the desire to improve their mentoring services. 3. Prepare research findings on best practice mentoring science. 4. Host Mentoring Partnership Summit for all HomegrownSTL partners with mentoring activities 5. Launch cohort technical assistance to implement best practice mentoring science. 				
Number of youths to be served: Minimum 60, dependent on reach of mentor organization partners.				
Target Age Range: 12-24 (this project with Homegrown will target a narrower age range to match with our community needs assessment data)				
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New practices implemented in TA cohort • New mentors recruited by TA cohort 				
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of convenings of Mentoring Partnership • Number of organizations participating in Mentoring Partnership 				

Goal A Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth Objective A1. Build organization's capacity to mentor youth, specifically in the VRZ, and link them and their families with services.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring best practices identified and shared 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
HOME GROWN STL	Quarterly meetings	X hours of TA	20 Months	April 2019	October 2020
Data Tracking: Organization/training participants/number of mentors/number of mentees/best practices implemented					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$15,000 to cover Research and Summit convening and TA support to implement best practices with cohort of mentoring organizations.					

Goal A Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth Objective A2. Provide street outreach to reach disconnected youth and connect them to services.				
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number of youths to be served	Comments
18-24 (Street outreach will target this age range of young adults)	City of St. Louis residents	Recruiters will go door to door in the VRZ and receive referrals from criminal justice partners, churches and community organizations.	30	Mission: St. Louis builds relationships to empower people to transform their lives. With relationship in hand, we have made a strategic set of programs available to the people we serve. These programs work together to address critical stages in the cycle of poverty, like high school graduation + recidivism. We walk alongside people as they work their way through our programs, empowering entire families to break the cycle of poverty.

Goal A Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth					
Objective A2. Provide street outreach to reach disconnected youth and connect them to services.					
Activity 1: Mission: St. Louis will recruit 10 new volunteers to provide supports to new recruits to their support program identified through street outreach efforts.					
Number to be served: 10 volunteers					
Target Age group: 25-40 years old (these individuals will be recruited as near peer mentors to best serve the 18-24-year old's identified in activity 2)					
Outcome/performance measure:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members recruited to provide street outreach and connections to program for disconnected youth and young adults. 					
Output/ process performance measure:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New volunteers recruited New volunteers trained 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Mission: St. Louis	Once at beginning of program	Varies	Varies	April 2019	June 2019
Data Tracking: volunteer name/age/zip code					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$8,000 to cover leveraged staff time across Program Director, Manager and Coordinator for recruitment, training and support of new mentors.					
Activity 2: Mission: St. Louis will recruit 30 residents of the VRZ to the Beyond Jobs program through street outreach efforts including door to door canvassing, open gym and community and criminal justice referrals.					
Number of youths to be served: 30					
Target Age Range: 18-24 years old					
Outcome/performance measure:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young adults completing Beyond Jobs program or other relevant programing based on need Youth adults gaining new skills through program Youth able to access supports to prevent criminal justice involvement or recidivism. 					

Goal A Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth Objective A2. Provide street outreach to reach disconnected youth and connect them to services.					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of street outreach contacts made • Number of referrals made • Number of young adults enrolled in Beyond Jobs program or other relevant programing based on need 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Mission: St. Louis	Weekly	8 hours per week	24 weeks	June 2019	Sept 2020
Data Tracking: participant name/age/zip code/level of participation in program					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$7,000 to Reset Studio (4hrs/week for 24 weeks at \$15/hour), Basketball Open Gym (4 hrs./week for 48 weeks at \$10/hour) and equipment (\$3640).					

GOAL A: Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth Objective A3. Enhance existing out of school programming in the VRZ				
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments
11-17	Afterschool programs operating in schools within the VRZ	Referrals through SLPS and YVPP partners	350 students	This strategy is based on the understanding that this will give youth who would otherwise be at home alone something constructive to do.

GOAL A: Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth					
Objective A3. Enhance existing out of school programming in the VRZ					
Activity 1: Connect Afterschool for All Partnership programs to violence prevention and reduction programming					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in knowledge by youth in afterschool programs 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of youths participating in after school programs • Number of after school programs bringing in violence prevention and reduction focused programming • Number of YVPP/VPC members providing programming in afterschool programs • Number of youths led projects that intersect with afterschool programs in the VRZ 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Blueprint4summerSTL, Boys' and girls' clubs of Greater St. Louis, YMCA	5 days a week 3 hours	Varies	10 months	August 2019	June 2020
Data Tracking: End of year report from agencies					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$10,000 has been allocated for youth and community initiative projects which could include funding opportunities that connect to existing afterschool programs. No additional funds budgeted through Safe and Thriving St. Louis					

Goal A Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth					
Objective A4. Improve school climate through building trust and implementing alternatives to out-of-school suspensions.					
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments	
School district personnel and students	Work in SLPS or attend school in SLPS	Work with Central Office, specifically Student Services Department and SLPS Foundation	100 staff and 1,000 students	SLPS changed its out of school suspension policy in April 2016 to ban OSS in preK-2 nd grade. This policy change has prompted an intentional focus on the practices that district staff are skilled to use as alternatives to exclusionary discipline, a first link in the school to prison pipeline.	
Activity 1: Promote the Missouri School Violence Hotline with teachers, administrators and safety & security staff within St. Louis Public schools and educate building level and district leaders on when it is or is not appropriate to call 911.					
Number of youth to be served: 1,000 students who attend the two SLPS high schools with the most 911 calls					
Target Age group: 13-18 years old					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of district staff aware of the MO School Violence Hotline• Decrease in number of 911 calls to two SLPS high schools with most calls• Increase in number of reports to MO School Violence Hotline					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outreach and education to SLPS leaders					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End

Goal A Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth
Objective A4. Improve school climate through building trust and implementing alternatives to out-of-school suspensions.

YVPP members working with SLPS school building leaders	Share annually in person and provide regular electronic outreach to reinforce.	Varies	2-year education effort	2019 school year	2020 school year
Data Tracking: 911 calls to SLPS buildings					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$5,000 for targeted promotion activities					
Activity 2: Implement a district wide school climate survey.					
Number of youth to be served: 1,000 middle and high school students take survey					
Target Age Range: 11-18 year old's					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of nationally normed survey • Vital information on student perceptions shared with violence prevention partners via YVPP 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete assessment of a representative sample of SLPS students related to school climate • Number of presentations on survey results to violence prevention partners • Number of YVPP partners using survey information to inform programmatic and policy decisions 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
SLPS	Annually	1 hour	2-year pilot	Aug 2019	Sept 2020
Data Tracking: Student level data using a nationally normed tool of the district's choosing such as Gallop Student Poll or Youth Risk Behavior Assessment					

Goal A Increase the availability and accessibility of safe spaces and positive connections for youth Objective A4. Improve school climate through building trust and implementing alternatives to out-of-school suspensions.					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$5,000 purchase tool to be administered by district					
Activity 3: Trauma Informed Care and Cultural Responsiveness training for building level school staff					
Number to be served: 100 Target Age Range: Staff who work directly with students					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in amount and quality of trauma-informed developmentally appropriate services and evidence-based practices for youth • Increase in public-private funding investment in trauma-informed care • Percent of trained participants with increase in knowledge, skills and abilities related to violence prevention 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of SLPS staff trained • Number of trainings 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
SLPS	Annually	8 hours	1 year pilot	Aug 2019	May 2020
Data Tracking: Participant name/ training completed					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$150 per employee to serve 100 SLPS staff members, \$15,000 to hire trainers and support costs associated with professional development time.					

Goal B Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion Objective B1. Support residents to plan and host neighborhood events or improvement projects in the VRZ.				
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments
10-24	Live in the Violence Reduction Zone. Preference given to individuals who have received youth development training.	Referrals through North Newstead Association and ReCAST	120 youth	The North Newstead Association (NNA) is a Community Based Development Organization serving neighborhoods in North City for purposes of the Community Development Block Grant Program and it is designated by the City of St. Louis as a Community Housing Development Organization for purposes of Home Investment Partnerships Program. Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma (ReCAST) is funded by a 5-year, \$4.7M grant that was awarded to the St. Louis County Department of Public Health by SAMHSA.
<p>Re-CAST is a regional effort focused on an area of nearly 200,000 residents in the Promise Zone that cuts across two jurisdictions, the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County, whereas Safe and Thriving is focused on area(s) identified as violence reduction zone(s) by law enforcement, currently home to fewer than 41,000 people. Re-CAST has a broader mission than Safe & Thriving Communities to promote well-being, resiliency, and community healing. Its funding priorities are Youth Engagement, Peer Support, Mental Health, Trauma Informed Care, and Violence Prevention. As part of its funding efforts it has funded projects in the areas of youth engagement, peer support, mental health trauma-informed care and violence prevention, designed and selected through its participatory budgeting process, involving community resident ambassadors who helped to shape requests for proposals (RFPs) and residents who then voted on proposals submitted in response to those RFPs. It has also supported mini-grants, primarily for youth led projects, and these do include violence prevention activities. They have been interested in empowering communities to come up with small projects to address community challenges and to embrace opportunities.</p> <p>Given these activities with some intersection, it is critical that as Safe & Thriving Communities St. Louis focuses on VRZ. We coordinate our efforts with Re-CAST to make sure we are providing collective impact -- not duplicating and not interfering. Re-CAST staff will be able to report on the larger area so that Safe & Thriving Communities St. Louis will be able to complement efforts, and vice versa.</p> <p>Our funding proposal with Safe & Thriving St. Louis focuses on funding proposals coming through one strong neighborhood organization, North Newstead Association, that serves part of the area within the VRZ. North Newstead Association primarily serves the neighborhoods of Penrose,</p>				

Goal B Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion

Objective B1. Support residents to plan and host neighborhood events or improvement projects in the VRZ.

O'Fallon, Fairground, Carr Square, Jeff Vander Lou, St. Louis Place, Old North, Columbus Square, and the Gate District. However, it has relationships with organizations and residents of other neighborhoods within the VRZ. The Ville, Greater Ville, Kingsway East, Kingsway West, Wells Goodfellow, Mark Twain I-70/Industrial, Mark Twain, Walnut Park East, Walnut Park West, Penrose, and O'Fallon as well as Downtown and Dutchtown in the south are within the Chief's VRZ.

Of course those neighborhoods and others, and residents within them, may apply for any number of grants for projects, including projects supported by Re-CAST. While we want to be able to share and utilize good ideas that come from the communities and their residents as we consider projects and we want to help to maximize our impact and catalyze other initiatives, we don't want to be duplicating efforts and funding the same projects more than once -- especially with taxpayer/government dollars.

We plan to promote and support each other's efforts -- but not fund the same efforts. Of course, in order to assure that, we need to be sharing data and working together. If a particular issue is arising as an opportunity or challenge in a certain geographical part of the VRZ, it may be useful for Re-CAST, Safe & Thriving St. Louis and other partners to look at supporting various activities that are complementary, mutually reinforcing, and of course, non-duplicative. It serves none of us to fund the same effort more than once.

Re-CAST can also share with YVPP projects that perhaps haven't been selected through their process but are nevertheless worthy of consideration and which may be of great importance to our collaborative. Or if Safe & Thriving St. Louis learns of some issues outside of VRZ on which it isn't focusing, it too can share that information with Re-CAST and others in the hopes that that can assist them in their funding decisions.

Activity 1: Provide outreach to community groups to source 8 community lead projects each year in VRZ neighborhoods.

Number of youth to be served: 120 **Target Age group:** 10-24

Outcome/performance measure:

- Project submission process developed
- Submission process promoted
- Community led selections made

Output/ process performance measure:

- # media hits
- Number of projects submitted
- Number of projects funded
- Number of participants at funded community events

Goal B Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion					
Objective B1. Support residents to plan and host neighborhood events or improvement projects in the VRZ.					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
NNA and ReCAST	Monthly	Varies	20 months	April 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking:					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$10,000 to be distributed in grants up to \$2500 for community projects.					
Activity 2: Document and promote community projects through traditional and social media to highlight positive community efforts					
Number of youth to be served: 120 Target Age Range: 10-24					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write ups on community projects completed • Community projects shared with YVPP and VPC 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # media hits 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Youth Violence Prevention Partnership	Varies	Varies	20 months	April 2019	October 2020
Data Tracking: monitoring traditional and social media, collecting detail from project submissions and final reports.					
Budget amount/description of cost: none					

Goal B Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion					
Objective B2. Provide conflict resolution training for residents to engage in their own community.					
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments	
11-25 and adults	City Residents with attention to the VRZ	YVPP partner organizations	50	This strategy has an intentional multi-generational approach.	
Activity 1: Provide conflict resolution trainings in the community for youth and adults.					
Number of youth and adults to be served: 50					
Target Age group: 11-25 and adults					
Outcome/performance measure:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in knowledge• Increase in skill					
Output/ process performance measure:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of youths enrolled in Youth Passport to the Future program• Number of youths receiving “Making Proud Choices” curriculum• Number of youths receiving “Too good for Drugs and Violence” Curriculum• Youth will develop skills in conflict resolution, anger management, communication, decision making and health relationships					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Better Family Life	Twice a week	2 hours	16 months	May 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking: participant name/age/zip code					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$10,000 to promote, recruit participants and host training in the community.					
Activity 2: Provide conflict resolution trainings in the community for youth and adults.					
Number of youth and adults to be served: 50					

Goal B Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion Objective B2. Provide conflict resolution training for residents to engage in their own community.					
Target Age group: 11-25 and adults					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in knowledge • Increase in skill 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Trauma Awareness Training – Community Empowerment Workshops • Number of youths that will participate in trainings • Youth will gain knowledge and understanding of the impact of trauma and toxic stress. • Youth will demonstrate a change in attitude about individuals who have experienced trauma. <p>Youth will learn relatable self-care strategies that can be used to minimize the impact of trauma and toxic- stress; and identify ways in which they can work collaboratively with neighbors to create change at the community level.</p>					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Alive and Well Communities	7 session	2 hours	16 months	May 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking: participant name/age/zip code					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$10,000 to promote, recruit participants and host training in the community.					

Goal B Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion					
Objective B3. Involve youth as decision makers and owners in preventing youth violence.					
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number of youth to be served	Comments	
15-24	City of St. Louis residents	High Schools, Colleges, Churches, Community Organization	25	BFL is a major service provider in the City of St. Louis with a long history of working with members of under resourced communities to improve their lives. Deep End Advisory Committee was created in 2012 working across criminal justice professionals to safely and significantly reduce out-of-home placements, especially for youth of color who have become court involved.	
Activity 1: Create and implement a structured youth leadership body with job descriptions, clear youth responsibilities and compensation					
Number of youths to be served: 25					
Target Age group: 15-24					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy and practice recommendations of youth leadership body• Number of new policies or policy changes that are informed by youth• Number of activities lead by youth					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of youths who are part of leadership body• Number of meeting of youth leadership body					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End

Goal B Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion					
Objective B3. Involve youth as decision makers and owners in preventing youth violence.					
BFL, with Deep End Advisory and YVPP	Quarterly	Varies	21 months	March 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking: Participants names/ level of participation					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$10,000 to cover youth stipends for participation					

Goal B Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion				
Objective B4. Train adults on how to work with youth to share leadership.				
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number of youth to be served	Comments
11-25 and adults	City resident with attention to the VRZ	YVPP Partner Organizations	100	This strategy is based on the understanding the power sharing between youth and adults requires intentionality and training.
Activity 1: Host youth leadership workshops and connect youth with neighborhood organizations to implement leadership skills				
Number of youths to be served: 100				
Target Age group: 11-25 and adults				
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in knowledge • Increase in skill 				
Output/ process performance measure:				

Goal B Support and enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion
Objective B4. Train adults on how to work with youth to share leadership.

- Number of trainings held
- Number of youth and adults trained
- Number of neighborhood organization participating in training
- Number of youths attending Anti violence summit

Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
SLACO	3 Saturdays per month	4 hours per session	9 moths	March 2019	December 2019
Data Tracking: participant name/age/zip code					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$10,000 to promote, recruit participants and host training in the community					

GOAL C: Advocate for better coordination of city, nonprofit, and volunteer efforts to improve neighborhood conditions					
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments	
N/A	Vacant lots and buildings in high-crime neighborhoods	Outreach through members of the Vacancy Collaborative	N/A	N/A	
Objective/Activity 1: Convert vacant lots into clean safe spaces					
Outcome/performance measure: N/A <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of organizations/departments participating in the Vacancy Collaborative					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of vacant buildings demolishedNumber lots cleared					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Vacancy Collaborative	N/A	N/A	N/A	May 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking: Vacant lots cleared, by neighborhood.					
Budget amount/description of cost: No funds budgeted through Safe and Thriving St. Louis					

GOAL C: Advocate for better coordination of city, nonprofit, and volunteer efforts to improve neighborhood conditions						
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments		
N/A	Programs and activities participated in by YVPP and VPC members	Presentation at YVPP, VPC Meetings	N/A	System alignment is a significant thrust of structural work happening in St. Louis City and the surrounding County. We seek to engage partnership members to proactively identify these alignment opportunities and advocate for alignment.		
Objective/Activity 2: Improve communication, collaboration, and transparency through the development of an online safety dashboard						
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number visits to web-based dashboard						
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicator list developed• Safety Dashboard launched						
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End	
Ready by 21 St. Louis in partnership with the City/County Think Health dashboard	N/A	N/A	N/A	May 2019	September 2020	
Data Tracking: N/A						
Budget amount/description of cost: No funds budgeted through Safe and Thriving St. Louis						

GOAL C: Advocate for better coordination of city, nonprofit, and volunteer efforts to improve neighborhood conditions					
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments	
N/A	Indicators developed with YVPP members	Presentation at YVPP, VPC Meetings	N/A	VPC is identified as the lead entity with the city/county Chip specific to violence reduction efforts in the region, and YVPP is a goal-based committee of VPC for youth violence prevention in the City of St. Louis	
Objective/Activity 3: Clearly articulate the connection between the work of YVPP/VPC and other community efforts					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish clear roles and responsibilities and a clear organizations chart that includes staff and volunteers of VPC and YVPP• Provide regular updates and work happening across efforts to ensure awareness and further promote alignment					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of YVPP progress updates shared with VPC• Number of jointly marketed events• Development of organizational chart					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
YVPP, VPC	Monthly	Varies	16 months	May 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking: N/A					
Budget amount/description of cost: Staff time allocated via Safe and Thriving St. Louis					

GOAL D: Foster positive interactions between community and law enforcement (police, courts, etc.)					
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments	
11-24 and adults	City resident with attention to the VRZ	SLMPD officers	N/A	This strategy is based on the understanding that police meet residents daily and can assist with making referrals.	
Objective/Activity 1: Connect Social Workers in the SLMPD to help Connect resources to the community					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SLMPD’s 6th district will pilot the use of social workers specifically to address juvenile issues, based in part on the Cops and Clinicians’ model of New, Haven, CT• Community CompStat will connect residents to services that can address crime					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of referrals made					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
SLMPD	Varies	Varies	16 months	May 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking: Referrals made from Community CompStat					
Budget amount/description of cost: No funds budgeted through Safe and Thriving St. Louis					

GOAL D: Foster positive interactions between community and law enforcement (police, courts, etc.)					
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments	
11-24 and adults	City resident with attention to the VRZ	SLMPD officers	N/A	This strategy is based on the understanding that police meet residents daily and can assist with making referrals.	
Objective/Activity 2: Connect law enforcement to community members					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VPC will identify communities in the City with and interest in strengthening police and community relationships and assess readiness of both parties to make change• Assist law enforcement in implementing and sustaining community defined performance measures through community policing strategies to restore community trust and increase cooperation.					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of events/trainings held by SLMPD in VRZ• Number of community residents who feel safe using social observation tool from OJJDP Diagnostic					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
SLMPD in partnership with VPC	Varies	Varies	16 months	May 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking: N/A					
Budget amount/description of cost: No funds budgeted through Safe and Thriving St. Louis					

GOAL D: Foster positive interactions between community and law enforcement (police, courts, etc.)					
Target Age Group	Eligibility Criteria	Outreach and referrals mechanisms	Total number to be served	Comments	
11-24 and adults	Youth who reside in the VRZ	N/A	N/A	This strategy is based on the understanding justice involved youth should help steer direction of the plan	
Objective/Activity 3: Connect the work of Deep End Advisory to YVPP					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide regular opportunities for Deep End Advisory to share progress with YVPP members					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of progress updates provided by Deep End Advisory					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Deep End Advisory and YVPP	Varies	Varies	16 months	May 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking: N/A					
Budget amount/description of cost: \$10,000 will be used to provide stipends to youth engaged in the Deep End Advisory’s Youth Advisory Council (see Goal B3) but no other funds budgeted through Safe and Thriving St. Louis.					

Goal E Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the Violence Reduction Zone					
Objective E1. Develop, articulate, and implement a shared vision of success, and the scale and scope of that vision					
Goal E Sustainability Goal will not directly serve youth; rather through this Goal, STSTL and YVPP will recruit youth leaders to provide critical input to meet two Objectives and Activities. Where applicable, youth leader criteria and other information are provided.					
Activity 1: Clearly define the desired results and measure the impact of the efforts by the YVPP and other affiliates toward meeting Goals A through D (A: improve safe space and connection availability and accessibility for youth; B: enhance neighborhood and community-based organizations to rebuild social cohesion; C: better coordination of city, nonprofit and volunteer efforts to improve neighborhood conditions; D: foster positive interactions between community and law enforcement.					
Target Age group: 17-24, youth leaders (including those who have been involved in the juvenile justice system) are recruited and invited to YVPP meetings and other meetings to engage in Activity 1 (definitions of desired results and what measures to be used to show impact)					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definitions of desired results for a total of 14 objectives covering Goals A-D will documented, reviewed and approved by YVPP (including youth participants) by April 2019 Impact measures will be drafted, reviewed and approved by YVPP (including youth participants) by May 2019 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ready by 21 and Washington University will provide monthly update and documents feedback each month Washington University, Ready by 21 and St. Louis Health Department will collectively develop workshop materials, implement workshops/review meetings and obtain evaluation in Feb, March April, October 2019 and April 2020. The final assessment review will take place August 2020 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Washington University Ready by 21 St. Louis Health Department	Reporting at monthly YVPP meetings; a two- hour workshop every 6 months at minimum	Varies	21 months	January 2019	September 2020

Goal E Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the Violence Reduction Zone					
Objective E1. Develop, articulate, and implement a shared vision of success, and the scale and scope of that vision					
Data Tracking: Documentation of monthly YVPP feedback; documentation of review/workshop meetings. Qualitative documentation on youth leaders' attendance/feedback at each monthly YVPP and workshops for Objective E1, Activity 1. Improved perceived efficacy in this area will be assessed by the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention (NFYVP) Toolkit Criteria #1 and #2, baseline and two follow-up assessments of YVPP members and representatives of affiliate organizations, including qualitative comments on a total of 11 questions.					
Activity 2: Nimble adapt to, and strategically influence, the changing context in which to implement the vision of success.					
Target Age Range: 17-24, youth leaders (including those who have been involved in the juvenile justice system) are recruited and invited to YVPP meetings and other meetings to engage in Activity 2 (adapt to changing context to implement).					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing number and levels of collaboration with St. Louis City and St. Louis County policy makers to advocate for youth and reduce youth violence Production of at least one policy brief report by YVPP collectively or in collaboration with the Office of St. Louis City Mayor and/or the St. Louis Police Department 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of YVPP response to policy changes or lack of new policies within the City of St. Louis, State of Missouri and Nationwide. Sustainability workshops include educational presentations by policy makers, their representatives and/or presentations by representatives from the City's Executive Branch. Document a number and contents of educational presentations 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Washington University Ready by 21 St. Louis Health Department	Reporting at monthly YVPP meetings; a two-hour workshop every 6 months at minimum; email announcements of relevant events	Varies	21 months	January 2019	September 2020

Goal E Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the Violence Reduction Zone

Objective E1. Develop, articulate, and implement a shared vision of success, and the scale and scope of that vision

Data Tracking # attended each relevant event. Improved perceived efficacy in this area will be assessed by the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention (NFYVP) Toolkit Criteria #8, baseline and two follow-up assessments of YVPP members and representatives of affiliate organizations, including qualitative comments on a total of 6 questions.

Goal E Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the Violence Reduction Zone

Objective E2. Create, implement and enhance multidisciplinary leadership, governance structure and collaborative partnership.

Activity 3: Authentically engage youth in all aspects of the effort.

Target Age group: 17-24, youth leaders (including those who have been involved in the juvenile justice system) are recruited and invited to YVPP meetings and other meetings to engage and, in some cases, lead the YVPP members through Activity 3 (Authentically engage youth)

Outcome/performance measure:

- Increase the number of youth leaders who participate in the YVPP activities who reside in or near the Violence Reduction Zone
- Increase the number of youth leaders who participate in the YVPP activities who was/have been involved in the City's juvenile justice system.
- Improve training sessions in youth-adult partnership
- Increase educational sessions for positive youth development
- Create youth leadership stipends
- Train volunteers to mentor youth leaders

Output/ process performance measure:

- Document recruitment and training protocols of youth leader development
- Document the process of youth involvement in the positive youth development educational materials
- Documentation of workshop feedback from youth on youth leader development training
- Documentation of youth leaders for innovations and ideas for juvenile justice system reform

Goal E Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the Violence Reduction Zone					
Objective E2. Create, implement and enhance multidisciplinary leadership, governance structure and collaborative partnership.					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
St. Louis City Health Department and Ready by 21 to take the lead in recruitment of youth and material development	Continuous	Varies	22 months	December 2018	September 2020
Data Tracking: # of youth leaders recruited who live in the Violence Reduction Zone; # of youth leaders recruited who have been involved in the juvenile justice system; # of youth leaders trained on youth-adult partnership; # of youth leaders trained on positive youth development education; # of mentors assigned to youth leaders. Improved perceived efficacy in this area will be assessed by the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention (NFYVP) Toolkit Criteria #3 and #4, baseline and two follow-up assessments of YVPP members and representatives of affiliate organizations, including qualitative comments on a total of 11 questions.					
Activity 4: Consistently and effectively engage community stakeholders in the collaboration.					
Target Age Range: 17-24, youth leaders (including those who have been involved in the juvenile justice system) are recruited and invited to YVPP meetings and other meetings to engage in the YVPP through Activity 4 (Engage community stakeholders in the collaboration)					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase transparent decision-making process across all levels of the Initiative's implementation • Increase youth leader engagement in decision making process • Monitoring and expanding new partners and support groups • Increase opportunities to recognize and reward stakeholders • Increase diversity of stakeholder racial and ethnic representations 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of how decisions are reached at YVPP and subcommittee meetings • Documentation of steps taken to increase racial and ethnic diversity 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End

Goal E Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the Violence Reduction Zone					
Objective E2. Create, implement and enhance multidisciplinary leadership, governance structure and collaborative partnership.					
Ready by 21 and City's Health Department will lead the effort	Quarterly at minimum; Some monthly	Varies	22 months	December 2018	September 2020
Data Tracking: Monthly YVPP meeting decisions made and process documentation; # of youth leaders participated in decision making; # of new partners and support groups (quarterly); # of racial and ethnic minorities attending and participating in decision makings at YVPP and subcommittee meetings (at each meeting). Improved perceived efficacy in this area will be assessed by the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention (NFYVP) Toolkit Criteria #5, baseline and two follow-up assessments of YVPP members and representatives of affiliate organizations, including qualitative comments on a total of 6 questions.					
Activity 5: Effectively manage the operations of a multidisciplinary partnership to achieve shared goals.					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear delineation of management roles and responsibilities • Annual documentation of the backbone organization (Ready by 21) regarding management systems, and roles and responsibilities 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative evaluation of the YVPP leadership and backbone organization's management and partnership achievement 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
St. Louis City Health Department takes the lead; Washington University takes the lead in assessment	Annually	NA	22 months	January 2019	September 2020
Data Tracking: Improved perceived efficacy in this area will be assessed by the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention (NFYVP) Toolkit Criteria #6, baseline and two follow-up assessments of YVPP members and representatives of affiliate organizations, including qualitative comments on a total of 5 questions. Qualitative comments to be shared subsequent to each assessment.					

Goal E Implement a sustainability framework for youth violence prevention focused on the Violence Reduction Zone					
Objective E2. Create, implement and enhance multidisciplinary leadership, governance structure and collaborative partnership.					
Activity 6: Secure and leverage a broad range of financial resources to support the capacities and functions needed to achieve and sustain the vision.					
Outcome/performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop inventories of federal, state, and local public funding sources as well as private philanthropic funding sources, including usual RFP release frequencies and timing • Regular monitoring of budget projection and cost incurred • Establish financial resource sub-committee within YVPP 					
Output/ process performance measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically plan funding request planning meetings 					
Entity Responsible	Frequency	Intensity	Duration of the service	Start	End
Read by 21 for inventory lead; City Health Department for financial tracking	As needed for planning; budget projection and cost reporting quarterly	Varies	22 months and beyond	December 2018	September 2020
Data Tracking: Quarterly financial reporting. Number and types of grant funding and similar funding requests submitted (cumulative). Number and amount of grant and other funding obtained (cumulative). Number of investments offered (cumulative). Improved perceived efficacy in this area will be assessed by the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention (NFYVP) Toolkit Criteria #7, baseline and two follow-up assessments of YVPP members and representatives of affiliate organizations, including qualitative comments on a total of 6 questions.					

Appendix 1: Community Analysis

There is no “one size fits all” solution to preventing youth violence. For our approach to be effective, it must ground itself in, and respond to, the specific context for violence in the City of St. Louis. A public health approach to violence prevention entails looking at the greater environment and the social determinants that are contributing to negative outcomes. If we want to alter this environment to produce better outcomes, we must understand the *history that led to the current conditions*, and we must also understand that *these conditions are being actively produced* by the systems we have in place.

This community analysis provides an overview of the St. Louis context. It addresses key aspects of geography, history, demographics, economy, policy and more that together create the reality we see today. In addition to looking at the City as a whole, it places a special emphasis on a high-crime section of North St. Louis that has been a focus of new St. Louis Police Chief John Hayden’s enforcement efforts, hereafter referred to as the “Violence Reduction Zone.”³¹ The plan focuses on this area because whenever possible it seeks to align with and build on existing efforts across the continuum of crime prevention efforts. It highlights disparities within Violence Reduction Zone and the city and greater region. It does this, not to pathologize place or approach the issue from a deficit perspective, but in order to emphasize that there are structural and environmental conditions that contribute to high rates of violence.

The analysis responds to four overarching questions:

- What is the community context for violence in St. Louis?
- What is the nature of violent crime in St. Louis?
- Where, and with whom, should violence prevention efforts focus?
- What is the experience of youth impacted by gun violence in St. Louis?

By addressing these questions, the analysis sets the stage for identifying strategies that are necessary, meaningful to youth, effective, and sustainable. It paints a picture of pervasive and persisting structural disadvantage, but also offers insights into where interventions can disrupt cycles of violence and achieve maximum impact.

No effort has ever been successful by calling out deficits to the exclusion of assets. It is important to cut through the haze of obvious challenges to take note of the assets upon which the futures of our communities must be built. Rather than relegating these to a footnote, this analysis calls out relevant “Assets and Bright Spots” throughout, in recognition of the many positive things that are already occurring in St. Louis. Our community has been resourceful and resilient, even in the face of immense challenges. Youth insights from our engagement sessions are woven in throughout relevant sections, and also summarized at the end of the analysis.

Several key findings emerge through this analysis. It highlights the structural disadvantage, concentrated poverty, and lack of opportunity endemic to high-violence neighborhoods. It shows that a very small subset of the City’s population is at much higher risk of being victims or perpetrators of violence. It examines the connection between victimization and future delinquency, and the role of

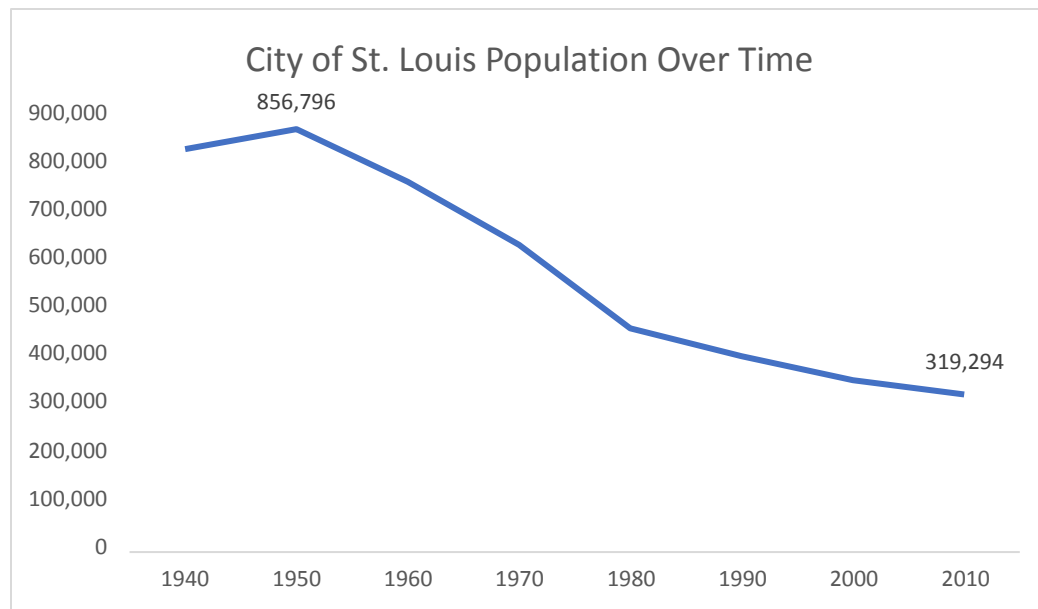
³¹ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (2018). *Commissioner Hayden highlights his first 100 days*. Retrieved from <https://www.slmpd.org/images/First100Days.pdf>

trauma at the individual and community levels in high-violence communities. These findings paint a picture of the many St. Louis youth who face tremendous barriers and numerous risk factors, and who must be at the center of any strategies intended to reduce violence.

Geographic and Historical Context

In the early 20th Century, St. Louis was the 4th largest city in the United States. The city recorded its peak population of over 850,000 people in the 1950 census. In the second half of the 20th century, a combination of multiple factors—among them deindustrialization, suburban sprawl and White flight, small and fixed city boundaries, deregulation and attendant corporate relocation—led to a long period of economic and population decline.³² Figure 1 illustrates the city's population loss. This population loss has contributed to the disinvestment and decline of many neighborhoods throughout St. Louis, particularly in the City's northern half.

Figure 1: St. Louis' Population Decline



Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census

A key geographic feature of St. Louis is that it is a small central city within a large metropolitan area. In addition, the City of St. Louis is not a part of the surrounding St. Louis County, but instead constitutes its own county. This unusual arrangement has contributed to disparities between the City of St. Louis and the greater region, which will be explored in later sections.

³² Primm, J. (1998). *The lion of the valley*. St. Louis, MO: Missouri Historical Society Press

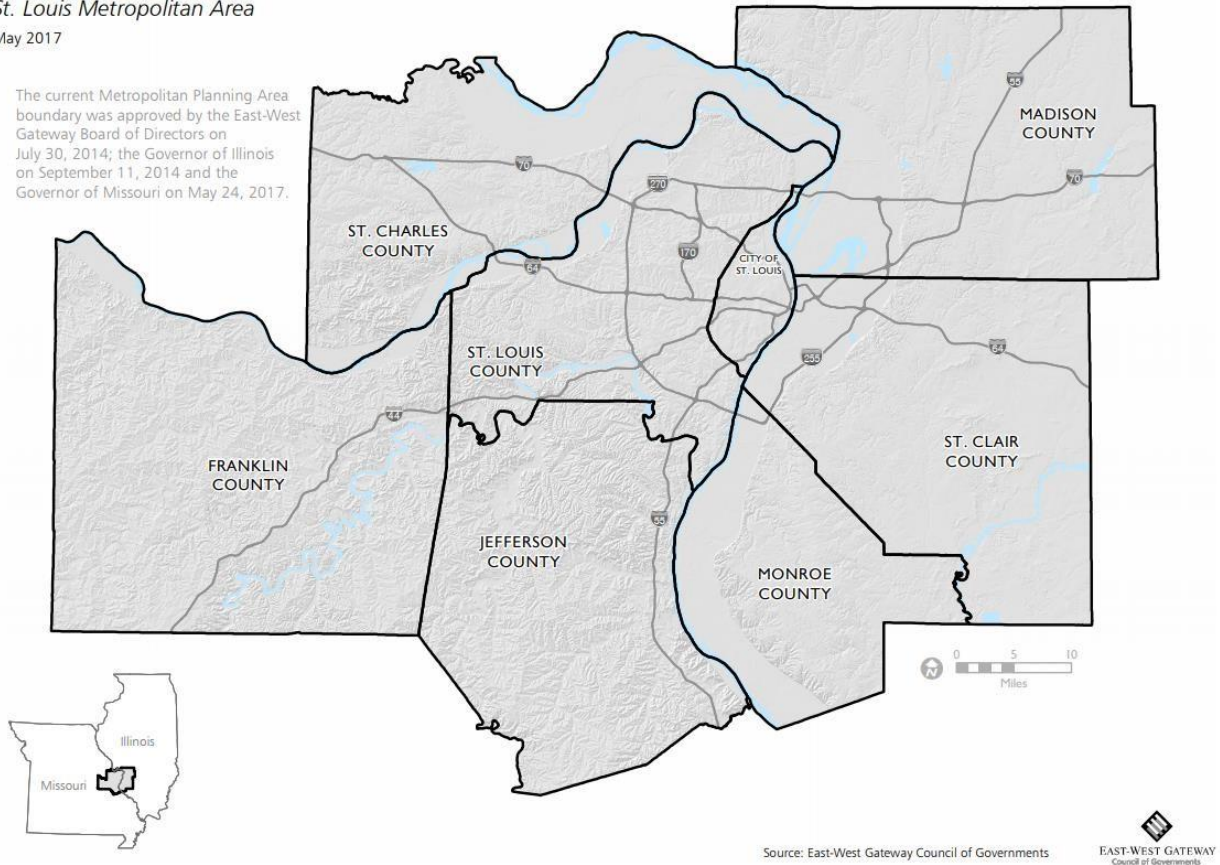
Figure 2: St. Louis Metro Area

East-West Gateway Region

St. Louis Metropolitan Area

May 2017

The current Metropolitan Planning Area boundary was approved by the East-West Gateway Board of Directors on July 30, 2014; the Governor of Illinois on September 11, 2014 and the Governor of Missouri on May 24, 2017.



Source: East-West Gateway Council of Governments

Demographics

In 2016, the City of St. Louis counted 316,030 residents, just over 11% of the Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) population. This low proportion of the region's population are effects of the city's small geographic size and the region's population sprawl. 12.7% of the City's residents—40,096 people—live in Violence Reduction Zone.³³ Table 1 shows the racial composition of the population. The City of St. Louis is a more racially diverse than the region and is split relatively evenly between the White and Black population. It is a "majority minority" city. The Violence Reduction Zone, on the other hand, is over 97% Black. 3.9% of The City of St. Louis residents claim Hispanic or Latino identity, higher than the proportion in the metro area, but less than 1% of residents in the Violence Reduction Zone claim Hispanic or Latino

³³ Social Explorer (2018). Social Explorer Tables: ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

identity. Out of the 50 largest metro areas in the United States, St. Louis has ranked as the 7th most segregated.³⁴

Table 1: Racial Composition

	Violence Reduction Zone	City of St. Louis	St. Louis MSA
Population	40,096	316,030	2,803,449
White Alone	1.60%	45.60%	76.30%
Black Alone	97.10%	47.90%	18.30%
American Indian and Alaskan Native Alone	0.10%	0.20%	0.20%
Asian Alone	0.20%	3.10%	2.40%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	0.00%	0.10%	0.00%
Some Other Race Alone	0.10%	0.90%	0.60%
Two or More Races	0.90%	2.20%	2.20%

Source: Social Explorer Tables (SE), ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

This area also has a high concentration of youth. 16% of the Violence Reduction Zone's population are youth aged 15-24. This is a larger proportion of the population than the City (13.6%) or the Metro area (12.9%).³⁵ This larger youth population means there are many young people at risk of being victimized by or involved in violence.

Employment and Economic Landscape

A look at the economic and employment landscape for the City of St. Louis and the Violence Reduction Zone offers a picture of an area that faces many challenges, especially for youth. The St. Louis region's economy has consistently grown in recent history, albeit slowly. However, the benefits of economic growth have been uneven, as the City of St. Louis has consistently performed worse than the

³⁴ East West Gateway (2015). *Where we stand: The strategic assessment of the St. Louis Region*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ewgateway.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/WWS2015.pdf>

³⁵ Social Explorer (2018). Social Explorer Tables: ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

region on metrics like unemployment rate.³⁶ Much of the region's poverty is concentrated in the St. Louis City and inner suburbs. While only 12.7% of the region's population lives below the federal poverty level, the proportion of city residents in poverty is over twice that—26.7%.³⁷ Within the Violence Reduction Zone, the number is even higher still: approximately 1/3 of residents are below the poverty level.³⁸ In addition, over 65% of residents in the Zone have incomes less than twice the poverty level, an indication that many who are above the poverty level are still struggling economically.³⁹ The poverty picture in the Zone is even starker for children and youth: over half of the population under age 18 is living in poverty.⁴⁰

Not surprisingly, high poverty rates within North St. Louis are coupled with high rates of unemployment. The 23.2% unemployment rate in the Zone is more than double the rate of the City and more than triple the rate in the MSA.⁴¹ Youth struggle especially with unemployment. 17.4% of youth aged 19-24 in the City of St. Louis are unemployed.⁴² While it is not possible to determine unemployment rates for specific age groups in the Violence Reduction Zone due to sample size issues, it is reasonable to infer that, based upon its higher overall rates of unemployment, its youth unemployment rates likely outpace the City and region. High unemployment rates contribute to lower median household incomes in the City and in the Violence Reduction Zone, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Median Household Income

	Violence Reduction Zone	City of St. Louis	St. Louis MSA
Median Household Income	\$24,051	\$36,809	\$56,726

Source: Social Explorer (2018). Social Explorer Tables: ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

Education can be a path for improving employment prospects. Unfortunately, educational attainment in the VRZ lags the City and region. Nearly one quarter of the population 25 years and over in the VRZ lacks a high school diploma, and just over 10% have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. The City also has a higher proportion of residents lacking a high school diploma than the metro area, but it actually has a higher proportion at the higher end of the educational scale: well over 30% of the City's population has a bachelor's degree or higher.

³⁶ U.S. Census Bureau (2010-2016). *S2301- Employment Status, 1-Year Estimates*. Retrieved from factfinder.census.gov

³⁷ Social Explorer Tables (SE), ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Social Explorer (2018). Social Explorer Tables: ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

⁴² Ibid.

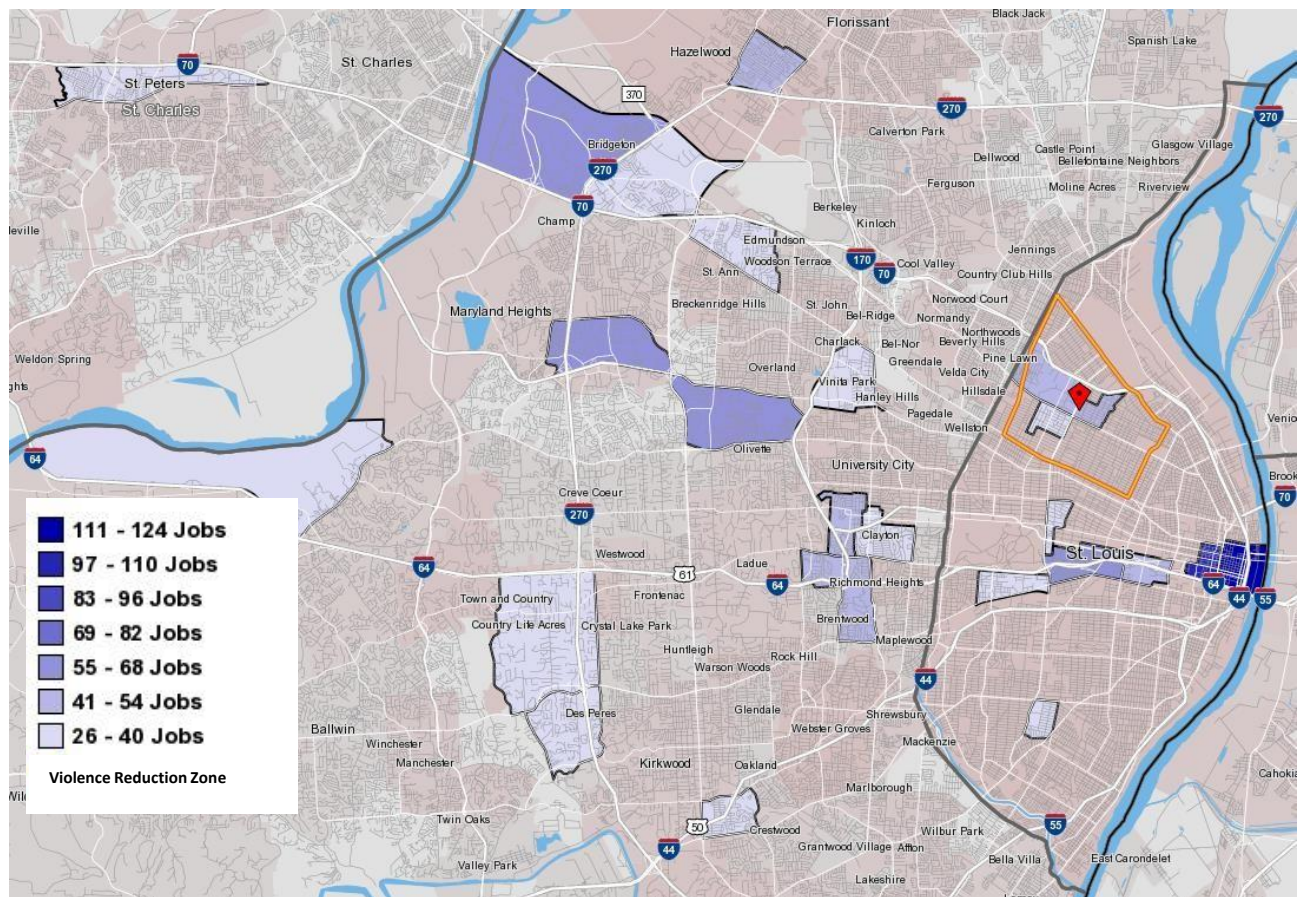
Table 3: Education Attainment

	Violence Reduction Zone	City of St. Louis	St. Louis MSA
Less than High School	23.8%	15.5%	9.1%
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency) or Some College	65.0%	51.6%	58.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	11.3%	32.9%	32.6%

Source: Social Explorer (2018). Social Explorer Tables: ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

In addition to education levels, another barrier to employment is job access. Figure 3 shows the top 25 census tracts of employment for workers under age 30 who live in the Violence Reduction Zone. It shows that many of them must travel long distances to reach their jobs. These commutes can be time-prohibitive, especially for those who do not own cars.

Figure 3: Top 25 Census Tracts of Employment for VRZ Residents Under Age 30 (2015)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2016. OnTheMap Application. Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program.
<http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

Youth aged 16-24 who are neither working or in school are sometimes referred to as “disconnected” or “opportunity” youth. From 2011-2015, 18.3% of youth in St. Louis City were considered opportunity youth.⁴³ The proportion of Black opportunity youth over this period was over 25%.⁴⁴ There are strong indicators that youth are looking for opportunities to engage productively and get jobs. In 2017, STL Youth Jobs placed 518 youth from underserved neighborhoods of St. Louis City in jobs, along with 122 youth from St. Louis County. Despite this, there were an additional 1,048 youth who applied but were unable to be placed due to program funding limitations. Youth focus groups reflect this reality, as jobs came up multiple times in the context of strategies to reduce violence.

Employment and Economic Landscape: Assets and Bright Spots

- Ranken Technical College’s **Ranken Community Development Corporation** teaches Ranken students the construction trades while building new homes in North St. Louis City.
- St. Louis Community College **Workforce Solutions Group** provides job training in in-demand fields.
- **St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE)** offers many training and education opportunities for job-seekers and partners with St. Louis Public Schools to offer Workforce High, a virtual 24 hour education experience.
- MERS Goodwill is opening an **Adult High School** for learners over the age of 21 to earn high school diplomas.
- **United States District Court Workforce Development** for returning citizens provides job training to those leaving the correctional system.
- Programs like **LaunchCode** and **NPower** work to provide inclusive pathways for residents to attain jobs in the tech sector.
- In 2017, **STL Youth Jobs** placed 518 youth from underserved St. Louis City neighborhoods in jobs.
- SLATE, NPower, STL Youth Jobs, and other organizations have formed the **STL Regional Youth Employment Coalition**, which seeks to foster economic empowerment of youth.
- **Project Connect** seeks to leverage the relocation of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency’s West headquarters to North St. Louis to promote neighborhood stability and reinvestment.

Insights for violence prevention:

- The Violence Reduction Zone is characterized by extremely high rates of poverty and unemployment, compared to both St. Louis City and the greater region. These statistics underscore the structural inequality facing the Violence Reduction Zone. While violence

⁴³ National Equity Atlas (2015). *Breakdown: Percent of 16 to 24 year olds not working or in school by race/ethnicity: St. Louis City, MO, 2015*. Retrieved from: [http://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Disconnected_youth/By_race~ethnicity:35181/St._Louis_City,_MO/false/Year\(s\):2015/](http://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Disconnected_youth/By_race~ethnicity:35181/St._Louis_City,_MO/false/Year(s):2015/)

⁴⁴ Ibid.

prevention efforts might not be able to resolve these systemic issues, any interventions must recognize this context of extreme economic need.

- Few employment programs and interventions have an explicit focus on neighborhoods experiencing the highest rates of violence. Employment programs should look to support those youth who face the most risk by targeting outreach and recruitment efforts to neighborhoods experiencing violence.

Housing and Built Environment

St. Louis' population loss—and resultant widespread vacancy—is a defining characteristic of daily life for many of its residents. According to “Broken Windows Theory,” vacant buildings and lots contribute to perceptions of danger and social disorder, which can lead to increased criminal behavior.⁴⁵

One recent study in Philadelphia found that “treating” vacant lots through interventions such as clearing debris and installing low fencing led to a statistically significant reduction in gun violence in neighborhoods where lots were treated.⁴⁶ The Office of Justice Program’s report for the City of St. Louis recommends deploying city services strategically to reduce the physical disorder found in high-violence neighborhoods.⁴⁷

A recent study on “Urban Prairie” in St. Louis used multiple data sources to determine that between 33,073 and 48,836 parcels in City of St. Louis are either vacant lots or vacant structures—25.7%-40.0% of all parcels in the city.⁴⁸ The same dataset shows that 43.5%-62.2% of parcels in the Violence Reduction Zone are vacant. Figure 4 shows the low end of this estimate for “Urban Prairie”—vacant lots or structures—in the Violence Reduction Zone, referred to as “Hayden’s Rectangle” in this map.

⁴⁵ Kelling, G. and Wilson, J. (1982, March). Broken windows. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/>

⁴⁶ Branas et al. (2018). Citywide cluster randomized trial to restore blighted vacant land and its effects on violence, crime, and fear. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*.

⁴⁷ OJP Diagnostic Center (2017, March). *Diagnostic Analysis for the City of St. Louis, Missouri*.

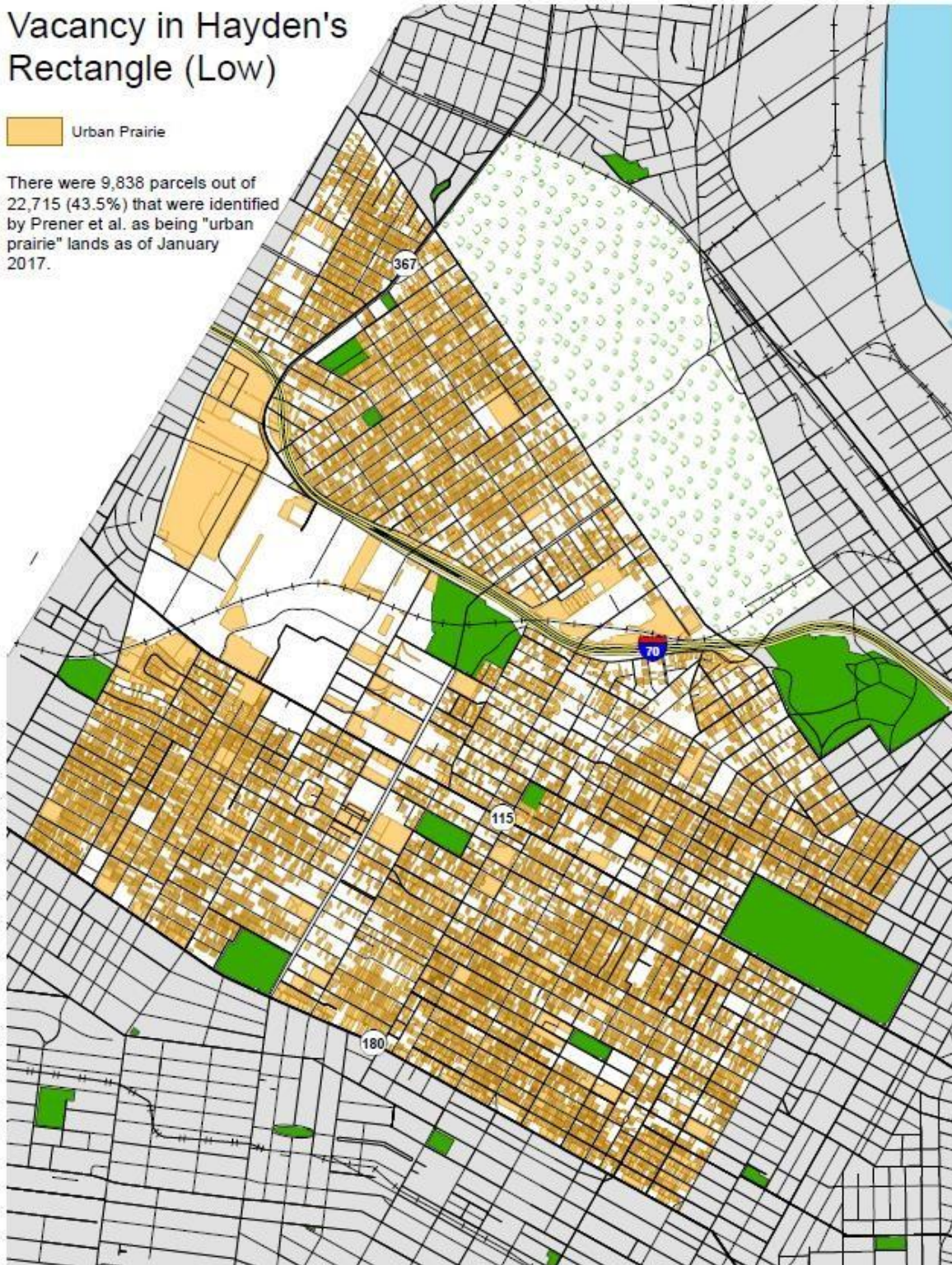
⁴⁸ Prener et al. (2018). St. Louis’s “urban prairie”: Vacant land and the potential for revitalization. *Journal of Urban Affairs*.

Figure 4: Widespread Vacancy
in VRZ

Vacancy in Hayden's Rectangle (Low)

Urban Prairie

There were 9,838 parcels out of 22,715 (43.5%) that were identified by Prener et al. as being "urban prairie" lands as of January 2017.



Map and data produced by Christopher Prener, Ph.D.

Community organizers under the auspices of the St. Louis Promise Zone, a federal designation for a geographic area with high unemployment, crime, and vacancy, held a canvassing day in 2017 to speak to North St. Louis City residents. The St. Louis Promise Zone covers all of North St. Louis City and much of North St. Louis County, and includes the Violence Reduction Zone area. After speaking with over 200 residents, “Neighborhoods” arose as the top concern category, and “Vacant/dilapidated buildings/lots” was the top specific concern within the neighborhood category.⁴⁹ In youth focus groups, it was recommended that we fix up vacant or abandoned houses, and one young person described a safe community as “not hearing gunshots, having street lights, no vacant houses.”

In addition to safety factors, chronic vacancy can also mean that residents have limited access to community resources and employment opportunities within their neighborhoods. This means residents may have to travel significant distances to visit a child’s school, go to the doctor, shop for groceries, or reach their job. This can severely restrict access to resources and opportunities for the 21.4% of households in the City of St. Louis and 31.9% of households in the Violence Reduction Zone that do not have access to a car.⁵⁰



Vacant and deteriorated buildings on St. Louis Avenue in North St. Louis.

Stable, affordable housing positively affects many outcomes related to well-being. In fact, the single act of securing safe, decent, and affordable housing is one of the most effective ways to help

⁴⁹ St. Louis Promise Zone + Forward Through Ferguson (2017). Canvass Day Response Analysis Summary.

⁵⁰ U.S. Census Bureau (2016). *DP04-Selected Housing Characteristics, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*. Retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_S2301&prodType=table.

individuals and households break the cycle of poverty. Because of this, any discussion related to addressing poverty should include affordable housing. When people live with the constant threat of losing their home, or the oppressive stress from being overly rent-burdened, or the persistent fear that the home they live in is not safe, they cannot thrive. When the cost of housing is limited to the generally accepted standard of 30% of household income, lives improve. Below the 30% threshold, individuals can spend resources raising their families, investing in their homes and education, pursuing their interests, putting down roots in their community, and gaining some control over their destiny.

In recent years, the cost of housing and the cost of utilities have both risen faster than incomes for many families. When families are burdened by the high cost of housing, they must make difficult budgetary choices. When the cost of housing commands more of a family's household income, families must decide between paying for rent, food, transportation, childcare or health care. 28.3% of households in the metro area devote 30% or more of their income toward housing costs, the traditional standard for a household being deemed “housing cost-burdened.”⁵¹ In St. Louis, this number is 39.1%, and within the Violence Reduction Zone it is higher still: 49.2%.⁵² When families pay such a high percentage of their income on housing they become at risk of falling behind on their rent and vulnerable to losing their home.

When families lose their homes and become homeless, they lose their foundational stability that helps the family stay united, strong and healthy. Aside from the sense of failure and loss, when people are removed from their neighborhoods, they become cut off from their emotional and spiritual support network of friends, neighbors and relatives. Becoming homeless disrupts family life in deeply personal ways. Studies show us that children who are homeless experience a trauma and chaos that often results in greater absenteeism, lower grades, stunted academic achievement and higher rates of drop out. In the 2016-2017 school year, 5,525 St. Louis Public Schools students were considered homeless, over a quarter of the district's total enrollment.^{53,54} This instability and transiency can also be major risk factors for violence.⁵⁵

Housing and Built Environment: Assets and Bright Spots

- BFL's **Clean Sweep Program** is targeting four North St. Louis neighborhoods for cleanup, which includes demolishing vacant buildings, cleaning up trash, and clearing plant overgrowth.
- Metro Transit's **Gateway Go Program** offered subsidized transit passes for youth to reach employment in summer 2018.
- The **St. Louis Vacancy Collaborative** is a coalition of government officials, nonprofits, and community members that are focused on addressing vacancy.

⁵¹ Social Explorer (2018). Social Explorer Tables: ACS 2016 (5-Year Estimates); Social Explorer and US Census Bureau

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2018). *Homeless District Results*. Retrieved from: <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/qs-Homeless-Dist-Results-2012-2017.pdf>

⁵⁴ Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2018). *School Finance Report*. Retrieved from: https://apps.dese.mo.gov/MCDS/Reports/SSRS_Print.aspx

⁵⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (n.d.). *Youth violence: Risk and protective factors*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>

- Voters approved a sales tax increase to go toward planning and engineering a **North-South MetroLink** line, which would serve many high-need communities.
- The St. Louis **Community Development Financial Institution Coalition** is a group of financial institutions committed to providing financial services to underserved areas.
- St. Louis' **Continuum of Care** plan takes a Housing First approach to addressing homelessness.
- The St. Louis City **Neighborhood Stabilization Team** serves as a catalyst bringing together stakeholders to identify solutions to neighborhood problems.
- The St. Louis Development Corporation's **Facade Grant Program** offers grants of up to \$20,000 for improvements to the facades of commercial or mixed-use properties.
- In 2016, the City won a **Choice Neighborhoods** grant to revitalize housing and provide services to residents on the Near North Side of St. Louis.
- The LimeBike dock-free bike share company has an agreement with the City to serve designated "Equity and Inclusion" neighborhoods.

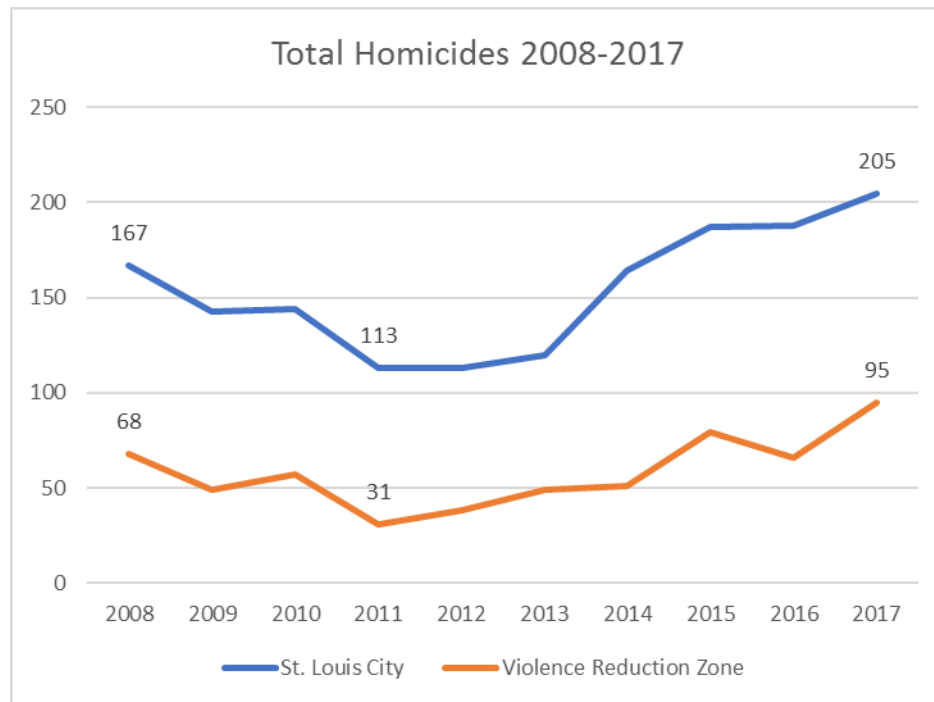
Insights for violence prevention:

- Vacant buildings and lots are a defining characteristic of the built environment in the Violence Reduction Zone. Vacant buildings are a prominent source of complaints from area residents and are highly visible nuisances that contribute to a sense of social disorder in the neighborhood. Violence prevention efforts in the VRZ should include strategies to address vacancy.
- The physical environment in neighborhoods experiencing violence is a major concern for residents. In addition to vacant buildings, violence prevention efforts should focus on other aspects of the physical environment that are concerns for residents, including lighting and trash.

Violence in St. Louis

Violent crime in St. Louis is at a crisis point. Recent years have seen a steady increase in homicides in a city that was already considered one of the most violent in America. Figure 5 shows that homicides in the City of St. Louis reached a relative low in 2011 and 2012, but have increased every year since then, until the 2017 homicide total nearly *doubled* the numbers from 2011 and 2012.

Figure 5: Homicides in VRZ on the rise



Source: St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department

Other forms of violent crime, including Aggravated Assault with a Firearm, show similar trends.⁵⁶ While we know that many forms of violence are on the rise, the exact causes for this surge are difficult to identify. This section unpacks what we *do* know about the characteristics of violent crime in St. Louis, so that prevention and intervention efforts can focus where they are likely to have the most impact. It shows that violence in the city is concentrated in certain parts of St. Louis, particularly in the Violence Reduction Zone.

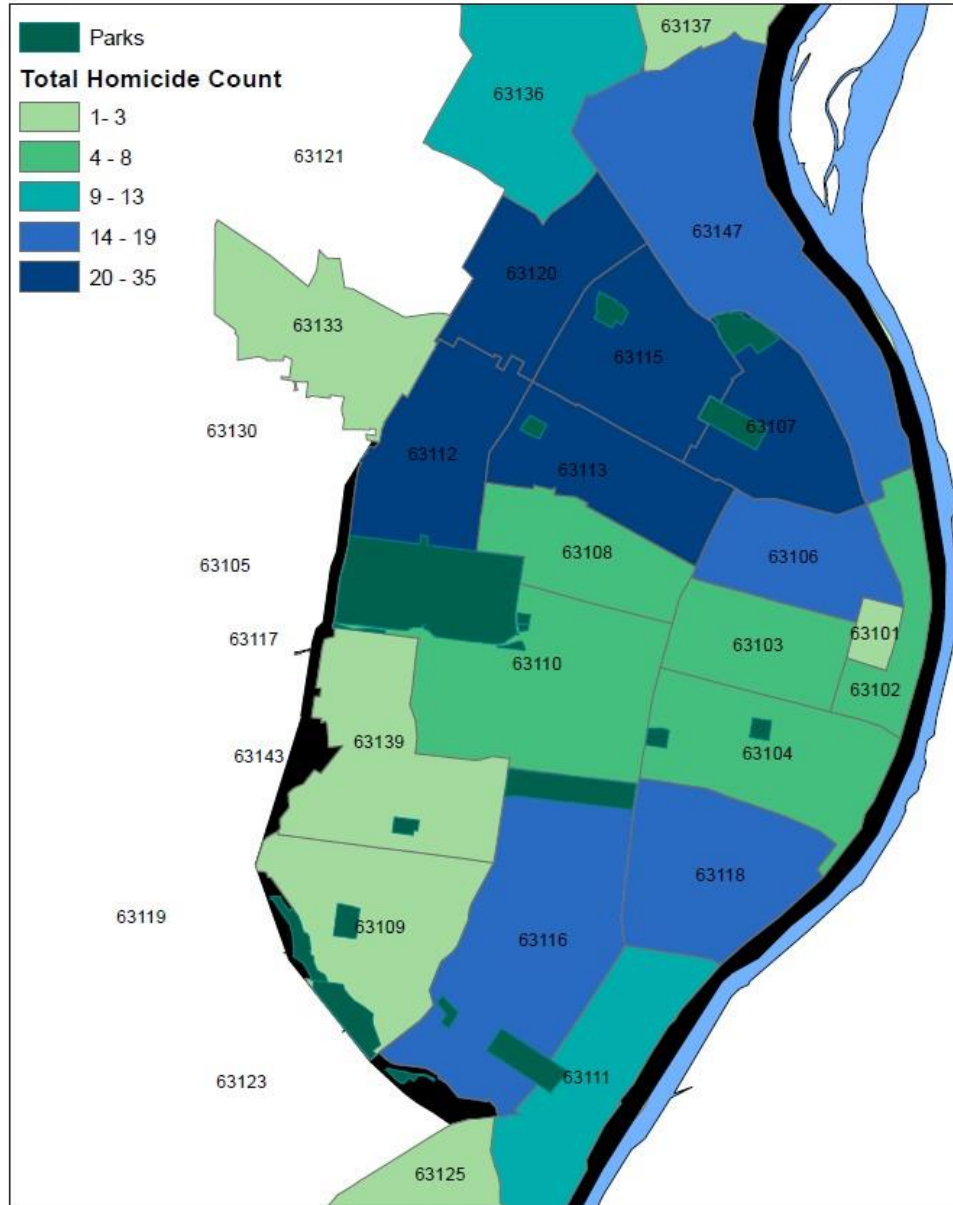
Breaking down 2017 homicides by zip codes shows that some zip codes had zero homicides, while the 63120 zip code suffered 26.⁵⁷ The Violence Reduction Zone, although it contains just over 10% of the city's population, accounted for nearly half (46.3%) of the city's homicides and 31.4% of aggravated assaults with a firearm in 2017.⁵⁸ Figure 6 shows the geographic distribution of homicides that occurred between January 1, 2017 and May 31, 2018. Four of the zip codes with the highest concentration of homicides—63120, 63115, 63113, and 63112—encompass the Violence Reduction Zone.

⁵⁶ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, response to data request

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Figure 6: Homicide Counts by Zip Code—January 1, 2017-May 31, 2018



Source: Prepared by City of St. Louis Department of Health, using St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Data

The risk of being victimized by violence or being a suspect of a violent crime is also not evenly distributed among demographic groups. A 2017 report by the Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center examined cases of gun violence in St. Louis from 2011-2015. They found that men accounted for 64.7% of gun violence victims and 92.6% of suspects, that 77.5% of victims and 93.8% of suspects are Black, and that those aged 15-24 are most likely to be a victim or suspect of gun violence.⁵⁹ The report also finds that, although Black males ages 15-24 make up less than 5% of the city's population, suspects in the majority of gun violence cases come from this demographic group.⁶⁰ In 2017, over 99% of all

⁵⁹ OJP Diagnostic Center (2017, March). *Diagnostic Analysis for the City of St. Louis, Missouri*.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

known homicide suspects were Black, and 98% were male.⁶¹ The Diagnostic Center report recommends that Law Enforcement take a “Hot People in Hot Places” approach, in recognition of the fact that “a small number of high-rate offenders commit shootings at specific places and times.”⁶²

The same report looked at circumstances of homicides in 2013 (this year was chosen because data was more complete). They found that, in the cases where the relationship between the victim and offender was determined, the offender was known to the victim in over 80% of those cases.⁶³ The report also highlights that, although the circumstances of the homicide was unknown in 17.5% of cases, arguments or fights were the most frequent circumstances for homicides (23.3%), followed by drugs (19.2%) and retaliation (15.0%).⁶⁴ Taken together, these data paint a picture of many homicides not being random acts of violence, but instead stemming from interpersonal disputes. This is in line with recent research that found that private conflict in a neighborhood is the strongest predictor of future crime.⁶⁵

Figure 7 shows the location of homicides in the St. Louis in 2016, mapped with poverty rates in the region. This map highlights the structural aspect of the violence problem: certain community environmental conditions, like poverty, are highly correlated with higher levels of violence.

⁶¹ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (2017). *2017 UCR Homicide Analysis*. Retrieved from: https://www.slmpd.org/images/2017_Homicide_Stats_for_Website.pdf

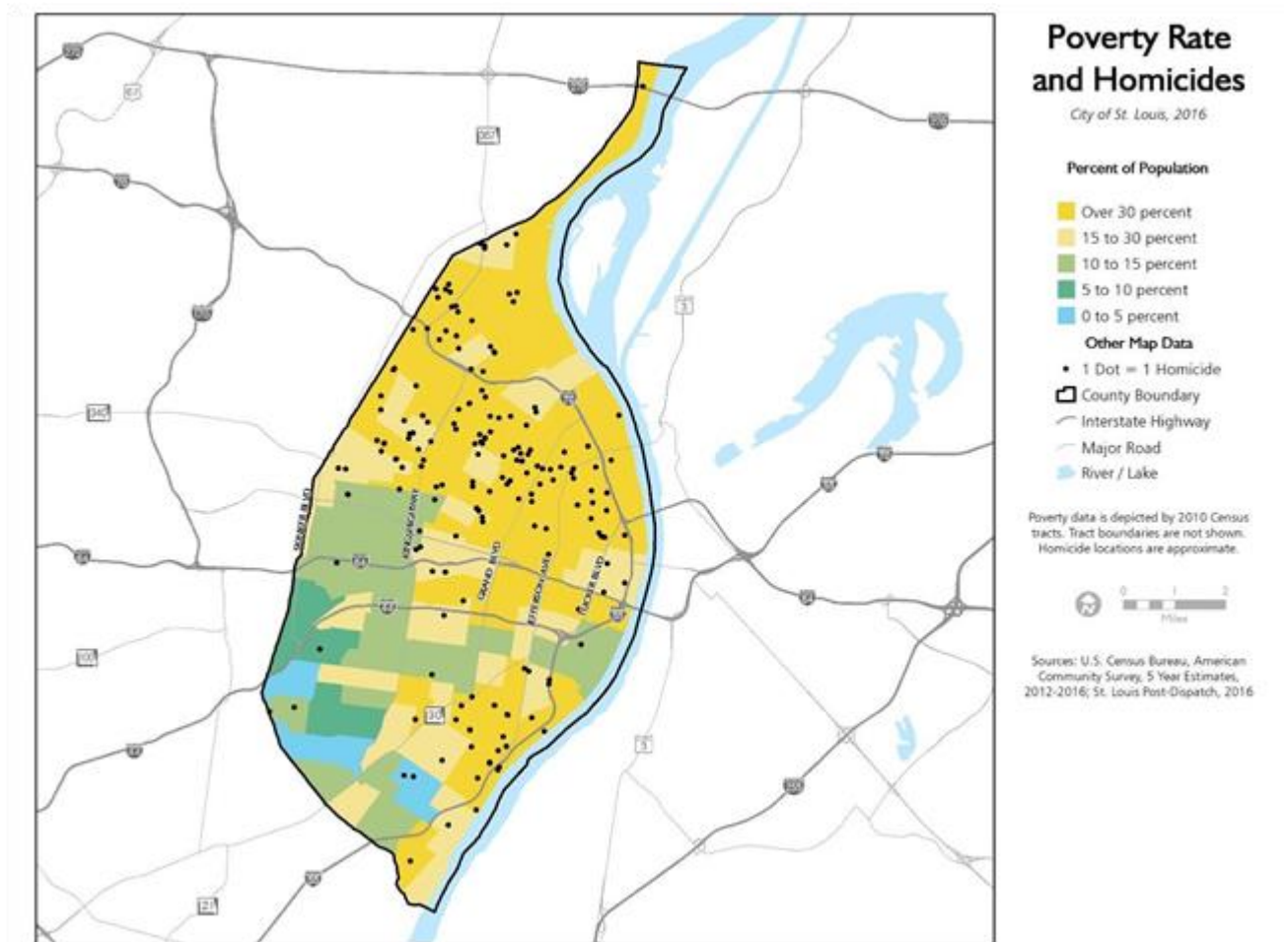
⁶² OJP Diagnostic Center (2017, March). *Diagnostic Analysis for the City of St. Louis, Missouri*.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Tumminelli O’Brien, D. & Sampson, R. (2015). Public and private spheres of neighborhood disorder. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 52(4).

Figure 7: Poverty Rates and Homicides



Source: East-West Gateway Council of Governments

The relationship between guns and violence in St. Louis is strong. Missouri has among the loosest gun regulations in the country, allowing residents to carry a weapon without a permit.⁶⁶ In 2017, the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department recovered 2,085 firearms (Note: excluded from this number are 898 firearms recovered as part of a Gun Buyback program), indicating that criminals have easy access to firearms.⁶⁷ This access could contribute to the fact that St. Louis far outpaces the national average for homicides attributed to guns: 86% of homicides in St. Louis used guns in 2013, versus the national average of 69%.⁶⁸ In 2017, the proportion of homicides in City of St. Louis involving guns was even higher, at 94%.⁶⁹ Youth in our focus groups spoke of being accustomed to gun violence, speaking of “shootings everyday” in their neighborhood, and how they “don’t blink” anymore when they hear gunshots. These anecdotal experiences are backed up by quantitative data: the City’s “ShotSpotter”

⁶⁶ Missouri Senate Bill 656 (2016). Retrieved from:

https://www.senate.mo.gov/14info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=28098814

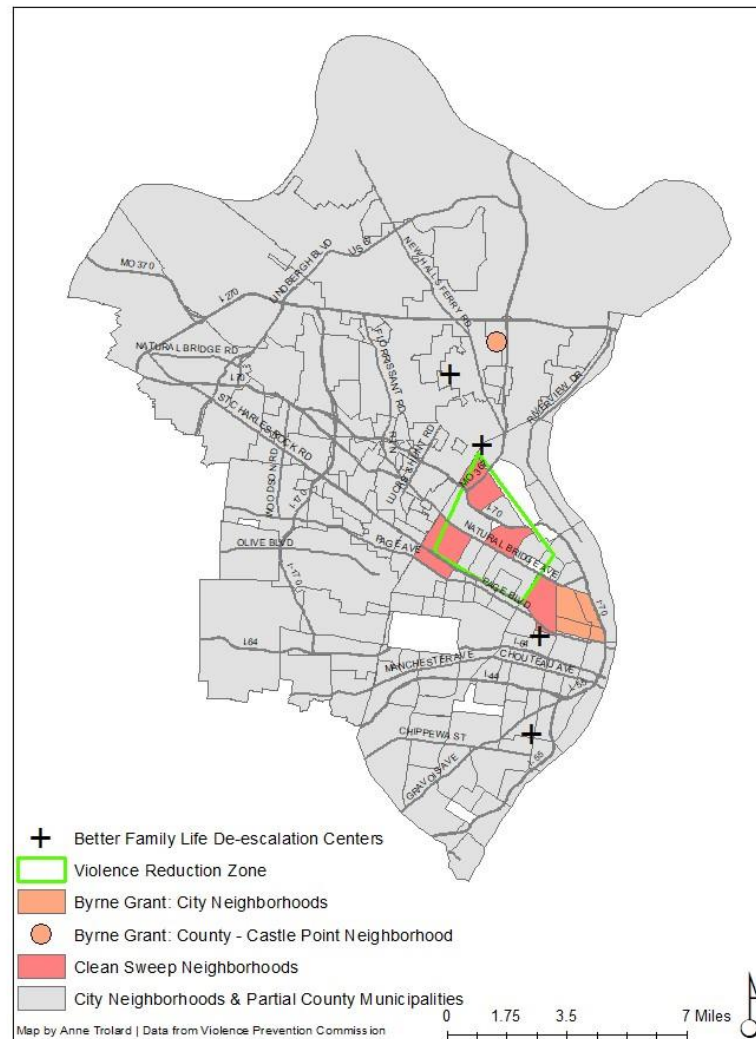
⁶⁷ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, response to data request

⁶⁸ OJP Diagnostic Center (2017, March). *Diagnostic Analysis for the City of St. Louis, Missouri*.

⁶⁹ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (2017). *2017 UCR Homicide Analysis*. Retrieved from: https://www.slmpr.org/images/2017_Homicide_Stats_for_Website.pdf

system, which automatically detects gunshots and alerts the police, registered 2,856 calls in the Violence Reduction Zone in 2017 alone, nearly *eight per day*.⁷⁰

Figure 8: Violence Prevention Efforts



Violence Prevention: Assets and Bright Spots

- The St. Louis Area **Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program** will place social workers at four area hospitals to work with victims of violence, interrupt the cycle of violence, and promote alternatives to retaliation.
- City of St. Louis Department of Health's **Innovations in Community Based Crime Reduction** grant is focusing on the Near North Side of St. Louis.
- BFL is operating **Gun Violence De-Escalation Centers** at three churches in St. Louis City.

⁷⁰ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, response to data request

- The Crime Victims Center offers **crisis intervention** for victims of aggravated assault.
- The North Newstead Association and the police department are partnering to host **“Take Back the Park”** events in 3 North St. Louis parks.
- St. Louis is a member site of the **National Public Safety Partnership**, which encourages collaboration and coordination of local crime reduction strategies with Department of Justice federal agencies.
- Blueprint4SummerSTL is a free online directory of summer camp programs in the St. Louis Metro Area with the aim of making it easier for families to access opportunities for enrichment and summer learning
- Nearly \$1M is earmarked and allocated annually by the Board of Alderman through the Public Safety Committee to fund programs violence prevention programs for at-risk youth.
- St. Louis is rich with world class institutions such as the Science Center, the St. Louis Art Museum, the Zoo, the Missouri Botanical Gardens, the Arch that offer free experiences to youth and families.

Insights for violence prevention:

- St. Louis’ high rates of violence are concentrated among a relatively small number of highly at-risk individuals. Violence prevention efforts should focus on reaching these individuals, who are unlikely to engage in traditional programming.
 - Violence in St. Louis is not typically random, but rather the result of personal conflict that has escalated. Interventions should seek to equip individuals with conflict resolution and de-escalation skills.
-

Gang Activity

Gang activity in St. Louis is widespread but fragmented. St. Louis Police have documented 127 gang profiles and 3,193 gang members in the City of St. Louis.⁷¹ 14% of homicides in 2013 involved a documented gang member as suspect, but this is likely an underestimate, as they only include gang members the police have been able to document.⁷² Police note that gangs in St. Louis are unstructured and localized, and “base their affiliations on family members, friends, school membership and (the) block where they grew up or on which they live.”⁷³ These gangs lack the hierarchy traditionally associated with gangs, and gang members can “cross over into other parent gangs and subsets.”⁷⁴ In addition, more informal groups or crews that may not be an identified gang have grown more common in recent years.⁷⁵ The police cite identity and protection as key reasons youth join gangs. Common criminal violations related to gang members include narcotics trafficking, firearm violations, and assaults.

⁷¹ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, response to data request

⁷² OJP Diagnostic Center (2017, March). *Diagnostic Analysis for the City of St. Louis, Missouri*.

⁷³ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, response to data request

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (2016). *2016 Annual Report to the Community*. Retrieved from: http://www.slmpd.org/images/2016_Annual_Report.pdf

Conversations with youth about their experiences with gangs found widely varying perspectives, from “everyone is in a gang or know somebody in a gang” to “I don’t even know no gangs.” Although information on gangs in St. Louis is limited, the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department has recently reorganized and is in the process of updating gang databases, which should lead to more robust information in the future.

Gang Activity: Assets and Bright Spots

- The Police Department offers the **Gang Resistance Education and Training program** (G.R.E.A.T) at elementary and middle schools.
- The Missouri Department of Corrections runs a **Gang CPR** program in partnership with the Police Department, which provides intensive supervision and support for gang-involved individuals upon their release.

Insights for violence prevention:

- Because St. Louis does not have large hierarchical gangs that span the city, gang prevention and intervention efforts should take a localized, neighborhood-level approach.

Law Enforcement

In 2013, City of St. Louis regained control of its police force, something it had not had for over 150 years.⁷⁶ This change gives the mayor authority over the Public Safety Director and the Police Commissioner (Chief) and departmental priorities. This change is important, and the police department’s annual operating budget of over \$200,000,000 makes up nearly one-fifth of the city’s overall budget and about 40% of the general operating fund.⁷⁷ This budget includes a \$6,000 annual pay increase for all uniformed officers in the department, which comes as the result of City voters passing a special sales tax.⁷⁸ Despite this raise, the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department has a \$4,000 lower starting salary than St. Louis County, albeit with more generous pension benefits.^{79,80,81}

⁷⁶ Greenblatt, A. (2013, August 28). After 152 years, St. Louis gains control of its police force. *National Public Radio*. Retrieved from: <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2013/08/28/216489820/after-152-years-st-louis-gains-control-of-its-police-force>

⁷⁷ City of St. Louis (2018). *Executive Summary: FY2019 Annual Operating Plan*. Retrieved from: <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/budget/documents/upload/FY19-AOP-Executive-Summary-to-BOA.pdf>

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ City of St. Louis (2018). *Applying to: Police officer (trainee)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/jobs/job-detail.cfm?job=1671&detail=1>

⁸⁰ Deere, S. (2017, June 22). Police officers getting a 30 percent pay raise in St. Louis County. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Retrieved from: https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/police-officers-getting-a-percent-pay-raise-in-st-louis/article_99dc3da8-fd37-531e-b3be-e906e015f60f.html

⁸¹ Wicentowski, D. (2017, July 21). St. Louis police want more pay, but no one is talking about pensions. *Riverfront Times*. Retrieved from: <https://www.riverfronttimes.com/newsblog/2017/07/21/st-louis-police-want-more-pay-but-no-one-is-talking-about-pensions>

In 2016, St. Louis had 51.9 Police Department employees per 10,000 residents, the seventh-highest number among the 100 most populous cities in the US.⁸² Even so, the Police Department is over 100 officers short of its authorized number. One way it plans to address this gap is by bringing back its Cadet Program, in which City residents ages 18-25 can get paid to receive training and attend community college, with the goal of enrolling in the Police Academy.

In 2015, in response to strained relations between the community and the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department as a result of multiple officer-involved shootings, the City of St. Louis instituted a Civilian Oversight Board to investigate allegations of police misconduct.⁸³ In 2018, the Oversight Board was granted subpoena powers.⁸⁴ Youth we spoke to had mixed perspectives on the police, with some calling for greater police presence in their neighborhoods and others saying they feel *less safe* when police are around.

Law Enforcement: Assets and Bright Spots

- The St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department started **Operation Polar Cops** in 2016. This is an ice cream truck operated by the police department, which offers free ice cream and gives police officers a chance to interact with the community.
- The US Attorney's Office is **trying more gun cases in Federal Court**, citing their high conviction rate and better resources upon release.
- Police Commanders and St. Louis City departments hold monthly **CityStat meetings** to address problem properties and public safety issues.
- The Police Department's **Real Time Crime Center** integrates surveillance technologies to monitor and deter crime.
- The Police Department has started a **"Park and Walk" program** to encourage officers to get out of their cars.
- The **Gun Crime Intelligence Center** analyzes shell casings from shooting scenes to aid prosecution and find connections between cases.
- The **US Marshals Fugitive Task Force** works to remove violent offenders from communities by arresting individuals with outstanding warrants for drug and gun offenses.

Insights for violence prevention:

- The Police Department will be better positioned to engage in proactive policing and community engagement activities when it is at full strength.

⁸² Police employment, officers per capita rates for U.S. cities (n.d.). *Governing*. Retrieved from: <http://www.governing.com/gov-data/safety-justice/police-officers-per-capita-rates-employment-for-city-departments.html>

⁸³ City of St. Louis, MO (n.d.). *Board Bill No. 208*. Retrieved from: <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/city-laws/board-bills/boardbill.cfm?bbDetail=true&BBId=9608>

⁸⁴ City of St. Louis, MO (n.d.). *Board Bill No. 233*. Retrieved from: <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/city-laws/board-bills/boardbill.cfm?bbDetail=true&BBId=10998>

Juvenile Justice

Table 4 details referrals to the juvenile justice system in 2017, broken down by the referred youth's home zip code and also by the zip code of the alleged offense. Youth living within the Violence Reduction Zone account for over 23% of referrals to the juvenile justice system. Overall, referrals have declined dramatically in St. Louis City: the number of referrals was more than halved between 2011 and 2017, from 2,378 to 1,004 as part of the Disproportionate Minority Contact Reduction efforts.⁸⁵

Table 4: 2017 Juvenile Justice Referrals 1

	Violence Reduction Zone	City of St. Louis
Referrals by Youth's Home Zip Code	135	586
Referrals by Offense Zip Code	61	484

Source: Juvenile Courts

There is a significant relationship between victimization and offending, which can lead to a cycle of violence. A National Institute of Justice Study found that those who had been abused or neglected as children were significantly more likely to be arrested as a juvenile, arrested as an adult, and be arrested for a violent crime.⁸⁶ The relationship between childhood abuse and neglect and later criminality was especially strong for Black youth.⁸⁷

One survey of St. Louis youth under formal supervision of the juvenile justice system found that 67% had been threatened with harm in the past year, and 22% had been shot at with a gun in that time frame.⁸⁸ After being victimized, youth may feel compelled to retaliate for their own safety. Further violence may also reflect trauma and unmet behavioral health needs. One recent study found that victimization by a family, peer, or gang member was significantly related with engaging in violence in the future.⁸⁹ This cycle can be exacerbated by close physical proximity between victims and perpetrators. The Crime Victim Advocacy Center of St. Louis reports that their most frequent request that they are unable to meet is assistance with relocation. When victims are unable to relocate, they are often forced to return to an unsafe environment where they experienced trauma, and where they run an increased risk of encountering the perpetrator.

⁸⁵ Twenty-Second Judicial Court of Missouri, Family Court—Juvenile Division, response to data request

⁸⁶ Wisdom, C. and Maxfield, M. (2001). An update on the "Cycle of Violence." *National Institute of Justice: Research in Brief*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/184894.pdf>

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Twenty-Second Judicial Court of Missouri, Family Court—Juvenile Division, response to data request

⁸⁹ Zimmerman et al. (2017). Does the strength of the victim-offender overlap depend on the relationship between

the victim and perpetrator? *Journal of Criminal Justice*, Volume 48.

Juvenile Justice: Assets and Bright Spots

- The St. Louis Family Court received a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to provide **TARGET (Trauma Affect Regulation: Guide for Education & Treatment) training** for all staff in the juvenile detention facility.
- The St. Louis Family Court supports **Neighborhood Accountability Boards**, which seek to offer offending youth the chance to repair harm to their community and avoid formal processing.

Insights for violence prevention:

- Youth already involved with the juvenile justice system and those who have been victims of crimes are at increased risk of future offending and should be a focus for support.

Schools

Public Schools in St. Louis have faced challenges but have also shown major recent improvements. St. Louis Public Schools celebrated a major victory in 2017, after regaining the full accreditation status that it lost in 2007.⁹⁰ Despite the academic progress, the district has struggled with declining enrollment: from 25,046 K-12 students in 2010 to 21,754 in 2017.⁹¹ This can be attributed to the City losing population during that time, along with competition from private and charter schools.

One area in which schools intersect with youth delinquency and violence is through exclusionary discipline. When students are suspended from school, they may not have a safe place to go, which can increase their risk of delinquency. Table 5 shows the number of out-of-school suspensions at St. Louis Public Schools high schools, along with public charter high schools. It is worth noting that the high schools featured with the highest rates of out-of-school suspensions per student enrolled—Confluence Preparatory Academy and Lift for Life High School—are both charter schools. Several of the high schools also have extremely low attendance rates, indicating many youths that are at risk for becoming involved in dangerous activity.

⁹⁰ Taketa, K. (2017, January 11). St. Louis Public Schools fully accredited once again. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

⁹¹ Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2010, 2017). *District Report Card*. Retrieved from <https://mcde.dese.mo.gov/guided inquiry/School%20Report%20Card/District%20Report%20Card.aspx>

Table 5: Exclusionary Discipline at City of St. Louis High Schools

High School	Total Number of Students (2015)	Out-of-School Suspensions (2015)	Out-of-School Suspensions per Student (2015)	911 Calls (2016-2017)	4-Year Graduation Rates (2016-2017)	Attendance Rates (2016-2017)
Vashon	589	154	0.26	116	53.1%	49.7%
Roosevelt	486	87	0.18	146	50.6%	65.0%
Sumner	348	106	0.30	1	63.4%	72.5%
Clyde C. Miller	664	63	0.09	25	92.7%	90.3%
Northwest	371	38	0.10	44	79.6%	87.6%
Soldan International Studies	591	77	0.13	29	94.8%	80.1%
Gateway Science Academy	244	16	0.07	22	89.5%	80.3%
Confluence Preparatory Academy	585	370	0.63	51 ^x	86.7%	66.1%
Lift for Life Academy High School	335	127	0.38	26 ^x	85.7%	74.7%

Source: Office of Civil Rights, DESE.

^x-Indicates total 911 calls includes calls to a middle school on the same site.

Schools also use local law enforcement at times to deal with issues. In the 2016-2017 school year, there were nearly 2,000 police calls for service to City public and Charter schools.⁹² The vast majority of these calls—86%—did not result in criminal incidents.⁹³ As detailed in Table 6, some schools were much more prone to calling 911 than others. A recent workgroup looked at why police were being called to schools and how to reduce unnecessary referrals to law enforcement. The group recommended that schools make use of the Missouri School Violence Hotline, which can refer callers to the appropriate department when a police response is not necessary. It also recommended that schools refrain from calling police for offenses like simple possession of drugs.

St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) is taking a new approach to successfully meet the needs of some of its students through Innovative Concept Academy. Innovative Concept Academy is a partnership between St. Louis Public Schools, MERS Goodwill, and the Family Court-Juvenile Division and started by Judge Jimmie Edwards prior to him moving from the bench to the Public Safety Director office. All youth attending Innovative Concept Academy have been involved with the law or had issues with their previous school. This alternative school offers supports like lower student-to-teacher ratios that help address the risk factors students are facing and get them back on track to college and successful careers.⁹⁴

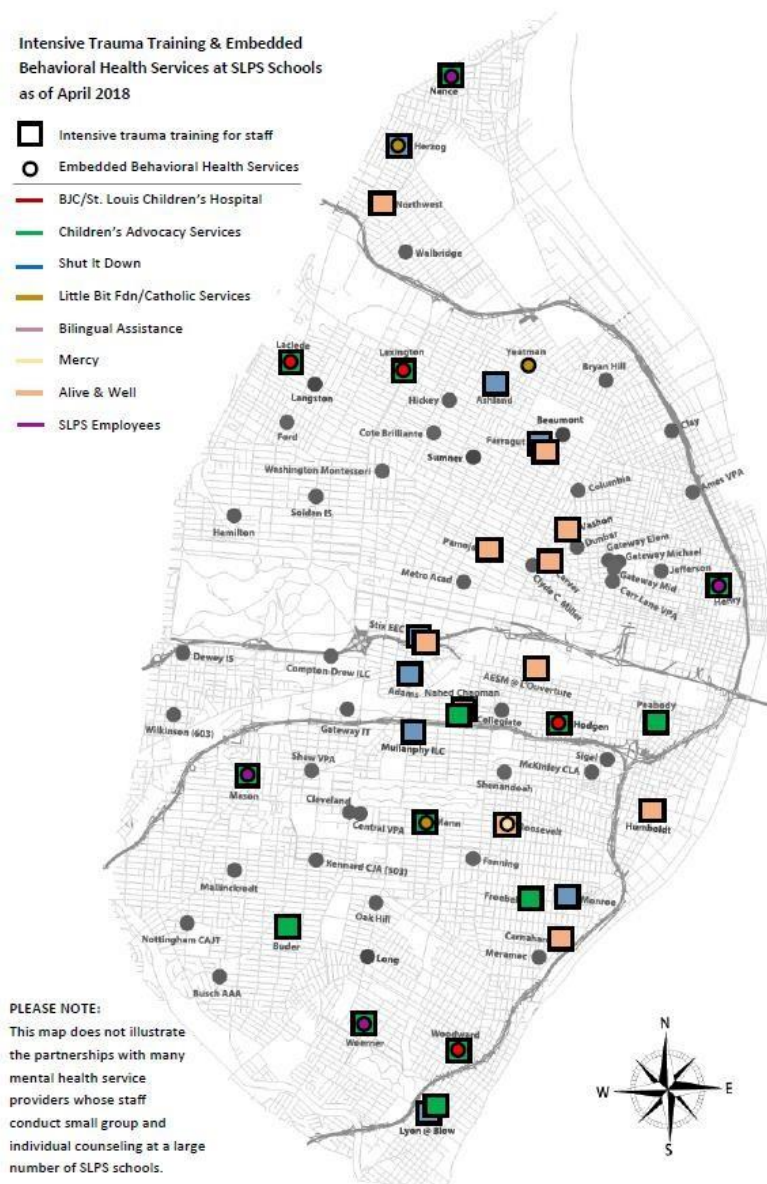
⁹² St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, response to data request.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Faust, V. (2019, January 10). School that takes in delinquent teens develops college, career prep program. *Fox 2 Now St. Louis*. Retrieved from: <https://fox2now.com/2018/01/10/school-that-takes-in-delinquent-teens-develops-college-career-prep-program/>

Policy changes to reduce exclusionary discipline use will be ineffective if there is not effective practice in place to support students and meet their needs. St. Louis Public Schools is working to ensure that staff are trained to meet the needs of students who have experienced trauma. Every school in the district went through an introductory session on understanding trauma in 2017, and many schools have participated in more intensive training. Figure 8 shows schools that have undergone intensive trauma training in the 2017-2018 school year. Several more schools are slated to participate in intensive trauma training in the 2018-2019 school year.

Figure 9: SLPS Intensive Trauma Training



Trauma, Physical and Social-Emotional Wellness

Many youths in City of St. Louis have unmet behavioral health needs that put them at risk for violence. The 2017 St. Louis Youth Behavioral Health Community Needs Assessment made specific recommendations for how to improve behavioral health services in St. Louis. Among these were to “Respond to youth experiences of trauma” and “Increase early identification of behavioral health vulnerability and provide early intervention.”⁹⁵ In addition, the report calls out an “alert” across all recommendations to prioritize supports for vulnerable populations, which includes those who have experienced violence or trauma.⁹⁶ The Office of Justice Program’s Diagnostic Report recommends strategies that address “individual-level and community-level violence and trauma,” and calls for increased capacity in trauma-informed approaches for both law enforcement and service providers.⁹⁷

There is ample evidence for the need for trauma-informed approaches and behavioral health supports for youth in St. Louis. The number of mental/behavioral health hospitalizations (not including substance abuse) for children and youth aged 1-19 in St. Louis City increased by over 46% between 2010 and 2015.⁹⁸ There were 3,910 reported incidents of child abuse and neglect in City of St. Louis in fiscal year 2017.⁹⁹ Children who experience abuse and neglect are impacted in many ways. Children who experience trauma often have poor impulse control, impaired critical thinking skills, and difficulty regulating their emotions. Children facing these issues are more prone to delinquent behavior, angry outbursts, and/or inappropriate emotional reactions to stimuli. Child abuse and neglect impacts youth violence because sometimes youth in care are using the same abusive behaviors that were used against them by caretakers or an adult figure in their life.

Trauma manifests at the community level in addition to the individual level. The Prevention Institute argues that symptoms of community trauma show up in the socio-cultural environment (trust, social norms), the physical/built environment (deteriorating buildings, poor infrastructure, displacement pressure), and the economic environment (concentrated poverty, lack of access to economic opportunities).¹⁰⁰ Although the current Adverse Childhood Experiences survey does not include exposure to community violence as an Adverse Childhood Experience, researchers have recognized that exposure to community violence causes toxic stress in children.¹⁰¹ High levels of exposure to community violence for young people has been associated with numerous harmful outcomes, including increased aggressive behavior and violence—which can contribute to a vicious cycle of further community

⁹⁵ Behavioral Health Network of Greater St. Louis (2017). *2017 St. Louis youth behavioral health community needs assessment*. Submitted to St. Louis Mental Health Board and St. Louis Region System of Care.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ OJP Diagnostic Center (2017, March). *Diagnostic Analysis for the City of St. Louis, Missouri*.

⁹⁸ University of Missouri Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis (2018). *Missouri kids count county indicator pages*. Retrieved from: http://missourikidscountdata.org/pages/2018/st_louis_city.pdf

⁹⁹ Missouri Department of Social Services (2017). *Children’s division: Annual report fiscal year 2017*.

¹⁰⁰ Pinderhughes et al. (n.d.). Adverse community experiences and resilience: A framework for addressing and preventing community trauma. *The Prevention Institute*. Retrieved from: <https://www.preventioninstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Adverse%20Community%20Experiences%20and%20Resilience.pdf>

¹⁰¹ Lee et al. (2017). Exposure to community violence as a new adverse childhood experience category: Promising results and future considerations. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 98 (1).

traumatization.¹⁰² Strategies seeking to address trauma should operate at both the individual and community level.

In 2017, researchers from George Mason University conducted a study to determine gaps in services that aim to reduce violence. The study found a general need for more services aimed at reducing violence, and identified interpersonal skills and life skills as particular gaps in programming for the general youth population.¹⁰³ Focusing specifically on youth involved with the juvenile justice or child welfare systems in St. Louis, the study identified treatment for severe substance use disorder, decision making, and interpersonal skills as critical needs.¹⁰⁴ It also recommended programs targeted toward known violent offenders, specifically in the areas of Decision Making and Self-Management.¹⁰⁵

Children in St. Louis face physical health challenges as well, which can contribute to issues with violence. Lead poisoning continues to be an issue in City of St. Louis. Although efforts to reduce lead poisoning have been effective, lead poisoning rates are still higher than the state or national average.¹⁰⁶ Lead poisoning has been linked to behavioral and cognitive issues, and aggressive behavior.¹⁰⁷

Schools, Trauma, Physical and Social-Emotional Wellness: Assets and Bright Spots

- **Alive & Well STL** is work with St. Louis Public Schools and 11 City charter schools to help more schools be trauma-informed.
- The Integrated Health Network's **RE-LINK Program** seeks to improve the health outcomes for minority reentrants in transition from jail to their communities.
- **Shut it Down** provides education on racial equity and implicit bias for school personnel to address the rate of suspensions for youth attending Saint Louis Public Schools Grades K-8.
- The Mayor's Office, St. Louis Public Schools, 22nd Judicial Courts, Police Department and others formed a **workgroup to look at the intersection of schools, police and the justice system** and offer recommendations on policy changes.
- The Police Department's **Crisis Intervention Team** provides officers the tools to respond effectively to someone having a mental health crisis.
- There is a robust regional effort to **end the school-to-prison pipeline** and eliminate disparate and harmful discipline practices in schools.
- Missouri is a national leader in using a trauma-informed developmental framework in youth services, known as the **Missouri Model**.

Insights for violence prevention:

- Use of exclusionary discipline in schools can put young people at risk of further dangerous activity. Schools can offer a safe and structured environment for students who might otherwise lack stability.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Taxman, F. & Breno, A. (2017). *Addressing crime & violence through the risk-need-responsivity framework in St. Louis City: A report to the St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Collaborative*

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Bartow, R. (City of St. Louis Department of Health) (2018). *Childhood lead poisoning in St. Louis City*.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

Policy

“Ban the Box” refers to banning the practice of requiring job applicants to check a box if they have been convicted of a felony. This practice of screening for felons can make it challenging for ex-felons to find gainful employment and support themselves legally. The City of St. Louis “banned the box” in 2014 by removing this question from job applications with the City.¹⁰⁸

Currently, 17-year-olds accused of crimes in Missouri are automatically tried as adults. The Missouri State Legislature recently passed a law so that children 17 years of age or younger must be tried in the juvenile justice system.¹⁰⁹ This change reduces the likelihood that children are sent to prison, which can lower a young person’s chances of finding employment upon release.¹¹⁰ However, this law will not take effect unless there is an appropriation to fund it.¹¹¹

In the state of Missouri, counties and municipalities are not allowed to pass gun restrictions stricter than those at the state level. Mayor Lyda Krewson joined with mayors across the country to put forward an Op-Ed in USA Today denouncing state pre-emption of local law and calling for sensible local firearm regulations.¹¹²

Community Engagement

The Safe and Thriving St. Louis effort has made it a priority to center youth in discussions that will impact them. With that in mind, the Safe and Thriving team held numerous engagement sessions in the City of St. Louis, with an emphasis on the Violence Reduction Zone. Table 7 summarizes the six youth engagement sessions the team held.

Table 7: Youth Engagement Overview

Location	Date	Number of Youth	Age Range
Northwest Academy of Law & Social Justice	5/18/2018	10	High School Juniors
Gateway STEM High School	6/28/2018	18	13-15
Thomas Dunn Learning Center	6/28/2018	13	12-24
St. James AME Church	7/7/2018	7	14-23
Better Family Life	7/10/2018	36	12-23
Julia Davis Library	7/18/2018	13	10-22

¹⁰⁸ *City of St. Louis bans the "box" on job applications* (2014). Retrieved from: <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/mayor/news/ban-the-box.cfm>

¹⁰⁹ Missouri Senate Bill 793 (2018). Retrieved from: <http://www.senate.mo.gov/18info/pdf-bill/tat/SB793.pdf>

¹¹⁰ Mitchell, D. (2018, March 28). It’s time to raise the age in Missouri. It’s a matter of dollars and sense [Guest Commentary]. *The Kansas City Star*. Retrieved from: <https://www.kansascity.com/opinion/readers-opinion/guest-commentary/article207188189.html>

¹¹¹ Missouri Senate Bill 793 (2018). Retrieved from: <http://www.senate.mo.gov/18info/pdf-bill/tat/SB793.pdf>

¹¹² Gillum, A. et al. (2018, March 23). Mayors want to pass gun safety laws, but the NRA and our state legislatures won’t let us [Opinion]. *USA Today*. Retrieved from: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2018/03/23/mayors-want-gun-control-but-blocked-nra-preemption-laws-column/450893002/>

During engagement sessions, youth had the opportunity to react directly to potential strategies. They also engaged in small group conversations hosted by youth facilitators. Youth facilitators were trained in facilitation skills, including setting norms for safe conversations and encouraging honest sharing. Youth facilitators asked the following questions:

- Do you feel safe in your community?
- What does a safe community look like to you?
- How do you see gangs impacting your peers and families in your community?
- How has gun violence impacted your community?
- What things do you see helping your community?
- What strategies do you think will help to reduce violence?

As participants shared, note-takers recorded their responses. The planning team compiled responses across sites and analyzed them for themes. Four themes from youth responses that stood out across sites and questions:

1. The Pervasiveness of Shooting and Gun Violence

Shooting and gun violence are a fact of life for many participants, to the point where they are not seen as anything out of the ordinary. One youth described their neighborhood as “Not good or bad; just a lot of shooting.” Another spoke of the senselessness of this violence: “people shooting just to be shooting.” Many youth shared experiences of family members and friends being victims of gun violence. Some spoke of carrying guns themselves in order to feel safe, which speaks to the blurred line between victimization and perpetrators. Throughout, it was clear that—for far too many participants—gun violence was a defining aspect of their experience.

2. Avoiding Certain Areas/Not Being Able to Live in Their Whole Community

When reflecting on their experiences, many youth spoke of specific parts of their neighborhood or community or time of day they would avoid so as not to endanger themselves— “not safe in the park,” “a group of scary guys in a grocery store,” “a” gang area,” “not at night.” For others, the feeling of not being safe is even more expansive. They spoke of staying in the house as means of avoiding trouble, even when they’d rather not: “home should not feel like a jail.” When asked what strategies will help reduce violence, one young person stated simply, “don’t go outside.”

Conversely, when envisioning a safe community, many spoke to simply being able to experience their entire community: “Being able to walk around at any time,” “kids on playgrounds,” “children playing outside,” or to “know that if you’re out walking the dog nothing will happen.”

3. Desire for Relationships and Trust

The theme of relationships and trust came up when youth were describing things that were helping their community, as well as when talking about their vision of a safe community. These ideas of relationship and trust were applied to neighbors generally and to police more specifically. Young people talked about people mowing their neighbors' lawns, "welcoming new neighbors," and "more people coming out to talk to people."

Describing what a safe community would look like, youth described “sufficient communication with one another”, a place where “everyone knows each other,” and “people looking out for you” even if they’re “not necessarily related.” They also spoke of wanting “trust in the police”, and police “making connections with the citizens in the community.”

4. Value of Programming and Activities

Programming and activities for youth came up frequently as both existed assets and as something youth want to see more of. These included places that provide programming for youth (BFL, the Dream Center, the library), employment and job opportunities, and community events and block parties. Several participants expressed a desire for more activities, including sports activities and camps. One participant complained of “nothing to do”, and many spoke to the importance of just having activities that “keep kids busy” or “keep kids off the street” without specifying what types of activities these might be.

Figure 10: Common Words from Youth Cafes (Top 100 words, Larger font = higher frequency)



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