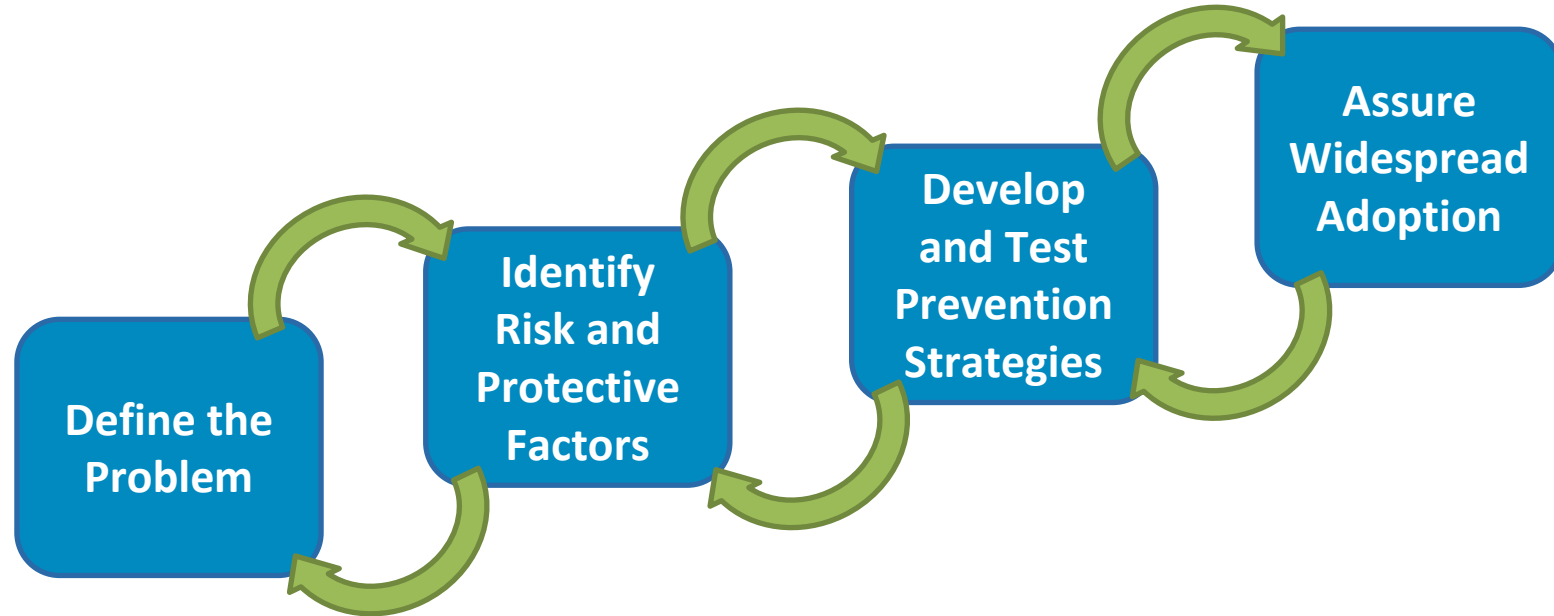


# Transforming Community Safety Engagement : Community Forum

Presented 1/26/2021

Sasha Cotton  
Director  
Office of Violence Prevention

# The Public Health Approach — “Textbook’ Definition



The public health approach to violence prevention is systematic and scientific, typically incorporating these four steps.

For more information, see:

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/publichealthissue/publichealthapproach.html>



# Public Health Approach — Violence is Preventable

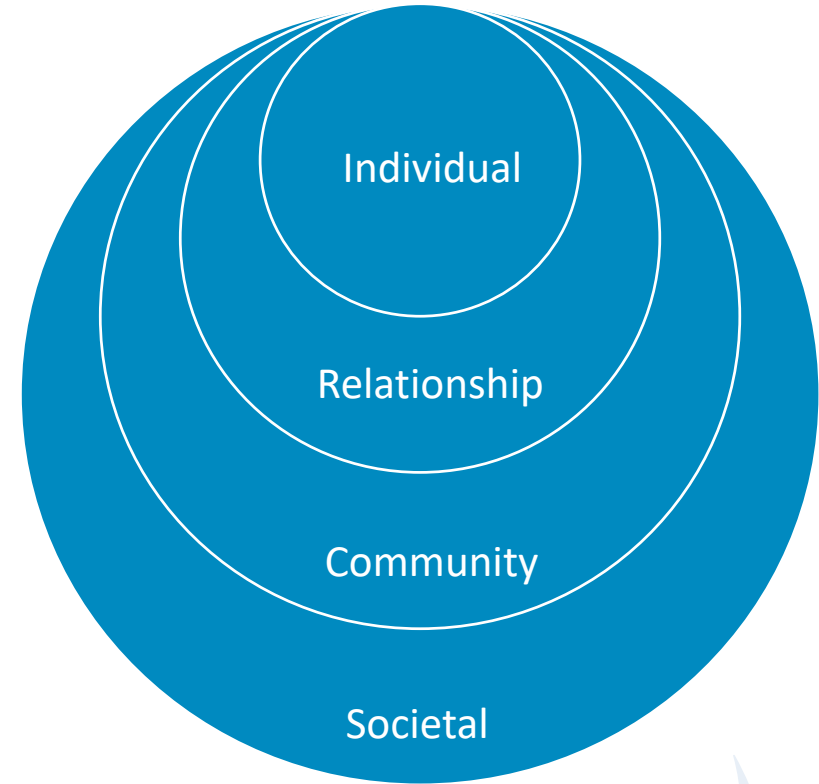


- Violence is not inevitable
- Like other communicable diseases, we can protect against, prevent, and treat violence



# Public Health Approach — Many Factors

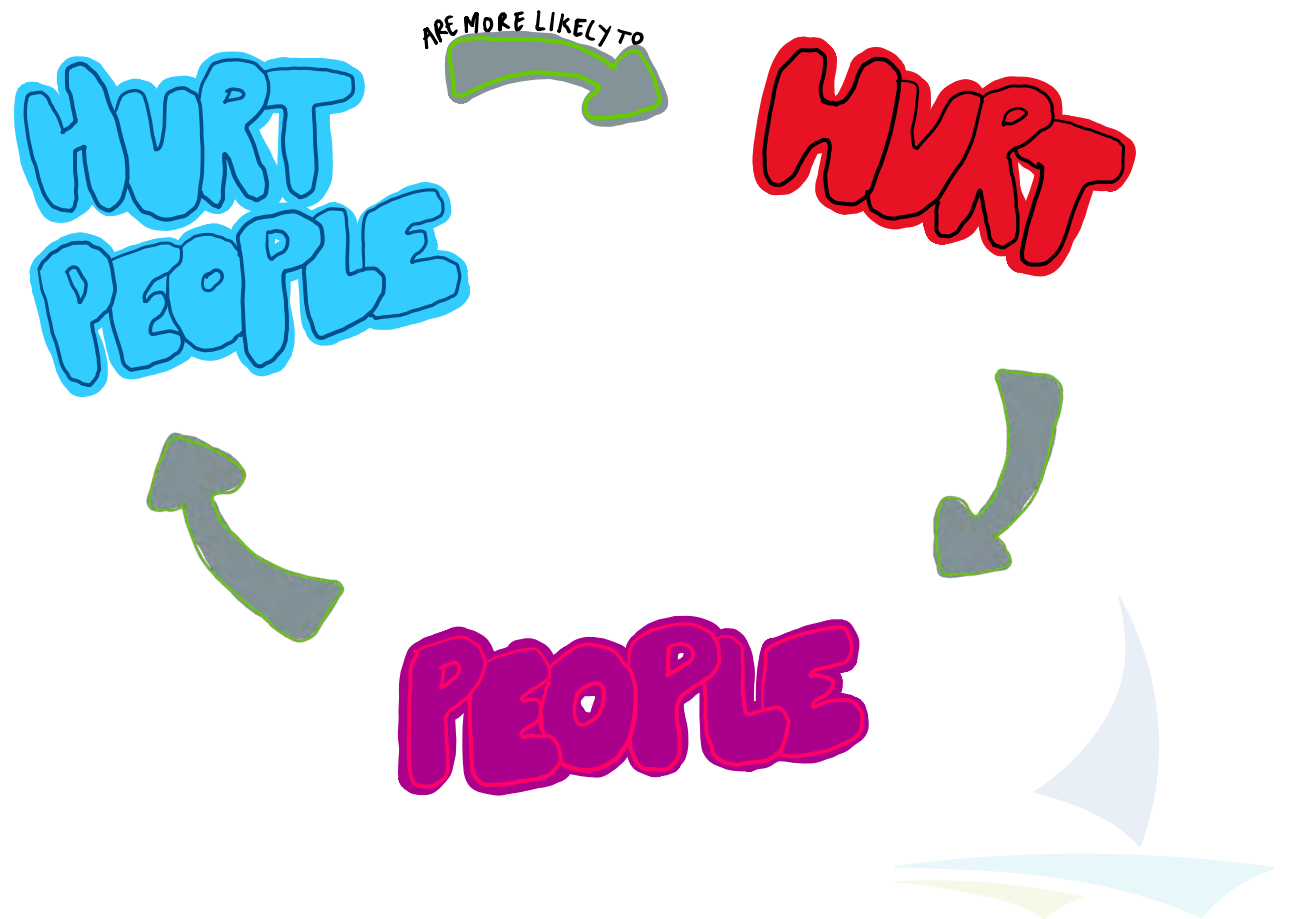
- Violence is complex, and social conditions matter
- Violence is not just the individual actions of “bad” people
- Violence is multifaceted, so the solutions must be too
- The social-ecological model considers the interplay between all factors that put people at risk for or protect people from experiencing or perpetuating violence
- For more information, see:  
<https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2019/01/28/violence-is-a-public-health-issue>



For more information about how the social-ecological model applies to violence prevention, see:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/publichealthissue/social-ecologicalmodel.html>

# Public Health Approach — Many factors

- Violence can be cyclical
- For those in the cycle, violence prevention is interested in the question of how we can support individuals on a path toward healing and away from perpetuating violence they've experienced



# Understanding Solutions — Prevention Continuum

Up Front

In The Thick

Aftermath



Approaches that take place

**BEFORE**

violence has occurred to lay groundwork that can prevent violence from emerging

Early intervention, often at the first sign of risk or as a response to an immediate to the threat of violence

Responses

**AFTER**

violence has occurred to deal with the lasting consequences and promote healing and restoration



# The Minneapolis Office of Violence Prevention (OVP)

- We use a public health approach to help ensure that everyone can be free from violence.
- Created in 2018 through an amendment to the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances
- Established to provide strategic direction and coordination for efforts to reduce the risk of violence on an enterprise-wide basis through a variety of linked strategies
- Launched in 2019



# How did we get here?

**2006:** Resolution declaring youth violence a public health issue

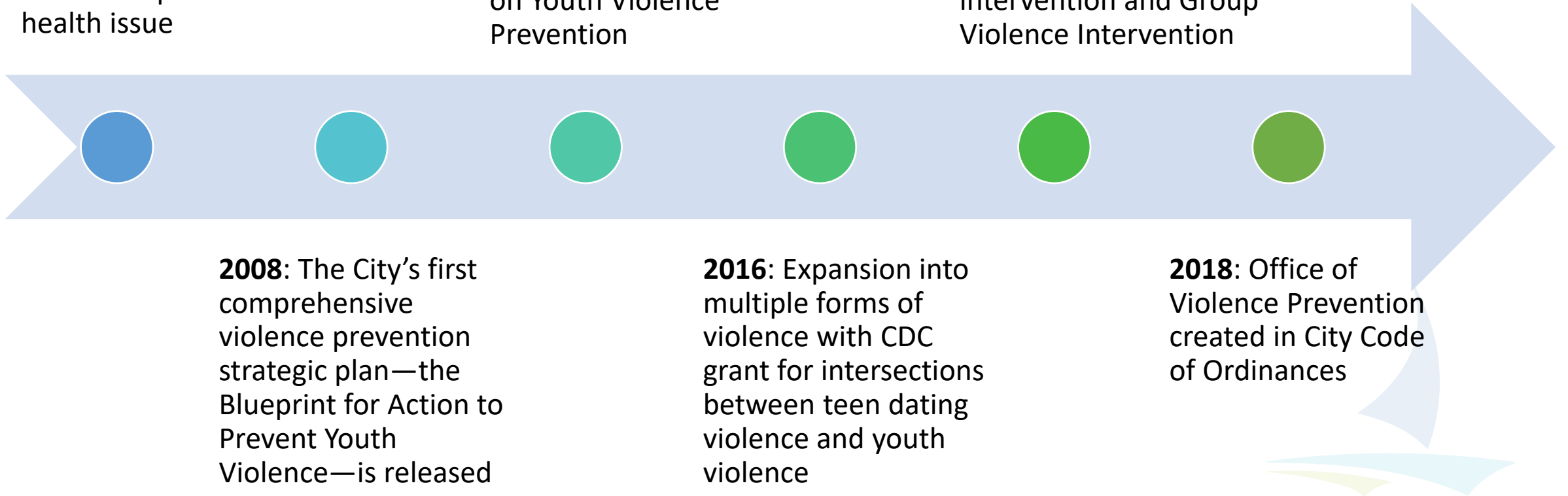
**2013:** The Blueprint is updated and Minneapolis joins the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention

**2016-2017:** Expansion into tertiary prevention with launch of hospital-based intervention and Group Violence Intervention

**2008:** The City's first comprehensive violence prevention strategic plan—the Blueprint for Action to Prevent Youth Violence—is released

**2016:** Expansion into multiple forms of violence with CDC grant for intersections between teen dating violence and youth violence

**2018:** Office of Violence Prevention created in City Code of Ordinances





# OVP Initiatives

## Up Front

## In The Thick

## Aftermath



- Youth outreach and engagement
- Coaching Boys into Men

- Inspiring Youth (case management/mentorship)
- Juvenile Supervision Center

- Project LIFE (Group Violence Intervention)
- Next Step (Hospital-based Violence Intervention)

# We work to break the cycle of violence in partnership with hospitals.

- The Next Step program connects victims of violent injury to resources and support in partnership with HCMC and North Memorial.
- Next Step staff provide immediate bedside support for participants and their families.
- Staff also provide long-term community-based follow up for participants who want further support with changing their lives and stopping the cycle of violence.
- For more information about the hospital-based violence intervention model, including some of the evidence behind it, see:  
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d6f61730a2b610001135b79/t/5d83c0d9056f4d4cbdb9acd9/1568915699707/NNHVIP+White+Paper.pdf>



Image credit: Minnesota Public Radio

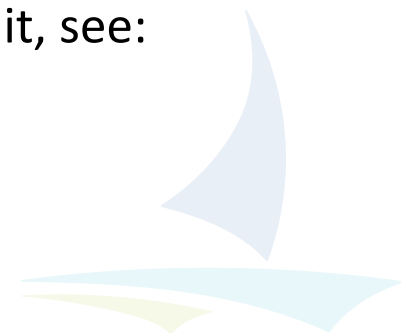
# Next Step has a positive impact on the cycle of violence.

- Next Step has served over 450 participants since launching in July 2016.
- During the program's first year, only 3% of participants returned to HCMC with a same or similar injury (n=101).
- Support around community-based needs can be an instrumental part of holistic healing following a violent injury. Next Step has succeeded in engaging participants in services and providing that support:



# **We work to address the actions of gangs/groups most responsible for driving serious violence in the City through Project LIFE.**

- Project LIFE is the local implementation of a national evidence-based practice called Group Violence Intervention (GVI).
- GVI is based on data that suggests that a relatively small number of individuals drive a large share of violence in cities.
- It relies on a partnership between community members, social service providers, and law enforcement acting together to address the actions of gangs/groups most responsible for driving serious violence.
- The approach employs moral engagement and a legitimate and credible offer of support and services for those wishing to make a change, offering group members an “honorable exit” from committing violence and providing resources and a path for those who want to change.
- For more information about the GVI model, including some of the evidence behind it, see: <https://nnscommunities.org/strategies/group-violence-intervention/>

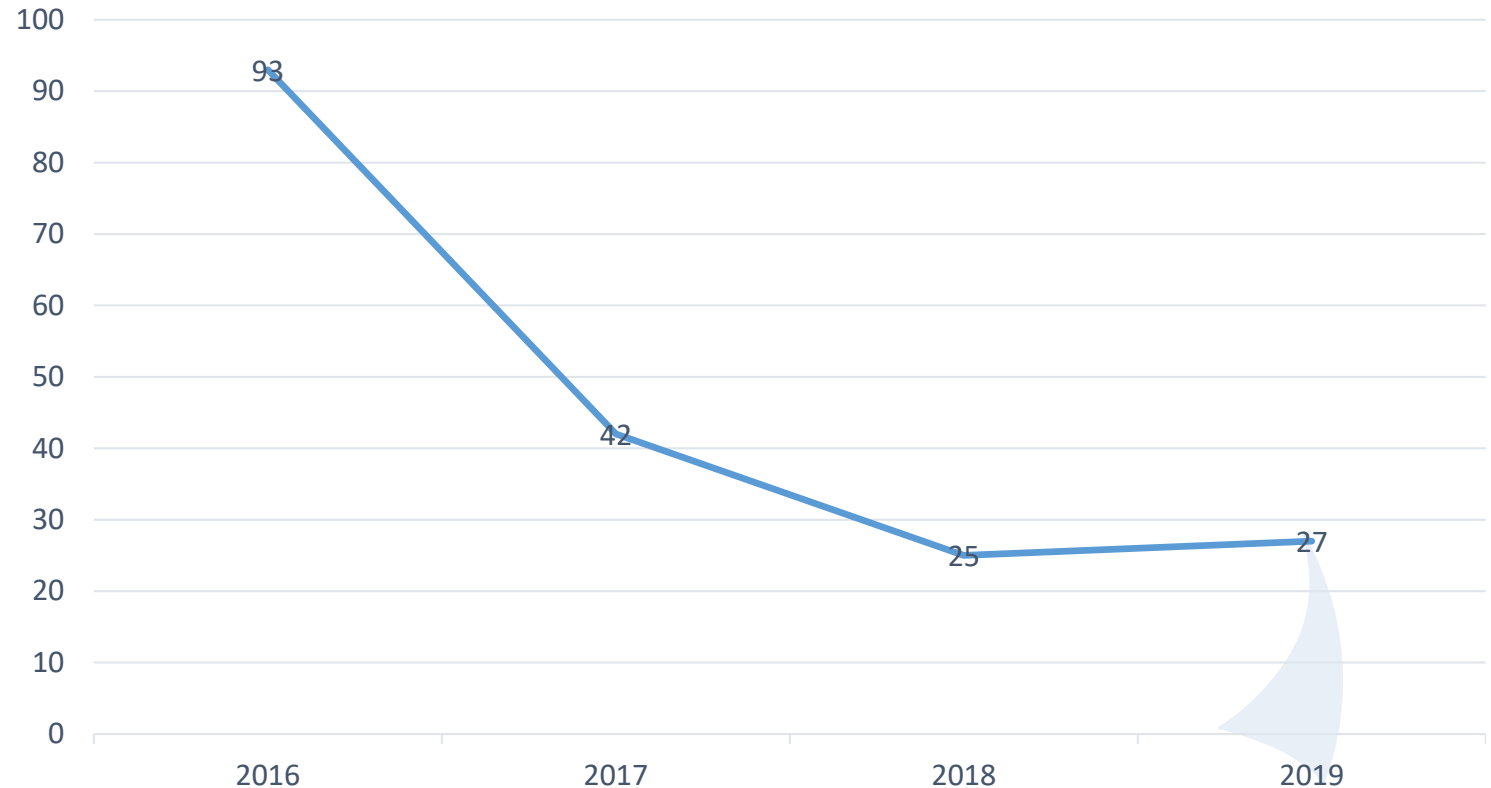


# Project LIFE has a positive impact on reducing group-involved violence.

From the year before GVI implementation (2016) to 2019, the annual number of gang or group involved non-fatal shootings from May to September dropped 71% (from 93 to 27).

(Because GVI activities are focused more during the summer months and because the summer months tend to have more community violence, May – September is used as the period for data comparison.)

**Group Member-involved Non-Fatal Shooting Incidents May 4 to September 21, 2016-2019**





A wide-angle photograph of a park in winter. The foreground is covered in a layer of snow, with several bare trees and a few evergreens. A frozen pond or lake is visible in the middle ground, surrounded by snow and some dry grass. In the background, a city skyline with various high-rise buildings is visible under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is peaceful and serene.

# Reimagining Public Safety Overview

# This process is centered on developing a new model for community safety by focusing on three areas.



## Prevention

- Break the cycle of violence before it begins.
- Led by the Office of Violence Prevention, this work includes intervention programs and funding and capacity building work to help organizations with the shared goal of a violence-free community.



## Alternatives

- Develop emergency service responses that don't require police.
- Led by the Office of Performance and Innovation, this work includes engaging community to analyze data for opportunities and test new ideas for alternatives to police response.



## Reform

- Enforcement of the law in a way that eliminates bias and harm in police interactions with community.
- This work includes national and local experts to assess current police standards, policies and procedures to improve police interactions with community.



# This update is a preliminary report on just the first phase.

- There are four planned phases of engagement, meant to build and evolve.
  - **Phase 1:** gathering input on the current model of community safety, opportunities for changes, and high level vision and ideas for a new model
  - **Phase 2:** review and additional input on the themes and goals established in Phase One. This deeper dive into more specific ideas will inform draft recommendations
  - **Phase 3:** gathering feedback on the draft recommendations
  - **Phase 4:** refinement and finalization of recommendations
- The findings in this first phase do not represent anything final. They are valuable building blocks for further research, engagement, and development of ideas.
- The opportunity to provide input has not passed—there will be additional opportunities to engage throughout the first half of 2021.





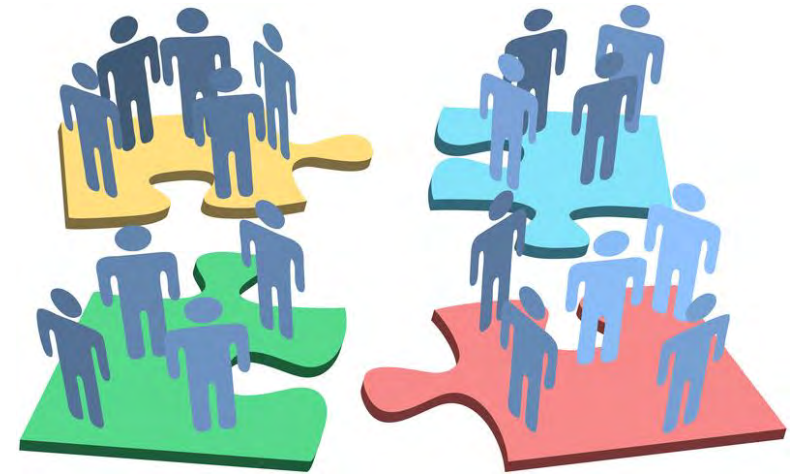
# Engagement Methods



# Mixed Methods Approach

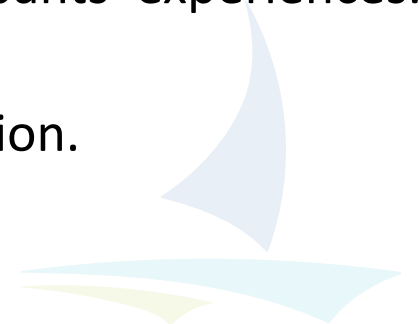
Engagement has included five different engagement methods:

- Survey
- Stakeholder interviews
- Policymaker interviews
- Engagement sessions
- Research



Using a mix of different methods is helpful for:

- Giving participants a voice and ensuring findings are grounded in participants' experiences.
- Capturing different perspectives.
- When taken together, allowing for a more complete picture of the situation.
- Helping to identify consistent themes across a diverse community.



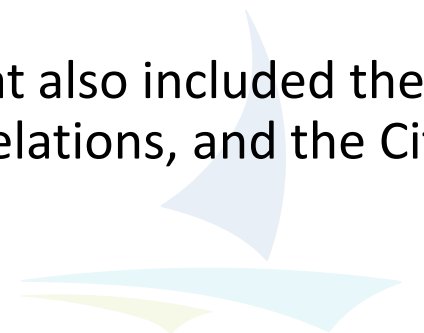
# Method 1 - Survey

## Purpose

- Capture input on the current model of community safety.
- Capture opportunities for change.
- Gather ideas that could be incorporated into a future model for further exploration.
- Given current pandemic conditions, it's one easy entry point for gathering baseline input from some in the community.

## Development Process

- Health Department staff, including Research and Evaluation team staff, oversaw creation of the survey. The Research and Evaluation Team is trained in community input gathering and has experience with designing and analyzing results of surveys.
- The development process was guided by a cross-departmental group that also included the Office of Performance and Innovation, Neighborhood and Community Relations, and the City Coordinator's office.



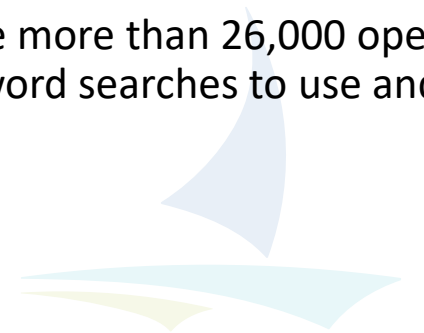
# Method 1 - Survey, Continued

## Implementation Process

- Survey was launched Oct 30, 2020. Responses submitted through December 18 were considered for first phase analysis.
- Communication and outreach efforts to encourage participation have included social media, promotion on the City's cultural radio programs, web news items, the City Update newsletter, NCR's MinneapolisConnects newsletter, Council newsletters, department-specific community networks and outreach, promotion from policymakers, and more.
- The tool is available in Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Oromo, and English.

## Analysis Process

- Data generated by the survey platform was used for demographic information and for quantitative-oriented questions.
- Analysis of open-ended questions was conducted using NVivo qualitative data analysis software.
- NVivo was used to auto code themes. From those themes, hierarchy charts and word clouds were also created.
- Written comments were also reviewed for additional takeaways.
- A Directory of Key Terms was created that can be used moving forward to guide reading of the more than 26,000 open-ended responses. The Directory of Key Terms allows for drilling down to identify specific key word searches to use and will be a useful tool during ongoing engagement.



# Method 2 - Stakeholder Interviews

## Purpose

- Identify what safety looks like and recommended strategies for achieving it.
- Assess community awareness of transforming community safety efforts.
- Measure readiness for transforming community safety.
- Inform future engagement activities.

## Process

- Interviews conducted between 11/16/20 – 12/21/20.
- Used a snowball sampling method—community members suggested other stakeholders to interview.
- One-hour semi-structured interviews with Likert scale questions and open-ended responses.

## Interviews included representatives from:

- Neighborhood organizations
- Business associations/  
small business owners
- Organizers
- BIPOC communities
- LGBTQIA+ communities
- Public safety policy advocates
- Renters
- Faith communities
- Cultural organizations

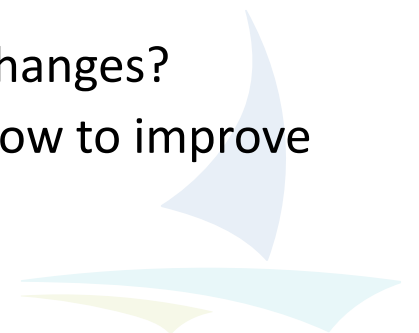
# Method 3 - Policymaker Interviews

## Purpose

- Capture and incorporate information from the significant amount of engagement that policymakers have been doing independently with residents since George Floyd was killed on May 25, 2020.

## Process

- Conducted interviews with Mayor and City Council members.
- Interviews were guided by these questions:
  - What have you been hearing from your constituents about their hopes for reimagining the City's Public Safety Efforts?
  - Have your constituents shared specific ideas around opportunities for changes?
  - Have your constituents shared any specific programs, or strategies for how to improve services?





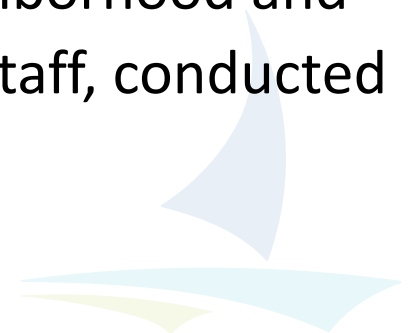
# Method 4 - Engagement Sessions

## Purpose

- Provide baseline contextual information on existing efforts, statutory requirements, and best practices.
- Conduct initial engagement to capture input on the current model of community safety, opportunities for changes, and ideas to be included in a new model.

## Process

- Culturally-specific community conversations facilitated by Neighborhood and Community Relations Cultural Specialists and Race and Equity Staff, conducted online.



# Method 5 - Research

## Purpose

- Identify existing models of community-based violence prevention.
- Identify existing models of response that can serve as alternatives to police response.
- Explore which of these models may be most suitable for implementation in Minneapolis.

## Process

- Researchers and research assistants reviewed scientific literature, media, and public websites to identify public health violence prevention and alternative models.
- The team classified these programs into model-types and captured model structure, implementation phase, partners, and problems addressed. They also considered evaluations of programs (when available).
- The team also captured illustrative information on jurisdictions that have announced intent to implement alternative models in the months since the killing of George Floyd.





# Results – Survey



# Survey - Response Rate and Demographics

- There were 9,559 surveys with at least one valid response; 57% of those (5,478) respondents completed at least most of the survey.
- 95% of those completing at least most of the survey reported being Minneapolis residents.
- BIPOC respondents were underrepresented and white respondents were overrepresented.
- The survey is one of numerous sets of information useful to this process. Given the response/completion rates and the fact that certain communities are under- or overrepresented, conclusions or decisions should not be based on this survey information alone.

Ward	Among those who answered at least most of the survey and who answered the neighborhood demographic question, percent of responses
1	4%
2	14%
3	10%
4	5%
5	2%
6	3%
7	12%
8	10%
9	8%
10	9%
11	7%
12	8%
13	8%

# Survey Themes - Ideas for Public Health Prevention Strategies

**Q: When you think about transforming public safety, what are your hopes?**

## Frequently mentioned topics/shared values:

- Action and change
- Safety and accountability
- Decreased crime and increased investments in violence prevention, mental health, and anti-poverty strategies.
- Equity and justice

## Underlying tension:

- Some residents want more police; some residents want less police.

## Consideration:

- Crime prevention and investments in social programs should not be considered zero sum/mutually exclusive.

# Survey Themes - Concerns Around Transforming Community Safety

Reimagining a transformative new model for cultivating safety for everyone in our City is a process filled with hope.

But it can be challenging too, especially in the context of increases in violent crime happening in cities all across the country, a complex political climate, uncertainty related to the current devastating pandemic, and other factors.

- Carjackings
- City council members
- City leaders
- Crime rates increasing
- Defunding the police
- Equitable treatment
- Funding for alternate responses
- Lack of real transformation
- Polarization and divisive attitudes
- Police union
- Police force
- Police department
- Population-specific experiences and needs
- Resistance to change
- Violent crime in general

# Survey Themes - Ideas for Public Health Prevention Strategies

**Q: Respondents were asked to describe ideas they have for programs, strategies, or suggestions for how to approach public health based violence prevention solutions in Minneapolis, if any.**

## **Frequently mentioned topics:**

- Affordable housing programs
- Mental health services and programs
- Youth programs
- Gun violence prevention programs
- Domestic violence prevention programs
- Sex work

## **Who should be involved:**

- Community members
- Social workers
- Mental health professionals
- Public health professionals
- Public schools

## **Other considerations:**

- Training
- Resources
- Poverty

# Survey Themes - Ideas for Police Reform

**Q: Respondents were asked to describe ideas they have for programs, strategies, or suggestions for how to approach police reform/policy change in Minneapolis, if any.**

## **Concerns:**

- Police union
- Police department culture
- Use of deadly force, excessive force
- Warrior training

## **Other considerations:**

- Accountability
- Racism
- Power
- Neighborhoods

## **Opportunities for change:**

- Ways in which police are trained
- De-escalation training, anti-bias training
- Community policing
- Union contracts
- Community engagement
- Recruitment and hiring
- Handling of misconduct

# Survey Themes - Ideas for Alternatives to Police Response

**Q: Respondents were asked to describe ideas they have for programs, strategies, or suggestions for how to approach alternatives to police response in Minneapolis, if any.**

## Concerns:

- Police force
- Armed police
- Police department

## Who should be involved:

- Community members
- Social workers
- Mental health professionals
- Other trained professionals

## Other considerations:

- Restorative justice
- Safety
- Funding
- Training
- Neighborhoods



# Survey Themes - Ideas for Alternate Responders

**Q: Respondents who indicated they think someone other than the Minneapolis Police Department should respond to one or more types of calls were asked to describe who they think should respond to each call type selected.**

- Most respondents identified at least one type of call that should be responded to by someone other than the Minneapolis Police Department.
- Some respondents expressed a desire for responders to be unarmed, whether police or not police.
- Some respondents expressed a desire for alternate responders and police to respond together as a team.



# Survey Themes - Ideas for Alternate Responders

## Who the alternate responders should be:

- Social workers
- Mental health workers
- Medical professionals
- Drug counselors

## Other considerations

- Training
- Teams (alternate responders and police)
- Unarmed

Type of Call	Among Those Who Answered Survey Question 9, Percent Selecting They Believe Someone Other Than The Minneapolis Police Department Should Respond
Person experiencing homelessness	85%
Mental health crises	79%
Drug use/overdose	65%
Child abuse/neglect	62%
Accident/injury	44%
Traffic accident/crash	38%
Domestic Violence	36%
Traffic Enforcement	36%
Sexual violence	34%
Disturbance/noise/alarms	27%
Property damage/vandalism	26%
Suspicious person	23%
Drug selling	22%
Trespassing	19%
Other type of call	15%
Theft/burglary	15%
Other violence or assault	14%
None—police should respond to all*	9%
Shooting/shots fired	8%

\*The answer choice none may be underrepresented here because those believing none of the call types should have an alternate responder may have chosen to not answer the question.

# Next Steps



# Next Steps for Engagement

- Community Information Meetings
  - First meeting: January 26th at 6pm
  - February meetings
- Meeting-in-a-box
  - Unique way for community to engage—opportunity for community to convene their own discussions and provide feedback to the City
  - Benefit is that people may be more inclined to be honest with smaller groups they know vs. larger meetings
  - The facilitation guide with questions, facilitation tips, and a feedback portal link is available on the City website
- Learning Labs featuring national experts
  - Meeting series to provide best practices and success stories/models from cities across the country, presented in collaboration with national expert partners
  - Help understand what's possible
- Youth Engagement
  - Meet youth where they're at for their ideas and input
  - Minneapolis Youth Congress facilitating engagement with their peers







# Thank you.

Sasha Cotton

Director

Office of Violence Prevention