



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the City Council

DATE ISSUED: April 7, 2016 REPORT NO: 16-035
ATTENTION: Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Committee
SUBJECT: Informational Report from the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention

REQUESTED ACTION: Information item only

This is an informational report. No action is required on the part of the Committee or City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the Report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ITEM BACKGROUND:

Since 2006, the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention (CGPI or Commission) has been serving as the official advisory body to the Mayor and the City Council on policy issues relating to gang prevention and intervention, as authorized by City of San Diego Ordinance Number O-19477 (April 7, 2006). The Commission will provide reports to the Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods (PS&LN) Committee biannually. One report will present the annual work plan, and the second report will provide updates to the work plan, including accomplishments and on-going tasks of the Commission. Each report will incorporate and highlight the collaborative community initiatives that impact gang violence within the City of San Diego.

This current report reflects the goals and status of the implementation of the Commission's Strategic Action Plan for 2015-2017, "A Strategic Collaborative Approach to Impacting Gang Violence: The Community Focused Youth Empowerment Initiative." The following is an update of the work performed by the CGPI on the Strategic Action Plan from January 2015 to the present, with a focus on work completed since the last update to PS&LN on September 23, 2015.

The goal of the CGPI's Strategic Action Plan is to advance prevention efforts to increase safety, provide opportunities that give hope to young people, and support the implementation of services for high need offenders. The Strategic Action Plan supports the pyramid model. This best practice model focuses on promotion, prevention, and intervention. We focus on three core levels specific to gang prevention:

1) Prevention: *Early intervention – preschool education and after-school activities. This also includes providing community-wide general information, general education, and resource information.*

2) Intervention: Efforts that support workforce readiness, employment, and youth development.

3) Suppression: Collaborating with law enforcement and partnering with other agencies and organizations to provide intervention for the “high end” gang members who require more intensive resources such as Gang Violence Interruption (GVI) support.

Since 2006, the CGPI has supported community initiatives, researched best practices and resources, and made recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on reducing the impact of gang violence in our neighborhoods. The Strategic Action Plan for 2015–2017 emphasized collaboration as a fundamental approach to prevention and intervention of gang-related crime. A broad range of stakeholders partnered across systems, disciplines, and communities to promote initiatives on five areas of focus: 1) employment training and placement, 2) integration of services, 3) youth activities, 4) early intervention, and 5) collaborative accountability. The spectrum of resources, research data, and working relationships emerging from this collaborative culture strengthened the comprehensive response to addressing gang violence in the City.

Each iteration of the Commission’s two-year Strategic Action Plan is an opportunity to review, reaffirm, and recommit to a shared effort at ending gang violence. The challenge inherent in this process is to continue building on the knowledge and collaboration generated over the Commission’s nine years of work. The 2015–2017 Strategic Action Plan has been guided by a consistent mission to work with communities and agencies to meet emerging issues and seek appropriate responses.

In addition, families devastated by crime and loss, grassroots leaders, and faith-based communities consistently identified a need for improved access to mental health and other support services. It is the consensus of the community that these services should be grounded in trauma-informed practice, be culturally aware, and incorporate restorative justice principles. These priorities are consistent with best practices for impacting gangs and gang violence, and are broadly advocated throughout San Diego.

STRATEGY #1 - PREVENTION

STARTING EARLY: Incorporate Trauma-Informed Principles to Pre-school and After-school Activities – Provide Information and Education

The Commission has and will continue to work in collaboration with entities that serve children/youth in the community to help ensure that Trauma-Informed principles and anti-bullying strategies are incorporated into services. The Commission has and will continue to assist in compiling written materials for public distribution and/or training opportunities for staff in applying these principles.

CITYSUPPORT: Adopt Resolution for Trauma-Informed Care

On May 13, 2015, a joint meeting was held by the PS&LN Committee and the CGPI where a Resolution for Trauma-Informed Care was voted on and approved to be moved forward to the City Council. The City Council approved and adopted the Resolution for Trauma Informed Care on July 28, 2015.

TRAINING: Provide Training on Trauma-Informed Care

To date, over 500 individuals have been trained, including City employees from Park and Recreation and Public Libraries. Since February 2015, the Citizens' Review Board on Police Practices, STAR/PAL, and the County of San Diego Probation Department (Probation) have all participated in trainings. There are plans underway for additional trainings for both City and non-City agencies and organizations.

STRATEGY #2 - INTERVENTION

WORKFORCE READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT: Provide Job Opportunities That Can Turn Lives Around

Commissioner Peter Callstrom

Workforce Partnership

The Commission has worked in collaboration with the Mayor and City Council, the Workforce Partnership, and the business community to advocate for more job opportunities for youth.

Workforce Partnership also reported a total of 900 jobs for young adults (16-24) through Connect2Careers and other funded programs/partners. This is an increase from 360 in 2013. Workforce Partnership also provided the funding for the Re-engagement Center through the Urban League to reach disconnected youth in the communities.

Executive Director Rev. Rickey Laster

District 4

The Commission is currently working with Civic San Diego to assist with the hiring of community residents on projects located in District 4. A meeting with Chelsey Development and Emerson Construction Company led to the hiring of 5 District 4 residents so far on the Trolley Residential Project. There has also been a commitment to hire community residents on the Ouchi Courtyards Project, whose ground breaking took place on March 25, 2016. The Commission was also invited to a meeting with Civic San Diego, the President of the YMCA of San Diego, and the contractors of record for the building of the new Jackie Robinson YMCA. The meeting produced commitments to hire local contractors and young adults from the community. The stakeholders asked the Commission to play an active role in helping to meet that commitment and achieve that goal.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: Establish Critical Positive Interactions with Adults

Commissioner Shelly Zimmerman, Chief of San Diego Police Department (SDPD)

Boxing Program

The SDPD's Gang Unit, working in collaboration with local churches, Probation, community recreation centers, numerous community outreach programs, and the San Diego Fight Club, has engaged at-risk youth in a more personalized manner and is using the sport of boxing to help place potential and current gang members on the path to success.

Led by the Gang Intervention Officers, participating youth go through rigorous training four times per week and are allowed to compete in matches. The average involvement in the

program is fifteen youths at any given time. In 2015, over 80 kids have participated in the program!

Gang Tattoo Removal Program

As we have seen, tattoos can be a barrier to a person trying to overcome the past and become successful in their personal endeavors. This is especially true for past gang members who typically have bold, gang-affiliated tattoos on their neck, head, arms, and hands. Employers, including those of minimum wage jobs, are often scared away and unwilling to take a chance on these individuals. The SDPD Gang Unit, in collaboration with Probation and the CGPI, is proud to partner in this program. During 2015, over 125 youths have taken advantage of this service and removed their gang tattoos. The cost of the service is \$165.00 per hour session, with no limit as to how many youths may participate. The cost is covered by a local business, the Hooker Header company, and the San Diego Police Foundation.

Commissioner Gary Gallegos

Pathways to Delinquency

In 2015, SANDAG produced and distributed an updated “CJ in Brief” from interviews with gang-involved arrestees. This completed study examined the greatest risk factors for youth most entrenched in the justice system – many of whom were gang members. The findings from this study, entitled “Pathways to Delinquency,” were shared with stakeholders regionally. Not only did they help to provide information on prevention and intervention strategies across the region, but they also highlighted the need for better system coordination and earlier intervention.

Alternatives to Detention

The Commission successfully partnered with Probation and local service providers to secure grant funding from the state to expand a program called “Alternatives to Detention” to support non-custodial interventions for youth at-risk of gang involvement.

Commissioner Bonnie Dumanis, District Attorney of San Diego County

San Diego Community Youth Court (CYC)

The CYC is a community-based diversion program for youth participants referred by the SDPD, City Schools, Probation, and CGPI. When youths make contact with SDPD officers for certain offenses, the officers may refer them to the program. If referred youths meet all the necessary requirements, they will appear before a panel of volunteer community representatives who serve as liaisons for the intervention between the participants and the juvenile court system. Each case is heard by a panel that will then assign proper consequences and accordingly verify the completion for the participants. The program holds the participants accountable for their actions, and through the educational component, gives them a better understanding of the impact their choices and actions have on their communities, their families, and themselves. These youths are provided a second chance with no conviction on their record. In 2015, 58 community elders have served on this panel, and 38 at-risk youths have participated in the program.

Girls Only Program (Toolkit)

The Girls Only prevention education toolkit is the product of a collaboration between the San Diego County District Attorney’s Office (DA’s Office) and the CGPI. This program focuses on

girls ages 8-12 and fills a need in San Diego by empowering girls before they enter their teenage years. The program outlined in this toolkit provides a forum for young girls to learn to love and honor themselves, giving them the opportunity to find alternatives to the kinds of abusive relationships with men and with themselves that often lead to involvement with gangs, substance abuse, prostitution, human trafficking, and, eventually, the criminal justice system. The toolkit is being implemented at the Encanto Boys and Girls Club. There were 34 participants in 2015. An MOU was just signed between the DA's Office, Project Concern International, and the Boys and Girls Club to expand the program to Linda Vista, Barrio Logan, and National City in 2016.

Anti-Bullying Program

The DA's Office has also created a speakers' bureau for the Juvenile Division that consists of Deputy District Attorneys (DDA) who have been trained to present on the topics of anti-bullying and cyberbullying. Experts from the San Diego Office of Education, juvenile service providers, and in-house DDA experts have all worked to train the outreach team. They have presented at elementary and middle schools, as well as PTA and other parents' groups.

Commissioner Bill Gore, Sheriff of San Diego County

RESPECT Program

The Sheriff Department's anti-gang efforts include a diversion program for at-risk youth in the County of San Diego. At the San Marcos Sheriff's Station, deputies developed the RESPECT (Responsibility, Ethics, Strength, Perseverance, Education, Courage, and Trustworthiness) Project. The RESPECT Project is a character development and mentorship program designed for at-risk youth, including gang members, in the city of San Marcos. In addition to building relationships and teaching life skills, the RESPECT Project integrates healthy community groups, including faith-based organizations, into the lives of each student. Youths are provided with comprehensive resources enabling them to succeed long after completion of the program. The RESPECT Project is coordinated by the Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (COPPS) Unit at the San Marcos Sheriff's Station. Designated Sheriff's Deputies volunteer to mentor students and teach core topics related to character development. Guest speakers, such as reformed gang members or local business owners, are utilized along with members of the faith-based community. Each session takes place in an uplifting atmosphere and provides the youth participants with basic life skills, positive role models, true friendships, physical activities, career development, and hope for success. In addition to the core program, each student is encouraged to engage in other school activities and/or join partnered organizations such as The Boys & Girls Club or faith-based youth groups.

Commissioner Adolfo Gonzales, Chief of San Diego County Probation Department

Community Recourse Directory (CRD)

The CRD was launched for adult and juvenile probationers. It is an online web-based system used by probation officers to refer offenders to rehabilitative services based on their assessed needs. The goal of the CRD is to connect high-risk offenders to at least one community-based service associated with an assessed need. In 2015,

There were 6,313 referrals made by probation officers to program services through the CRD during 2015, with the largest numbers going to substance abuse treatment, employment and vocational programs, and housing services. As of the end of the fiscal year, there were 150 approved agencies in the CRD, representing approximately 700 program services throughout the County, such as substance abuse treatment, mental health, counseling, housing assistance, employment and vocational training, anger management, domestic violence treatment, and other service types.

ONGOING COLLABORATION

JOINT COMMISSION SUMMIT

The CGPI and the Human Relations Commission held a joint meeting on January 22, 2015. At that meeting it was determined that both commissions would work together to plan and conduct a Restorative Justice Summit. After several planning meetings with a broad representation from the SDPD, DA's Office, Probation, San Diego Unified School District, City Attorney's office, Public Defender's office, County Health and Human Service agency, San Diego County School District, San Diego State University, Point Loma Nazarene, and community members, the Restorative Justice Summit took place on February 26, 2016. There were over 450 participants in attendance, and the Summit was considered by all to be a tremendous success.

CONCLUSION

The work of the CGPI continues to be an example of successful collaboration between law enforcement, communities, elected officials, and appointed Commissioners. The Strategic Action Plan serves as a guide for the work of the CGPI, and all of the Commissions deserve credit for their contributions every day that improve their communities, the City, and the region. We look forward to implementing initiatives that will make a difference in the lives of young people. The Commissioners are committed to this collaborative approach which will bring together a collective strength as we advocate for programs, resources, and opportunities for at-risk youth in San Diego.

CITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S)/OBJECTIVE(S):

Goal # 2 Work in partnership with all of our communities to achieve safe and livable neighborhoods. Objective #2 Reduce and prevent crime

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS: n/a

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONTRACTING INFORMATION (if applicable): n/a

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTIONS: *On September 29, 2014 the City Council accepted the Strategic Action Plan. On January 28, 2015 an update on the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan was heard by the Public Safety and Livable Neighborhood Committee.*

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH EFFORTS: *Input for this update was provided by CGPI and the community at a public hearing on March 17th 2016 as a representation of their continued work as directed by the plan on November 20, 2014.*

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS: *Key stakeholders include law enforcement, community members, the County of San Diego and those impacted by gang violence. The impact of this ongoing work will be the prevention and reduction of gang violence.*

Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention

Deputy Chief/Chief Operating Officer

Attachment(s):

- 1. Executive Report*
- 2. PowerPoint Presentation*