



**PSPC** PARTNERSHIP FOR SAFE AND PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES



Civic Committee  
COMMERCIAL CLUB OF CHICAGO



## **Philanthropic, Business, Government Leaders Join Community Violence Intervention Groups to Expand Neighborhood Collaboratives to Reduce Gun Violence in Chicago**

Today at the South Shore Cultural Center, community violence intervention (CVI) groups, public officials, philanthropic and business leaders announced an ambitious initiative to expand CVI programs in Chicago over the next decade to dramatically reduce gun violence. They also celebrated two years in a row of double-digit declines in shootings.

The plan, *Scaling Community Violence Intervention for a Safer Chicago*, or “SC2,” is made possible by a historic level of alignment and coordination among dozens of community-based and citywide stakeholders as well as city, county and state governments. The SC2 plan is to scale up CVI programs in up to three neighborhoods in 2024 and add others each year as funding becomes available and neighborhood organizations build capacity.

SC2’s five-year goal is to serve at least half of the estimated 20,000 Chicagoans at highest risk of shooting or being shot. The 10-year goal is to serve 75 percent. Currently, just 15-20 percent of those at highest risk receive services from about two dozen CVI organizations currently active in 37 neighborhoods of Chicago. The SC2 partnership also has a goal of reducing shootings and homicides by 50 percent in five years and 75 percent in 10 years.

Vaughn Bryant, the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Peace Initiative (MPI), which trains and supports CVI groups in Chicago, said, “This kind of alignment across all sectors, and among all stakeholders, is rare, if not unprecedented. No other city in America has put together such a broad partnership to achieve a transformative reduction in gun violence.”

Bryant and Arne Duncan, who founded violence prevention organization Chicago CRED, serve on an SC2 steering committee that includes community-based CVI organizations, city, county and state governments, the Partnership for Safe and Peaceful Communities (PSPC), a coalition of local foundations that has been funding CVI since 2016, and the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago, which represents many local corporations.

Duncan emphasized that SC2 requires neighborhood leadership and openness with the public saying, “To successfully go to scale, CVI plans must be shaped and driven by organizations that are deeply grounded in the communities they serve and are committed to being fully transparent about their impact and progress toward our shared goals.”

The SC2 steering committee is initially focused on seven communities based on rates of violence and consideration of geographic and racial equity. They are: East and West Garfield Park, Little

Village, Humboldt Park, New City, Englewood, Austin, and North Lawndale, where a neighborhood collaboration has been underway since 2022.

The existing collaborative in North Lawndale is a partnership among MPI, CRED, UCAN, READI Chicago and the North Lawndale Employment Network (NLEN). Collectively, they provide a menu of services, including street outreach, life coaching, trauma treatment, education, and job training. They also share data, make referrals to each other, and collaborate to identify potential conflicts, mediate disputes, and negotiate peace treaties among an estimated 30 separate street factions active in North Lawndale.

In each of the new neighborhoods, hub organizations are working with community partners to develop and implement plans tailored to the unique needs of each community. The hub organizations are Breakthrough, the Institute for Non-Violence Chicago, New Life Centers, ALSO, Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, and the Restorative Project.

In recent weeks, hub organizations have held meetings with community partners to solicit input on their proposals and to build awareness. Applications for funding are due February 19 with the initial round of selections scheduled for March.

Fully going to scale in these first seven neighborhoods over the next five years could cost as much as \$400 million, although about half of that amount is already accounted for in existing philanthropic and public sector budgets. PSPC and the Civic Committee, are taking the lead in raising additional private dollars, and they will continue to seek public funding.

At the convening, they announced that they have raised an additional \$66 million to support SC2. Major donors include Crown Family Philanthropies, Builders Initiative, Pritzker Foundation, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Sue Ling Gin Foundation, the Chicago Community Trust, Hyatt Hotel Foundation, and the John & Kathleen Schreiber Foundation, among others.

Esther Franco-Payne, the executive director of PSPC, said, “Taking CVI to scale is the culmination of nearly a decade of support for evidence-based solutions to gun violence. Over the long-term, we hope to scale up CVI in every neighborhood where it is needed.”

Hyatt Hotels President & CEO Mark Hoplamazian, and BMO Harris Vice-Chair Eric Smith co-chair the Public Safety Task Force of the Civic Committee. At the convening, Hoplamazian and Smith highlighted a “one-table” approach, in which business, government, community and philanthropies all collaborate on a coordinated and comprehensive public safety plan.

“Our goal is to be the safest city in America and to get there, we all have to work together over the long term and strengthen our ongoing partnerships. The business community is all in and we are thrilled to be partnering with so many others,” said Hoplamazian.

In recent years, the City of Chicago, Cook County and the State of Illinois have collectively provided hundreds of millions of dollars to support CVI programs. At the event, Governor J.B. Pritzker, Mayor Brandon Johnson, legislative leaders, and a representative of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, all affirmed their support for CVI.

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson said, “The partnership of our foundations, business leaders and community leaders reflects the full force of government and the very best of Chicago: generosity, collaboration and determination. We are especially pleased that efforts to scale up community violence intervention programs align with our city's comprehensive public safety strategy.”

With the passage of the Reimagine Public Safety Act in 2021, The State established an Office of Firearm Violence Prevention and began directly funding CVI. More recently, the State has provided funding to expand an initiative called FLIP (Flatlining Violence Inspires Peace) that hires people to occupy dangerous locations to deter shootings.

Governor Pritzker spoke at the event and issued the following statement: "Illinois is leading the nation in finding new approaches to public safety, intervening with young people at risk, working with the formerly incarcerated, reforming our justice system, and building partnerships among law enforcement, foundations, businesses and community groups. Complex problems require complex solutions, and the community violence intervention organizations in Chicago are among the many organizations across the state working in partnership with government to address violence and make all Illinoisans safer.”

Illinois Senate President Don Harmon said, “I look forward to seeing the positive outcomes that will result from this collaboration of community leaders. The Senate Democrats remain committed to supporting programs to reduce violence and improve outcomes, not only for youth but for all Illinois residents.”

Illinois House Speaker Emanuel “Chris” Welch said, “I’m proud Illinois has been able to enact historic, transformative policy to keep communities safer, while also putting state dollars toward creative and constructive ways to save lives. I look forward to collaborating further with CVI organizations to further reduce gun violence in Chicago and throughout Illinois.”

The office of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle provided the following statement: “Over the last two years, state, county and city agencies have been actively working together to maximize the impact of public funding for community violence intervention. Cook County and our partners will continue to come together and support CVI throughout this critical new phase.”

Two faith-based leaders, Father Michael Pfleger of St. Sabina’s Church and Pastor Marshall Hatch of the New Mount Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church, opened the convening. The event also included reflections on CVI work from Sam Castro, the Director of Community Violence Intervention at the Institute for Non-Violence Chicago, and Necole Muhammed, Director of the Women’s Program at Chicago CRED.

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