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Civic Committee
COMMERCIAL CLUB OF CHICAGO



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COMMUNITY LEADERS ANNOUNCE PLANS TO SCALE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN FOUR CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOODS

Austin, Garfield Park, Humboldt Park & Little Village to Expand Efforts

CHICAGO, June 17, 2024 - Four Chicago communities are moving forward with plans to expand community violence intervention (CVI) programs under a broad public and private sector effort [first announced in February](#). The communities are Austin, Garfield Park, Humboldt Park and Little Village. They join North Lawndale, which began scaling up CVI programs in 2022. Two additional communities, Englewood and New City, continue to build capacity to develop scaling plans.

At a convening today at the Institute for Nonviolence Chicago (INVC), 1856 North LeClaire Avenue, representatives from the four communities outlined plans to “scale,” which they define as serving up to 75 percent of the people at highest risk of shooting or being shot in their neighborhoods over the next decade. They were joined by elected officials, and philanthropic and business leaders who are raising \$100M to support the effort, which is called *Scaling Community Violence Intervention for a Safer Chicago*, or “SC2” for short.

The public sector at the city, county and state levels has also increased funding for CVI. The new state budget includes more than \$170M to support CVI programs in Illinois. Current city and county budgets include more than \$46M to support CVI.

Jorge Matos, Director of Implementation for SC2, opened the event by thanking public officials, and philanthropic and business organizations for helping expand CVI. He said, “Thanks to their generous support, we are taking CVI to scale in more neighborhoods. Our goal is that CVI becomes a permanent feature of Chicago’s overall public safety strategy, along with traditional policing and community investments that address the root causes of gun violence.”

Community Partnerships; Community-Led Plans

INVC, serving the Austin community, is one of four “hub” organizations leading scale-up efforts. The other three are ALSO (Alliance of Local Service Organizations), serving Humboldt Park; Breakthrough, serving Garfield Park; and New Life Centers, serving Little Village.

SC2 hub organizations coordinate community partnerships to provide a menu of services to participants, including outreach, life coaching, trauma treatment, education and job training. Both INVC and ALSO begin implementing scale-up plans

this summer. New Life and Breakthrough are in the planning stage and will begin implementation in the coming months.

All four organizations will receive multi-million-dollar, multi-year funding investments that will be shared with other neighborhood partners to support scaling CVI. They will also apply for the growing share of public dollars to further expand CVI.

Teny Gross, CEO of INVC, said, “Chicago has the most extensive network of CVI groups in the country. We have the architecture in place, and we are ready to take this work to a new level. It is only possible because of enlightened public and private sector leadership.”

Lori Crowder, Executive Director of ALSO, said that CVI is a “public health approach” to combatting gun violence. “Gun violence spreads like a disease and must be addressed with preventive measures that offer those at risk a safe path away from conflict. Thanks to our funding partners, we are building the capacity to make our communities safer.”

Yolanda Fields, Executive Director of Breakthrough, said, “We’ve spent several years developing our approach to reducing gun violence and we now want to serve more people. We’re very grateful to all of the public and private sector partners who are providing the resources needed to create a safer Garfield Park.”

Matt DeMateo, Executive Director of New Life Centers, emphasized that CVI can complement traditional policing, saying, “While police have to focus much of their resources on shootings that have already happened, we focus on stopping shootings before they happen. We are deeply grateful to have the resources to do this vitally important work.”

New Research on Chicago’s Peacekeepers Program (FLIP)

Jalon Arthur, the Director of Strategic Initiatives at Chicago CRED, also shared a [research update](#) from the Center for Neighborhood Engaged Research and Science (Corners) at Northwestern University on one particular CVI strategy called the Peacekeepers Program, also known as FLIP (Flatlining Violence Inspires Peace.)

The Peacekeepers program works with community partners in over 30 Chicago and suburban communities, employing approximately 1100 Peacekeepers who occupy more than 200 of the most dangerous locations during periods when shootings are most likely. Previous research suggests that when peacekeepers are on duty, shootings at most locations drop to nearly zero.

In addition to creating a safe street presence, Peacekeepers mediate disputes that may escalate to gun violence and negotiate peace treaties among active street factions. The program started with private funding in 2018 during the summer months and now runs year-round in Chicago and other Illinois communities, with funding from

Office of Firearm Violence Prevention housed within the Illinois Department of Public Health.

According to the latest CORNERS report, which looked at the second half of 2023, 94% of communities served by Peacekeepers experienced a decline in shootings. “Hot spots,” in particular, experienced a 35% drop in shootings between July 1 and December 31. Furthermore, in the period covered by the new research, peacekeepers mediated 630 documented conflicts.

Arthur said, “While it’s always hard to show causation, the data suggests that when you cool down some of the hot spots, it has positive spillover impact in the surrounding community.”

Fundraising Update

At the South Shore event in February, philanthropic and business leaders announced commitments of \$65 million toward a \$100M private fundraising goal to help support SC2. They expect to raise the full \$100M by July 1. Private sector donors to SC2 currently include:

MacArthur Foundation	
John and Kathleen Schreiber Foundation	The Brinson Foundation
Vivo Foundation	Hyatt Hotel Foundation
Lohengrin Foundation	Mark Hoplamazian
Crown Family Philanthropies	Steans Family Foundation
Builders Initiative, The	PNC Bank
Pritzker Foundation	Chuck Lewis
Chicago Community Trust	Lloyd Fry Foundation
Sue Ling Gin Foundation	
Allstate	
GSM Grosvenor	
McDonald's Corporation	
Matt Simon	
Northern Trust	
Illinois Tool Works (ITW)	

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