



# Tacoma Violent Crime Reduction Project

Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice

City Council Study Session  
July 12, 2022



## Presenters



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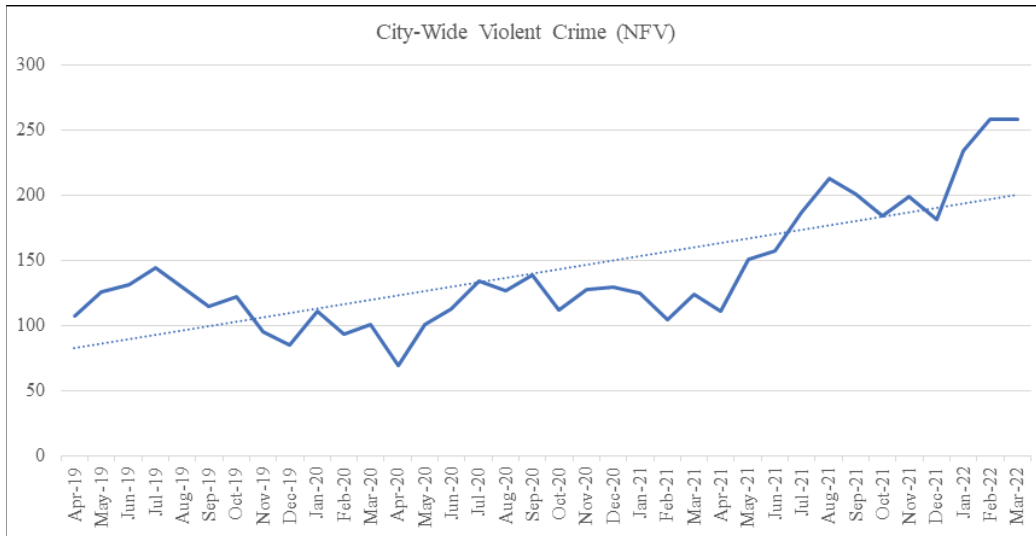




# BACKGROUND



In the last 12 months, violent crime in Tacoma has nearly doubled.



# Crime Concentration



Consistent with a large body of literature describing urban crime, violent crime in Tacoma is geographically concentrated in a relatively small number of places within the city.

For example, just 24 addresses accounted for roughly 12% of the City’s reported violent crime over the last year.

Similarly, research indicates that a relatively small number of offenders (5%) account for the majority of violent crime.





# Evidence-Based Solutions



Combined, these two factors suggest that carefully-tailored, *place-based* and *offender-focused* strategies will be the most efficient and effective at reducing violent street crime.

This requires a police-led, community-wide response to reducing violence and arresting and prosecuting violent offenders in the short term.

Long term solutions include a more comprehensive set of public safety solutions.

To ensure effectiveness, those solutions must address the social and physical disorder, crime, and fear of crime related to homelessness.



# Crime Plan Components



1. A near term hot spots policing strategy meant to substantially increase police visibility at addresses where violent crime is concentrated and prioritize street-level deterrence in these areas
2. A mid term strategy focused on violent places within the City using a Problem-Oriented, Place-Based Policing approach
3. A longer term strategy that will utilize a focused deterrence strategy to help break the cycle of violence among the small number of repeat and high-risk offenders who are responsible for committing most of the violent crime in Tacoma.



## Goals and Objectives



By implementing these strategies, and in building partnerships with other community stakeholders and agencies, TPD seeks to accomplish the following goals:

- Reverse the increasing trend in reported violent crime
- Advance the Mayor, Council, and Chief Moore's stated goal to reduce the annual number of victims of violent crime
- Increase community trust and engagement with the TPD
- Improve place-based conditions that contribute to violence
- Increase the percentage of residents who feel safe



## Keys to Success



To achieve sustained success, several additional factors need to be present:

- Engagement and support from City leaders to include:
  - commitment of resources to support the plan
  - mobilization of city services to underpin aspects of the plan (i.e., the mid-term and long-term strategies)
  - willingness to evaluate and change current legal and social practices as needed to address the underlying challenges that facilitate and contribute to violent crime
- Inter-city/governmental conversation and collaboration
  - including with, as examples, the Puyallup Tribe, Metro Parks, Tacoma Public Schools, courts, and State and Federal partners



## Keys to Success



- Community support to include businesses, faith-based leaders, neighborhood associations, and other professional organizations/communities (i.e., health, education, etc.)
- Consistent, honest evaluation of implementation and impact to facilitate modifications, as needed, to promote success
- Broad recognition that violent crime is a community problem that can be partially addressed by TPD but requires action taken by the City and community to tackle deep-rooted social problems (i.e., homelessness, employment opportunities, domestic violence, education, etc.)



## Near-Term Hot Spots Policing



With this in mind, the TPD will employ a hot spots policing strategy that:

- Focuses on violence-prone addresses
  - 16 addresses in Period 1
- Increases police visibility at or near those locations to deter violent offenders
  - Lighted patrol cars – 15 mins at a time during peak crime hours
- Drives down violent crime in and around these areas thereby impacting crime levels within larger geographical areas (e.g., patrol sectors)
  - Substantial evidence suggests there will be little to no crime displacement but this will be carefully tracked

# Hot Spots Policing Evaluation



UTSA researchers will:

- Evaluate changes to crime every 90 days. Emerging hot spots will be added and “cooled” hot spots will be removed.
- Conduct quarterly and semi-annual analyses of violent crime (within hot spots, sectors, and city-wide), calls for service, catchment areas, and plan fidelity.
- Provide quarterly reports to TPD and stakeholders



## Mid-Term Strategy



### **Problem-Oriented, Place-Based Policing**

Problem-oriented strategies carefully tailored to address underlying conditions that contribute to recurring problems in crime-prone locations

Require the involvement of other stakeholders who can help address the conditions that make a particular location attractive for crime.

Reducing social and physical disorder can be a powerful deterrent to would-be offenders and stimulate guardianship through the increased, pro-social use of space.

# Theoretical Foundation



- Three elements must come together in time and space for a crime to occur:
  1. A vulnerable victim,
  2. A motivated offender,
  3. The lack of a capable guardian.



# POPBP



- TPD, in coordination with other city agencies and departments will invite stakeholders to advise on the implementation of a POPBP process in Tacoma to complement the hot spots strategies it will implement in the shorter term.
- Estimated time frame: 6 – 12 months

Potential Stakeholders	Possible Roles and Responsibilities (Guided by the Advisory Group with Stakeholder Buy-in)
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene POPBP advisory group</li> <li>• Gather intelligence</li> <li>• Conduct criminal investigations</li> <li>• Make arrests</li> <li>• Deter criminal activity</li> <li>• Analyze crime and public-safety related data</li> </ul>
City Attorney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal review of recommended intervention strategies as needed</li> <li>• Drafts municipal code changes as needed</li> </ul>
Community and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhood investment</li> <li>• Economic development</li> </ul>
Community Stakeholder Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>
Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garbage and trash pick up</li> <li>• Environmental hazards</li> </ul>
Equity and Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement</li> <li>• Review of interventions for equity</li> </ul>
Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify/address fire hazards and fire code violations</li> </ul>
Metro Parks Tacoma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address design or re-development of parks as needed</li> <li>• Park improvements</li> <li>• Programs and activities</li> </ul>
Government Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD -- partner government entities and agencies of all levels with an interest in community safety</li> </ul>
Neighborhood and Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code enforcement</li> <li>• Community problem-solving</li> <li>• Provision of services/shelter</li> <li>• Impact and needs assessments</li> </ul>
Planning and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoning and land use</li> <li>• Traffic and street use</li> <li>• Assess infrastructure changes to reduce opportunity for crime</li> <li>• Crime prevention through environmental design</li> </ul>
Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety and cleanliness</li> <li>• Street repairs</li> </ul>
Tacoma Public Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before/after school activities</li> <li>• Facility availability and use</li> </ul>





# POPBP Evaluation



The UTSA researchers will:

- Conduct process and impact evaluations of the POPBP.
- Continue to follow key outcome metrics over time (e.g., 24-36 months) to track long-term impacts.
- Provide reports semi-annually following POPBP implementation.



# Long-Term Strategy



## Focused Deterrence

Focused deterrence strategies intervene with repeat and high risk *violent offenders* to offer them alternatives to a violent lifestyle (preferred) or to prosecute those who continue to offend

Prosecution is a collaborative effort between local, state, and federal partners

Service provision requires local, state, non-profit, and business partnerships







# Focused Deterrence



## Mechanism

- Offender call-ins – high risk offenders on probation/parole are called in quarterly for meeting with criminal justice officials, “moral voices,” and service providers
  - Those not on active probation/parole are contacted at home or on the street
- A deterrence message is given; harm caused is conveyed; services are made available
- Follow-up is done by case managers and/or street-level outreach workers



# Focused Deterrence



## Service Provision

- Counseling
- Job training
- Education (e.g. GED)
- Housing
- Job placement
- Substance abuse treatment, etc.



## Focused Deterrence Evaluation



The UTSA research team will be engaged to conduct an independent evaluation of the strategy.

Key indicators include:

- Process
  - Prosecutions/convictions/sentences received
  - Services provided
- Outcome
  - Before-and-after measures of crime and violence
  - Arrests/re-arrests among targeted offenders



## Timeline



- Hot Spots Policing
  - July 2022
  - Adjustments made quarterly
  - Reports made quarterly and semi-annually
- Problem-Oriented, Place-Based Policing
  - Ideally 6-12 months after hot spots policing begins
  - Implementation will be flexible depending upon budget requirements
  - Training needed (UTSA); coordination through POPBP Advisory Group
  - Semi-annual reports on implementation and impact by UTSA



## ● ● ● Timeline Cont'd



- Focused Deterrence
  - 6-12 months after POPBP begins
  - Implementation flexible
  - Federal, state, local partnerships must be formed; resources identified; costs budgeted
    - Federal and local prosecutions, when needed, must be coordinated
  - UTSA to provide training; process and impact evaluations

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## ● ● ● Equity and Fairness



The City of Tacoma has adopted a violent crime plan that:

- Is data driven
- Relies on objective indicators of crime, offending, and victimization
- Is racially and ethnicity-neutral

The plan does not rely on over-policing or practices such as stop and frisk, stereotyping, and/or discretionary/proactive stops.

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# Equity and Fairness

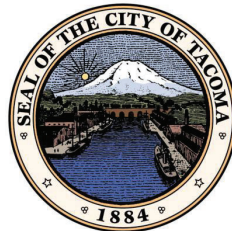


These modern strategies are designed to reduce violence in violence-prone places and among violence-prone people while also improving the place-based conditions that contribute to violent crime.

This is accomplished through visibility and deterrence rather than discretionary or proactive police stops.

- Enforcement, when needed, is strategic and surgical

Efforts are informed by objective criteria (e.g. reported crime, previous violent convictions, gang membership) rather than the race and/or ethnicity of neighborhoods or individuals in Tacoma.



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