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2023





Newark Office of Violence Prevention & Trauma Recovery: Strategic Plan







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Letter from the Mayor



It has been two years since the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery (OVPTR) was created to continue our "Newark Forward" efforts to make our city safer. The Office is an integral part of our city's violence suppression forces and the data collection efforts that allow us to funnel resources and support where and how they're needed. The OVPTR exists to be a point of collaboration among all of our strong community partners and to manage the city's own anti-violence initiatives.

Integral to our future as a city and as a people is our sense of the past and the struggle that has brought us to this point. Along with this Office, a museum will be inaugurated to honor the history of the fight for racial and social integration in our city. The building, at the corner of 17th Avenue and Livingston Street, was the Fourth Precinct in 1967; it is where the Newark Rebellion began. There, we will commemorate the history of the fight for freedom and equality in Newark – and honor "the voices of the unheard" that echoed through the streets in a cry for justice. Empowered, we continue to set Newark on a course of positive change – learning from and honoring our past, while preparing for our future.

As a city, we are committed to reducing violence and making our city safe for our people. We want to engage with the community, to make sure their voices are heard, and that they are involved in this Office and in the life of the city.

I would like to thank everybody who has helped make this Office true to its mission: The impact you are delivering in this city will be felt generationally.

I am truly excited about the work we have done and, more importantly, the work we are getting ready to do as mapped out in this Strategic Plan. Despite painful histories, Newark is on a long march forward. We are getting stronger every year. Not simply because of the work in city government, but because of your engagement and your input, you are pushing us to be a safer city, community by community. Because you are a part of the Newark People's Assembly, because you attend police community roundtables, because you do what is necessary to keep our city strong, Newark is leading the way. I am committed to continuing those efforts and addressing the harms of the past with compassion and healing that will allow Newark to grow as a place where families and communities thrive.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ras J. Baraka
City of Newark

Letter from the Director of Office for Violence Prevention & Trauma Recovery



Since our inception in 2020, we have worked hard to shape an agenda for healing, peace, and recovery from systemic and more personal forms of oppression, through the work of the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery. I have talked to hundreds of people in this city, partnered with our community leaders who are involved in violence prevention and interruption, met with national experts, and received guidance from my colleagues in city government and the Mayor's Office.

All of these conversations have led us to this plan for you. Mayor Baraka and City Council have created this office dedicated to the proposition that a community acting together is the only way we will sustain the battle against the epidemic of crime and violence in our City. Based on all of your feedback, this strategy represents the best thinking of experts, community leaders, and our neighbors on how to deliver on your dreams and most effectively use the resources at our disposal.

None of us will rest while we know that the scourge of guns and weapons on our streets still exists, and the incomprehensible impulse to take another's life still is acted upon. This plan represents an opportunity for every member of the Newark family to stand up and fight against these acts and in love to bring healing to our entire community.

Sincerely,

LaKeesha Eure
Director of Office of Violence Prevention & Trauma Recovery
City of Newark

Letter from the Director of the Department of Public Safety



Like so many of our colleagues across the country, Newark is on the front line of reimagining public safety as a public health issue. The Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery (OVPTR) is the embodiment of this strategy.

OVPTR combines proven methodologies, such as using data intelligence to focus resources on hot spots with input from the Newark Police Division, coupled with a public health approach toward implementing preventive and interventive actions. We are confident that this innovative process of addressing risk and violence will result in improved trust between the city and its communities and increased safety for all residents.

The role of public safety in this critical initiative was also supported by my predecessor, former Newark Public Safety Director Brian O'Hara, who recognized that reducing crime is based on both prevention and response. I am grateful for his commitment and look forward to building upon his uniquely holistic perspective.

The Newark Department of Public Safety will continue its partnership with OVPTR by advancing our collaborative work toward developing alternative responses to violence and improving the city's capacity to de-escalate violent behavior.

I am enthusiastic about the implementation of this plan for the betterment of our city.

Sincerely,

Fritz G. Fragé
Director
Newark Department of Public Safety

Letter from the Former Director of Public Safety

True safety in the City of Newark requires that it builds trust with the community, enhance the quality of life for every resident and foster a sense of security to enable citizens to live, work, be educated, and prosper. This work must be done not just through improving policing, but also by providing alternative responses that address need, acknowledge trauma, and provide meaningful support to address risk and resolve the real challenges behind the issues police so often are called to address.

The expectation that police alone can address violence is not realistic. That's why the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery is absolutely essential to providing public safety for our residents. I am proud to have endorsed the creation of OVPTR and look forward to seeing the implementation of this plan for the betterment of this great city.

Sincerely,

Brian A. O'Hara Former Director of the Department of Public Safety

Letter from the Director of the Department of Health and Community Wellness



For many years, our Department has been studying and mapping social determinants of health to improve health outcomes for members of Newark's most fragile communities. We must work together, city departments and communities, to identify and treat the underlying factors of violent behavior and prevent it from spreading even more. Extreme poverty, mental health conditions, and neighborhood dynamics can drive individuals to act violently. Trauma from violence also contributes to a recurring cycle.

Under the leadership of my predecessor, Dr. Mark Wade, this department took leading and groundbreaking steps in addressing public safety as a public health issue. We will continue to build upon that work.

The creation of the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery brought more visibility to these issues and pulled together the significant work that many community partners have been doing to address violence. I pledge my support to working with them and with our colleagues in government in the full and successful implementation of this strategy.

Sincerely,

Ketlen Baptiste Alsbrook
Director
Department of Health and Community Wellness

Letter from the Former Director of the Department of Health and Community Wellness

Violence is a public health crisis. It takes far too many lives, leaves families shattered, and the mental health toll caused by trauma faced in communities confronted with violence permanently scars our residents' healthy development and well-being.

We must confront this crisis with the urgency the situation demands. This plan of the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery marks a bold turning point for the City of Newark, acknowledging that it must address the underlying conditions that give rise to violence if residents hope to live in a city that is safe and prosperous for all residents. I proudly gave my support to this mission, and I am positive that my former colleagues in government will work together in the full and successful implementation of this strategy.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark J. Wade Former Director of the Department of Health and Community Wellness

Thank you

This Strategic Plan of the Newark Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery would not have been possible without the dedication of:

CITY OF NEWARK

Municipal Departments:

Department of Education

Department of Health and Community Wellness

Department of Public Safety

City Staff:

Mayor's Office

Andrea Mason
Newark People's Assembly

Jennifer Fana
Assistant

Shoshanna Page
Senior Policy Advisor and Communications Strategist

Communications Office

Crystal Rosa
Director

The team of the Office of Violence Prevention & Trauma Recovery

Photographer

Adewale Thompson

CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

Brick City Peace Collective

Equal Justice USA

Hospital Violence Intervention Program

The HUBB Arts & Trauma Center

My Brother's Keeper Newark

Newark Anti-Violence Coalition

Newark Community Solutions

Newark Community Street Team (NCST)

Newark Opportunity Youth Network

Newark Public Safety Collaborative

Newark Street Academy

West Ward Victims Outreach Services

Shani Baraka Resource Center

CONSULTANTS

Bloomberg Associates

Results Driven Consulting



Executive Summary

The Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery (OVPTR) was created by Mayor Ras J. Baraka in June of 2020. It is headquartered at the former 1st Precinct of the City of Newark Police Division, located in the Central Ward, and will host program services and a Museum to honor the city's long fight for racial integration and social healing.

OVPTR envisions a city where violence is approached from a public health perspective and where people are considered individuals as well as products of their environment. The Office's mission is to improve the quality of life for all residents of Newark through reimagining public safety and public health as tools to address the underlying causes of violence, not only its consequences.

The Mayor and City Council have allocated 5% of the Public Safety budget to fund the new OVPTR.

Our team has analyzed historic city data, listened carefully to suggestions from residents and invited recommendations from experienced community and city leaders who have been working to prevent violence in Newark for many years to define how budget expenditure could be prioritized. The result is the following strategic goals:

1. **Supporting Communities to Have an Active Role in Creating Public Safety**
2. **Mobilizing Community and Law Enforcement to Focus on Hot Spots**
3. **Shifting the Culture to Think About Trust, Healing, and Resilience**
4. **Investing in the Capacity of People and Resources Working to Prevent Violence**

Compassion. Caring. Community. Collaboration. These are the values that guide OVPTR, and which will be the north of our strategies.

There are currently five programs directly managed by our Office:

- Brick City Peace Collective: to coordinate existing community supports at the neighborhood level and promote collaborations for wraparound services that will drive strategic systemic change to violence prevention and trauma recovery;
- Victims of Crime Act: to provide financial assistance and services to victims and their families most impacted by trauma;
- Anti-Racism & Hate Crime Unit: to monitor organized behaviors of bias and promote a culture of mutual respect;
- Office of Well Being: a system of co-response of police and social workers responding to 911 calls together or as an alternative to police;
- Shani Baraka Women's Resource Center: to support women, families and LGBTQ residents who are in crisis or transition.

But most importantly, the city partners with experienced local community-based programs, such as, and not limited to, the Newark Community Streets Team, the Newark Opportunity Youth Network, and national programs, such as My Brother's Keeper and Equal Justice USA, who hold substantial knowledge about our communities and have been paving the way on preventive work for many years now. Through the Brick City Peace Collective and the OVPTR Advisory Group, local partners will work hand in hand with the City in the implementation of this Strategic Plan.

OVPTR will continue to work directly with the Public Safety and Public Health Departments and the Newark Education Board to address daily needs of residents experiencing or causing violence and trauma. We will do so by improving coordination between existing city and community initiatives, strengthening successful programs and creating new ones, if needed, to fill gaps in service.

OVPTR will focus on gun violence, drug selling and use, and domestic violence, which is where data and communities have expressed the biggest concerns. We will do that while strengthening the relationship between police and community, by providing opportunities for youth engagement, and implementing alternatives to heal individuals and their environment.

Newark is part of a national movement, which is shifting the paradigm around violence prevention. That is why OVPTR will develop partnerships to thoroughly measure the impact of key initiatives. We want the positive lessons learned here to become best practices nationwide.

"We want the positive lessons learned here to become best practices nationwide."

Finally, the Newark Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery will invest in the technical capacity and emotional resilience of those who are devoting their lives to preventing violence in our city. Training, as well as mental health and wellbeing practices will be core to our work, so that these dedicated workers can follow their vocation without suffering with the severity of the situations they address or witness on our collective quest to make Newark a safer city for everyone.

QUICK BOX

Who:

Mayor Ras J. Baraka, Director Lakeesha Eure from the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery, and partner initiatives.

What:

1. **Supporting Communities to Have an Active Role in Creating Public Safety**
2. **Mobilizing Community and Law Enforcement to Focus on Hot Spots**
3. **Shifting the Culture to Think About Trust, Healing, and Resilience**
4. **Investing in the Capacity of People and Resources Working to Prevent Violence**

Where:

Headquartered at the former 1st Precinct of the Newark Police Division, located in the Central Ward and acting city-wide.

How:

- Adopting a public health approach to violence
- Treating the whole person and their environment
- Coordinating efforts from public safety, public health, and community-based organizations
- Investing in successful community-based programs
- Creating new initiatives where gaps are found
- Monitoring and evaluating practices
- Building staff and collaborators' capacity
- Caring for the mental and physical health of social workers on the ground

Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery

Violence as a Public Health Issue

The CDC reports that as the United States became more successful at preventing and treating infectious diseases, death by homicide and suicide began to rise in the rankings. In 2019, homicides were the fifth-leading cause of death among people 1-44 years old in the US, while suicides occupied the second position.[1]

The Newark Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery believes that violent behavior can be the consequence of a combination of underlying factors such as mental health conditions, extreme poverty and neighborhood dynamics, and that violent repression is not always the best answer. Instead, we envision a city where communities and Municipal Departments work together to treat residents as individuals and products of their environment, and addresses crime and violence with wraparound services for both perpetrators and victims to break the cycle of violence.

As behavioral modifications such as exercise, diet changes, and smoking cessation can lead to the prevention of the major causes of death, such as heart diseases, the same can be done to facilitate behavioral challenges that underpin interpersonal violence and suicidal behavior. That is why OVPTR will adopt a Public Health model to address violence. It will use a systematic, scientific approach for understanding and preventing violence, which includes four main steps:

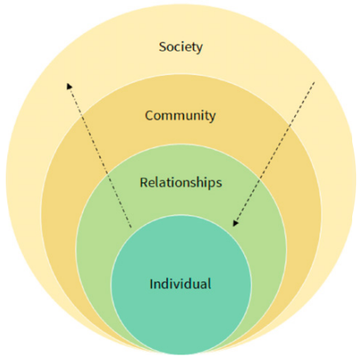
1. Define problems through data and community engagement
2. Identify risk and protective factors
3. Develop, test, and evaluate prevention strategies to decrease risk factors
4. Assure widespread adoption of successful strategies

Treating the Whole Person

We acknowledge that people act based on a combination of factors, internal and external, that influence their decisions and emotions (Figure 1):

- Individual: biological and personal history factors, such as age, education, history of drug abuse, depression, beliefs, child maltreatment, etc.;
- Relationship: close relationships with parents, friends, work, spouse;
- Community: settings such as schools, household, workplace, neighborhood dynamics, poverty, residential mobility, high crime levels;
- Societal: broad societal factors and cultural norms that drive attitudes, including individual rights and responsibilities, race and ethnic inequalities.

We will focus on strategies that treat individuals, but also their neighborhood and community. We know that unemployment, for example, is correlated with criminal activity, and so is the presence of broken and abandoned buildings in a neighborhood. Our prevention strategy must consider all. OVPTR will connect people to appropriate support services tailored to each situation and work with communities to rebuild neighborhoods.



OVPTR will treat the whole person as an individual and as a product of its environment. (Figure 1)

[1] https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/animated-leading-causes.html

Focusing on Hot Spots

The Public Health approach also invites city departments and communities to see violent behavior as an infectious disease. As stated in the Mayor's 2014 Blueprint to Reduce Crime and Violence in Newark[2] ("Blueprint"), violence is one of the leading causes of death in our city, and as with other deadly diseases, places where it is clustered must receive special attention before it spreads even further.

Newark presently uses Compstat to target concentrations of crime and to assign law enforcement personnel based upon where crimes occur rather than upon wards or districts. Geographic mapping technology, as well as a collaborative mapping process with communities, will be expanded to target workforce development, social services, code enforcement, literacy programs, vacant lot clean-ups, building demolitions, and other means to make neighborhoods safer and more livable. Treatment will be localized to ensure greater efficiency in deploying the City's resources.

Collaboration between Public Safety, Public Health, and Community Initiatives

The Newark OVPTR is part of a national movement that is working to provide comprehensive services to promote well-being of communities and work on the ground to defuse violent acts before they become crimes.

The underlying premise of our work is that by de-escalating socio-economic problems the City can also prevent criminal activity. Newark has an engaged and organized community, who for many years has been working on the streets to address community violence and trauma.

OVPTR will strengthen collaboration and coordination between law enforcement, public health and community-based initiatives using data and research to inform the city's further investments in violence prevention.

We will also launch initiatives that will give more power to residents to collaborate with city efforts and have a permanent active voice on the prevention work implemented by City departments.



[2] http://www.newark-thrives.org/uploads/7/8/8/4/78847100/baraka-blueprint-for-crime-final-copy.pdf

Background & Data

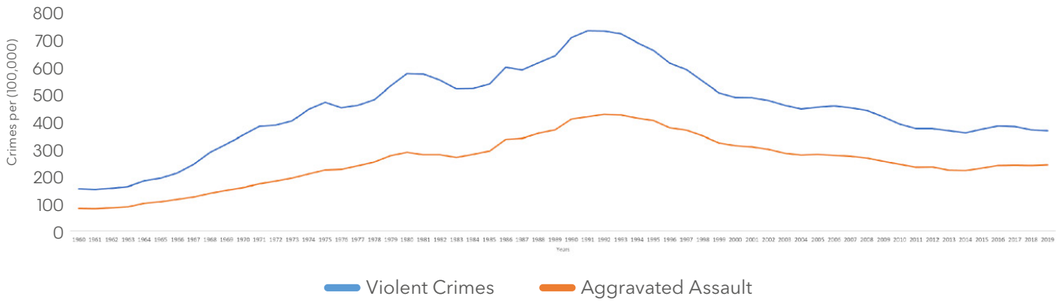
Background

In 1990, the United States witnessed a peak in both violent crimes and aggravated assault. Specifically, violent crimes peaked at 757.5 (per 100,000) in the year 1992, while aggravated assaults rose to 440.3 (per 100,000) a year later, in 1993.

The graph below expresses the change over time between these two specific events. While the United States has seen a dramatic decline in violent crimes since the 1990's, during the pandemic violent crimes have spiked up.



Crime Trends (1960 - 2019)





Newark Data

Data plays a central role in steering decisions of the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery. In March of 2021, the first OVPT Newark Community Safety Report was produced by Bloomberg Associates for the office, analyzing key crime data, pre- and during the pandemic, to help define priority actions for the Office (Figure 2).

The data was provided by the Newark Police Department and has been updated monthly and to continue to serve as a key reference for programs and budgetary decisions from OVPTR.

Due to the combined effort of government and partner community organizations, during the two years before the COVID-19 pandemic overall crime in Newark was declining, with some exceptions most notably domestic violence, and more recently gun related crimes. These will be key priorities of the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery.

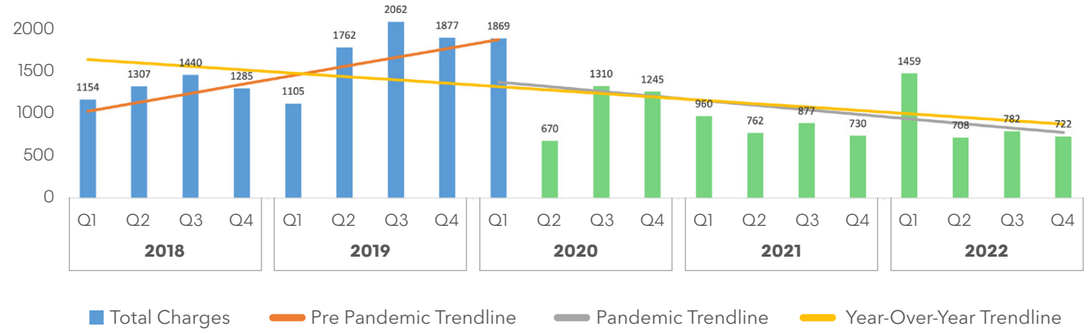
The Report also shows complaints broken down by precincts, and indicates a higher concentration of crime in Precincts 1, 2, 3 and especially 5, which should be treated as hot spots for targeting resources (Figure 3).

Some of the crimes that stood out in the report were murders, non-fatal gun shooting and domestic violence. Before the pandemic the number of murders and nonfatal shootings were on a significant downward trend, with only six recorded murder deaths in the first quarter of 2020. However, during the pandemic there has been a setback on these gains, with a spike. In both cases the 5th Precinct has the highest number of complaints compared to the other precincts.

"...higher concentration of crime in Precincts 1, 2, 3 and especially 5, which should be treated as hot spots for targeting resources."

Domestic violence incidents have increased significantly over the full three years. There has been a 40% increase over the full period. It is important to note that this increase occurred primarily before the pandemic, then leveled off, with an average of over 1,100 domestic violence victims per quarter during the pandemic period.

City Wide Charges Total
2018 - 2022



2018-2022 city-wide quarterly crime charges. The blue bars represent the pre pandemic data while the green bars represent the pandemic data. (Figure 2)

A Collaborative Work



Newark has a long history of violence prevention and intervention through its local organizations and community leaders. Acting daily on the streets and working closely with residents, these organizations have been fulfilling an important role in caring for victims and protecting communities long before our Office was conceived.

National organizations, such as **Equal Justice USA (EJUSA)**, have been paving the way to transform the justice system by promoting responses to violence that break cycles of trauma. Equal Justice USA works at the intersection of criminal justice, public health and racial justice to elevate healing over retribution, care for survivors, advance racial equity and build community safety.

In Newark, EJUSA partnered with the **Newark Anti-Violence Coalition (NAVC)**, founded in 2009 by Mayor Baraka, to develop their strategic plan. A grass-roots community organization created out of residents' outrage with young lives being interrupted because of violence, NAVC started working directly with victims and their families offering support in court, applying for family compensation, advocating for more trauma-informed education in schools, and were able to get a city-wide acknowledgment of gun violence as a public health issue.

NAVC led the largest anti-violence movement, which lasted 155 consecutive weeks, and is now responsible for the city's social and restorative justice strategy.

The **Newark Community Street Team (NCST)**, founded in 2015 by Mayor Baraka and Aqeela Sherrills, also works directly with residents as a community evidence-based, trauma-informed, violence reduction strategy. It hires, trains and deploys community-based nontraditional outreach workers and high-risk interventionists in the South Ward and West Wards of Newark. It includes those who have been incarcerated and those who have been engaged in the drug trade, to (a) provide casework to those at greatest risk of becoming a victim or a perpetrator of violence; (b) engage in high-risk intervention, both mediating ongoing disputes that may result in violence and preventing retaliation; (c) offer safe passage at contracted



schools; and (d) provide support to crime survivors who are overlooked by traditional victim services agencies.

NCST's work includes the support of the **Hospital Violence Intervention Program**, through which outreach workers embedded in the University Hospital Trauma Center connect victims and their families to support services including those of the high-risk intervention team to prevent repeat or retaliatory violence.

Youth has been and remains a key focus of this collaborative work. In 2016, the **Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN)** began its work after nearly 10 years of work as YouthBuild Newark, an affiliate of YouthBuild USA. Founded by Robert Clark, a former YouthBuild graduate, the initiative provides young people ages 16-24 years old with an opportunity to earn a GED while gaining on-the-job training through community building projects. NOYN coordinates support from other key initiatives, each one advancing one of the key pillars of the organization:

- Workforce Development: YouthBuild Newark, a comprehensive youth and community development program operating for more than 30 years across the country, which addresses core issues facing low-income communities: education, housing, employment, crime prevention and leadership development;

- Policy Advocacy: **My Brother's Keeper Newark (MBK)**, established in 2014 by Mayor Baraka, it is part of a national alliance to support black and Latino young men by focusing on mentoring, violence reduction and second chances, and connecting boys and men with living wage jobs.

- Systems Building: Newark Youth Workforce Collaborative, the table where impactful players in youth workforce development gather and work together to establish a clear school-to-workplace pipeline for Newark's young people.

- Education: LEAD Charter School, the first alternative public charter high school specifically designed to serve opportunity youth in Newark.

Also created by Mayor Baraka to support youth is the **Newark Street Academy (NSA)**, a program for disengaged youth between the ages of 16-24 years who have dropped out of school. NSA offers a 20-week cohort to 75 youth a year that includes case management, job readiness, vocational training and knowledge of self curriculum.

The **West Ward Victims Outreach Services (WWVOS)** program provides trauma support services to young men of color ages 18-30 in Newark's West Ward who have been impacted by trauma and victimization. Support services include mental health counselling, housing assistance, social services, legal aid, crime victim compensation assistance, and job readiness training.

Because evidence-based and data driven decisions are at the heart of Newark's approach to reduce violent crime and enhance public safety, the **Newark Public Safety Collaborative (NPSC)**, formed in 2018 as part of the **Rutgers-Newark** School of Criminal Justice Anchor Initiative, working in collaboration with the Mayor's Office, community grass-roots organizations and large corporations, provides key support by making data analytics and research evidence accessible to its members, local community groups and change agents.

Community collaboration also finds a strong supporter in **The HUBB Arts & Trauma Center**, one of the Mayor's "Center for Hope" The HUBB has become a beacon, offering beneficial activities and opportunities to youth residents of a subsidized housing complex, in an ongoing attempt to build equity. This has included job fairs, health screenings, and discussions on mental wellness, violence, abuse, arts and trauma recovery.

Finally, **Newark Community Solutions (NCS)** does a transformational work in criminal justice by offering judges with increased sentencing options for non-violent offenses such as drug possession, prostitution, and shoplifting. By expanding the use of community service and social service mandates, NCS reduces the court's reliance on ineffective fines and expensive short-term jail sentences, enhances procedural justice, and builds public confidence in justice.

To be successful, violence prevention programs require the commitment and participation of a range of community stakeholders starting with the residents of the City of Newark and extending to "every institutional stakeholder, including universities, small businesses, public schools, corporations, nonprofits, and philanthropic organizations."[3] The Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery will be charged with this responsibility.

Through the **Brick City Peace Collective (BCPC)**, OVPTR aims at strengthening collaboration of existing organizations while simultaneously linking residents to supportive services and needed resources. Sixteen organizations have already joined forces at BCPC: Newark Board of Education, Newark Public Safety Office, Brick Education, NSA, Rutgers, RWJBH, MBK, the HUBB, EJUSA, WWVOS, NAVC, New Black Panther Party, NPSC, NCST, My Sister's Keeper, West-Ward Victims Outreach, NOYN, and NCS.

This unprecedented collaboration between City and community-based organizations will generate a strategic systemic change on how we address violence prevention and trauma recovery. Together, BCPC members will meet periodically to rethink and redesign city-wide strategies that leverage all existing resources and gathered knowledge. BCPC members, together with the OVPTR Advisory Group, will work hand in hand with our Office to implement the strategies set in this Strategic Plan.





[3] http://www.newark-thrives.org/uploads/7/8/8/4/78847100/baraka-blueprint-for-crime-final-copy.pdf

Community Engagement and Advisory Group

A key aspect of OVPTR is getting the community involved to help shape and implement our programs and priorities.

Our Director as well as our Advisory Group and all staff members from OVPTR and partner programs have years of experience working directly with communities, being residents at high-risk communities and working daily with victims and perpetrators to interrupt the cycle of violence in Newark. Preventing violence is not only what they do, but also their mission in life.

Despite the in-person meeting restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to hold productive meeting sessions through the Newark People's Assemblies. During April and May of 2021, we held five different virtual meetings with residents of all of the five wards to present our key goals for OVPTR and listen to their suggestions and concerns. We were joined by key members of the Public Health and Public Safety departments who listed and answered to questions from residents.

Sessions were held in English, as well as in Spanish and Portuguese, when applicable, and participants could join by Zoom and Facebook. Residents shared their personal stories and key issues of their communities and offered recommendations on how to prioritize allocation of OVPTR resources.

For a complete list of priorities, proposed programs and challenges by ward, please refer to the Feedback chart below.

Feedback from People's Assembly

Ward	Suggested Programs	Thematic Priorities	Key Challenges Being Faced by the Community
North	• Crisis Response Teams to provide immediate emotional support and legal assistance for victims, affected families, and communities who may not be comfortable talking directly to law enforcement • Crisis consistent volunteer opportunities for residents	• Enhance and expand Captain's Corner and similar community policing events/programs • Domestic Violence and support for victims	• Bridging the communication and coordination gap between NPD and the community
South	• Enhance and expand Captain's Corner and similar community policing events/programs	• Community-centered public safety • Youth violence prevention services and youth engagement opportunities	• Safe, affordable, housing for those in need • Relocation/Transitional housing for DV victims and additional services
Central	• Police social ionteractions with the community • Social services to homeless individuals • Alternatives to incarceration • Helping people navigate NPD and police processes	• Human and sex trafficking • Domestic Violence • Homelessness • Drug Selling and use	• Springfield Avenue, close to basketball courts, hot spot for drug use and selling
West	• Conflict resolution and mediation services • Publicly accessible data dashboards and resource databases • Expansion of the Safe Passage programming	• Focus on Hot Spots • Youth violence prevention services and youth engagement opportunities • Coordination and communication with trusted CBOs	• Criminalization of poverty – mental health, drug use, and homelessness
East	• Community Block Watch • Increase community engagement with the Police officers to encourage empathy • Programs with teenage mothers and programs for Post-Partum depression	• Crime • Presence in all neighborhoods • Bridge gap between the community and the police	• Heavy drug activity – need more police presence in Hot Spots

Supporting residents to have an active role in creating public safety is our number one goal, and that is why on the section below, OVPTR Strategy, we have laid out our proposed strategy to have community members at the drawing board with OVPTR on an ongoing basis.

Finally, we also count with the invaluable support of our Advisory Group who are knowledgeable and experienced members of community-based organizations and city government:

- Khaatim Sherrer El – Results Driven Consulting
- Mark Comesañas – MBK Newark
- Princess Fortin – NYC Department of Health
- Aqeela Shirrells – Newark Community Street Team
- Will Simpson – Equal Justice USA
- Dr. Juan Rios – Seton Hall University, Professor of Social Work
- Kyleesha Wingfield-Hill – Brick City Peace Collective
- Shoshanna Page – Senior Policy Advisor and Communications Strategist, City of Newark

PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Thematic Priorities Raised by Residents:

- domestic violence;
- youth violence.

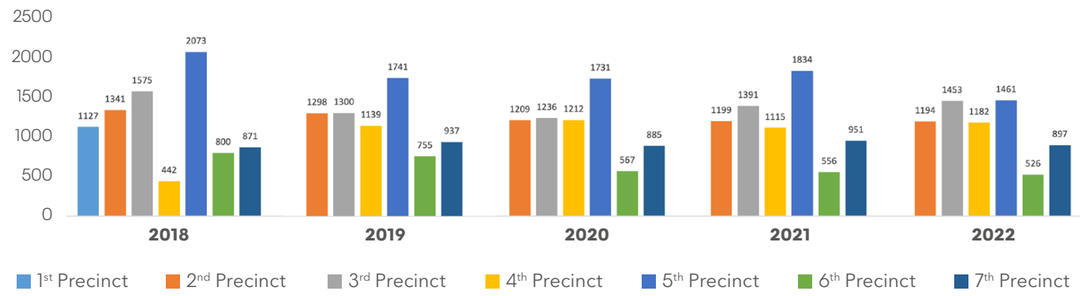
Programs Requested by Residents:

- expanding police social interactions with the community through more initiatives such as Captain's Corner;
- conflict resolution and mediation services;
- youth engagement services;
- community block watch among others.

Key challenges faced by communities:

- bridging the communication and coordination gap between the Newark Police and the community;
- affordable housing for those in need;
- criminalization of poverty;
- heavy drug use and drug hotspots.

City Wide Crime Complaints by Precinct 2018 - 2022



2018-2022 city-wide crime complaints by precinct. (Figure 3)

Source: Newark Police Department

OVPTR Strategy

Mission & Vision

The vision of the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery is a City of Newark where public safety and public health work hand-in-hand to address the underlying causes of violence. OVPTR wishes to see a city where rebuilding and healing our community shifts the culture from trauma to trust.

The OVPTR's mission is multi-faceted. We will provide services that will address trauma-related issues and promote prevention strategies to enhance the quality of life for all Newark residents. The Office will approach violence from a Public Health perspective, emphasizing education, advocacy, community healing, social impact, and interventions.

Target Population

We know that violence prevention starts at home and that giving children the right start in life is the best way to prevent violence and crime. We want to help families find stability, especially in children's early years. Youth will be a key target of OVPTR as well, through engagement and motivation for a brighter future. They are the future that we must invest in today. We want also women to be even more empowered to achieve independence and personal and professional growth in a safe environment.

As promised, reentry will also be a key focus of OVPTR, supporting autonomy and capacity building for people's full transition so they become integral participants in our City and in the neighborhoods where they live.

Finally, OVPTR will have a special focus on street organizations. All street organizations in Newark have been made aware that there will be zero tolerance for violence. We will continue having direct communication with them and will provide them with the necessary support, from conflict mediation to training, to stop violence.

Core Values

Empathy and integrity are key requirements of any member of OVPTR, who are duly trained on Trauma and Trust, Conflict, and Crisis Intervention to better serve communities and coordinate services with law enforcement.

We work by four main values:

- Compassion – we aspire to relieve suffering through open-hearted and holistic engagements.
- Caring – we commit to being consistently equitable, healing safe spaces in our City through innovative and effective strategies.
- Community – we empower our residents to take part in restorative justice, and contributors to the well-being and health of the community.
- Collaboration – fostering synergy and collaborations with stakeholders, businesses, government, and universities to address the root of shared trauma in the City of Newark. Establishing the center as a national think tank on Violent Crime Reduction and Trauma Healing.

Strategic Goals & Initiatives

The strategic goals of the Office are the result of a thorough analysis of data, discussions residents, program managers, community leaders and city departments, as well as years if experience serving communities. Initiatives, existing and proposed for future consideration, are briefly described under each strategic goal.

These priorities also round out the Mayor's vision in the Blueprint published in 2014. Please refer to Attachments II and III for a summary of strategies by Strategic Goals and by Thematic Priorities.



1. Supporting Citizens to have an Active Role in Creating Public Safety

Public safety requires deep and authentic community safety ownership. Communities are safe when every member of the community feels safe there. The focus of the public health approach is on the health, safety, and well-being of the entire population.

Together with communities, we will work to identify risk and protective factors at the community level and engage preventive strategies that are evidenced based and closely evaluated. Our goal is to deploy linkages of public safety data and public health data to increase transparency and impact. We believe that putting data into the community's hand empowers their decision-making action.

Programs and initiatives that will help us advance this goal include:

Partner Programs

Equal Justice USA

Trauma to Trust training that brings community members and law enforcement officials together to foster empathy and mutual understanding of trauma through conversations about race, violence, and social and economic inequity.

The HUBB Arts & Trauma Center

Locates at a subsidized housing complex, organizes job fairs, health screenings, and discussion on mental wellness, violence and abuse to low and very-low income residents.

Public Safety Roundtables

A community-driven public safety forum where residents interact with Police in responding to policing and safety in their neighborhoods, provide direct feedback to the Police Department on strategies, and develop local solutions.

Newark Community Solutions

Works directly with judges to advocate for sentencing options for non-violent offenses by expanding use of community service and social service mandates and decreasing jail sentences.

New Initiatives We Will Advance

Community Safety Plans

Place-based safety solutions tailored to unique neighborhood needs, developed by community and driven by data. Create a framework for each neighborhood to generate their own safety plan.

Community Data Dashboards

Build on Community Safety Report to create a broader neighborhood safety dashboard that incorporates indicators beyond crime that implicate safety.

Neighborhood Environmental Design

Actions to address blight through community driven physical improvements have been proven to reduce crime and build community cohesion.

Programs and Initiatives by Strategic Priority

Initiatives	Supporting Communities to Have an Active Role in Creating Public Safety	Mobilize Law Enforcement and Community to Focus on Hot Spots	Shift Culture to Think about Trust, Healing, and Resilience	Invest in the Capacity of the People and Resouces Working to Prevent Violence
Partner Initiatives Not Managed by OVPTR	• Equal Justice USA • Public Safety Roundtables • The HUBB Arts & Trauma Center • Newark Community Solutions	• Newark Community Street Team • Harm Reduction Centers • Hospital Violence Intervention • Newark Public Safety Collaborative	• Newark Opportunity Youth Network • West Ward Victims Outreach Services • [Newark Anti Violence Coalition] • [MBK]	• [Newark Public Safety Collaborative]
Existing OVPTR Initiatives		• Office of Well Being • Brick City Peace Collective	• Shani Baraka Resource Center • Victims of Crime Act • Anti-Racism and Hate Crime Units	• Design and Evaluation Manager • Budget and Procurement Manager • Data Analyst • Grant Manager
Initiatives to Consider	• Community Safety Plans • Community Data Dashboards • Neighborhood Environmental Design	• Focused Deterrence Programs • Community-based Youth Intervention Services • Crowd Sourced Community Safety Risk Mapping • Batterer Intervention Program • Expand Shani Baraka Center Citywide	• Intensive Survivor Support Service • Community Resilience Grant Program • Trauma Recovery Counseling • Youth Respite / Mentoring Initiative	• Research and Evaluation partners • Evaluation Fund • Mental Health and Wellness for Staff • Procurement Infrastructure • Communications Director

2. Mobilize Community and Law Enforcement to Focus on Hot Spots

We will utilize a collective impact approach, deploying violence prevention resources to priority communities.

A collective impact approach brings people together in a structured way to achieve social change, starting with a common agenda. It focuses on collective goals, strategic partnerships, and shared actions and accountability when it is most needed.

Collective action at the community level will engage leaders and partners with community members to come up with community driven solutions to public safety. Data and community input will be used to focus resources on hot spots.

Programs and initiatives that will help us advance this goal include:

Programs Directly Managed by OVPTR

Office of Well-Being
System of co-response of police and social workers responding to 911 calls together, or as an alternative to police, to provide the necessary mental health services to de-escalate situations, support needs and address trauma of all involved.

Brick City Peace Collective
A collaborative of 16 community-based organizations working together to reduce violence and conflict in Newark. They employ strategies such as reimagining policing, crisis response, diversionary programs, and community programming to eliminate violence. BCPC aims at gathering forces and knowledge of experienced community-based organizations to drive a systemic change on violence prevention and trauma recovery.

Partner Programs

Hospital Violence Intervention
Specially trained intervention with victims of violence bedside at the hospitals, to help reduce the chances they will be involved in retaliatory acts of violence.

Harm Reduction Centers
Cross disciplinary approach to addressing opioid addictions, could be leveraged for related activities to reduce justice involvement.

Newark Community Street Team
A member of BCPC, it is a community level violence interruption initiative which enlists former gangmembers and returning citizens to help BYMOC steer clear of the trouble before it escalates to violence, operating in South and West Wards of Newark.

Newark Public Safety Collaborative
Makes data analytics and research evidence on violent crime reductions and public safety strategies accessible to members, local community groups and change agents.

New Initiatives We Will Advance

Crowdsourced Community Risk Mapping
Open online platform for residents to directly report crime. Platform does not substitute official mapping done by authorities, but serves to compare community input with formal sources.

Community-based Youth Intervention Program
Intensive in-home family services including Family Functioning Therapy and Multi Systemic Therapy for youth who are at high risk and in need of intensive family-based services.

Batterer Intervention Program
Group and individual counseling to individuals who perpetrated domestic violence. Program includes screening and referral of individuals for mental health and drug abuse treatment.

Expand Shani Baraka Resource Center Citywide
Addressing Domestic Violence is a priority for Newark residents and for the OVPTR. The Shani Baraka Resource Center has become a key partner in preventing violence and protecting women and families. It is currently located in the South Ward, but a clear need has been identified in the Central and North Wards.

Focused Deterrence Programs
Intensive intervention for chronically violent offenders. Convince individuals that the costs associated with violence outweighs any benefit. Coupled with community support and ongoing social services.

3. Shift Culture to Think About Trust, Healing and Resilience

We will utilize a social determinants of health framework to advance community healing and strengths building.

Our goal is to adopt a healing and strengths building approach to tackle disparities caused by structural racism with strategies that acknowledge the harms caused by decisions of the past, and counter them with community healing and strengths-building activities.

Programs and initiatives that will help us advance this goal include:

Partner Programs

Newark Opportunity Youth Network
Focusing on education, workforce development, policy advocacy and system's building, the program, helps youth ages 16-24 years old earn a GED and job-training.

West Ward Victims Outreach Services
Support services to young men of color ages 18-30 in Newark's West Ward who have been impacted by trauma and victimization. Includes mental health, housing, social services, legal, and other types of support.



Programs Directly Managed by OVPTR

Shani Baraka Resource Center
A multi-faceted agency dedicated to providing comprehensive services to meet the needs of women and their families in crisis and transition.

Victims of Crime Act
Challenges the harmful factors that have long been at play through collaborative and holistic approaches, working with the community on tangible strategies to address the needs of the residents of Newark most impacted by trauma and violence.

Anti-Racism and Hate Crimes Unit
Focus on monitoring organized behaviors of bias in the community, educating the community on these and how to overcome them, and promoting a culture of mutual respect.

New Initiatives We Will Advance

Community Resilience Grant Program
Utilize the benefits of increased earnings, educational opportunities, and career experience to empower youth and populations at risk and address social determinants of health that lead to violence.

Intensive Survivor Support Service
Offers immediate intervention and advocacy via phone, chat, text, or in-person. Provides trauma-informed services to victims impacted by crisis, violence, or tragedy. Coupled with education and training.

Trauma Recovery Counseling
Counseling in the immediate aftermath of gun violence and in the years following can help survivors address their physical and emotional trauma. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) assists with mental health challenges and reduces criminal behavior.

Youth Respite / Mentoring Initiative
Youth engagement strategies to support youth who need positive support to achieve their goals

4. Investing in the Capacity of People and Resources Working to Prevent Violence

and navigate challenging life circumstances.

Finally, the Office will keep a lean structure to maximize resources and staff will work closely with program managers to provide daily support and mentorship.

Staff from OVPTR and from key partners will be trained and empowered to collaborate and lead. Mapping, tracking, and connecting city and community services to maximize collaboration and for wise use of resources is a key part of our work.

Programs and office activities will be closely monitored to ensure they can be adjusted as necessary as to achieve desired goals and efficiently use resources.

In terms of communications, we aim for transparency.

Finally, mental health and wellbeing of those who are doing the job is key for our Office. We know from experience the emotional toll that this work can have on outreach and social workers, as well as other supportive staff, and we have selected strategies to be considered to improve their emotional balance.

Programs and initiatives that will help us advance this goal include:

Budget and Procurement Capacity
The OVPTR will work in partnership with community-based organizations of all sizes and budgets to attend community needs by issuing grant and contract opportunities.

Data Analysis
Data plays a key role in the OVPTR. A data analyst will be responsible for keeping the Community Safety Report up to date. This person will also collect, organize, and analyze data, either already available or through new sources, to help inform decision-making and results.

Workers Mental Health and Wellness Support
Trauma-informed training and professional development resources to advance capacities, combined with mental health and wellness support to staff members from OVPTR and partner organizations.

Research and Evaluation Partners
Partnership with a think tank or evaluation organization to run detailed evaluation of programs and services and publication of case studies for replication.

Evaluation Fund
Allocate 5% of the OVPTR to evaluation and launch Request for Proposals to create a list of on-call evaluation partners to be used to analyze programs and the Office.

Procurement Infrastructure
Launch a Request for Proposals to select a partner to help build the Office's procurement infrastructure and build capacity to successfully partner with local organizations.

Communications
Hire a full-time communications person to help create materials for internal, cross-agency, and public communications. Transparency should permeate all fronts of OVPTR.



Programs and Initiatives by Thematic Priority

Initiatives	Police and Community Trust	Gun Violence	Youth Engagement	Domestic Violence	Drug Selling and Use
Partners Initiatives. Not Managed By OVPTR	• Equal Justice USA • Public Sasfety Roundtables • The GUBB Arts & Trauma Center • Newark Community Solutions	• Newark Community Street Team • Harm Reduction Centers • Hospital Violence Intervention	• [MBK] Newark Opportunity Youth Network West Ward Ward Victims Outreach Services	• Newark Community Street Team • Ham Reduciton Centers • Hospital Violence Intervention	• Newark Community Street Team • Harm Reduction Centers • Hospital Violence Intervention
Existing OVPTR Initiatives	• Office of Well-Being	• Brick City Peace Collective • Office of Well-Being • Anti-Racism and Hate Crime Units	• Anti-Racism and Hate Crime Units • Office of Well-Being	• Shani Baraka Resource Center • Victims of Crime Act • Office of Well Being • Brick City Peace Collective	• Office of Well Being • Brick City Peace Collective
Initiatives to Consider	• Community Safety Plans • Community Data Dashboards • Intensive Survivor Support Service	• Focused Deterrence Programs • Community-based Youth Intervention Program • Crowd Sourced Community Safety Risk Mapping • Trauma Recovery Counceling • Youth Respite / Mentoring Initiative	• Trauma Recovery Counceling • Community-based Youth Intervention Program • Community Resilience Grant Program • Youth Respite / Mentoring Initiative	• Intensive Survivor Support Service • Trauma Recovery Counseling • Batterer Intervention Program • Shani Baraka Expansion	• Community-based Youth Intervention Program • Crowd Sourced Community Safety Risk Mapping • Neighborhood Environmental Design • Youth Respite / Mentoring Initiative



Next Steps

To serve the City of Newark efficiently and effectively, significant and sustained resources are required. Violence prevention initiatives cannot be a one-time event but instead require a long-term commitment to positively impacting a culture change within the community. This takes time, along with human and financial resources.

The creation of OVPTR and allocation of its funds demonstrates this administration's commitment to the cause and desire to continue at the forefront of this work.

OVPTR will work with members of BCPC, the Advisory Group, and Municipal Departments on the implementation of this plan and measurement of its impact on our communities.

Mayor Baraka has a commitment to results. This plan and programs from our partner organizations will be closely monitored and their impact will be measured through key performance and management indicators.

To demonstrate our compromise with residents and our community partners, progress information on the goals set by this Strategic Plan will be made publicly available and data will be continuously used to actively readjust our work when necessary.