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February 14, 2008

The Honorable Antonio Villaraigosa
The Honorable Rockard J. Delgadillo
The Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council

Dear Mayor Villaraigosa, City Attorney Delgadillo and Councilmembers:

Last year a New York Times editorial was stunning in its blunt assessment: "No city has failed to control its street gangs more spectacularly than Los Angeles." The editorial was jolting, but not surprising. The City of Los Angeles and our surrounding region have been grappling with the problem of gangs for over 40 years.

During the last two decades, there have been countless studies, reports, consultants, City Council ad-hoc committees, new programs and hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars spent to stem the gang crisis. And what do we have to show for it? The recent in-depth Advancement Project study painted a grim picture, which my report echoes, of a disjointed maze of services that don't reach the intended "at risk" youth population.

Now what? It is important to note what my report does not say. There is no call for immediate new dollars, but there is a plan spelled out on how to spend the money more wisely and efficiently. New programs are not advocated, but rather the redesign, refocus and merging of existing programs is proscribed.

Nor does it recommend the creation of a new department with additional layers of bureaucracy, but directs the creation of the Anti-Gang Office, which will operate directly under the Mayor. This will be a centralized, empowered entity that has the oversight and responsibility of our many anti-gang efforts. To ensure public transparency, the City Controller's Office will issue status reports beginning six months from today, along with conducting periodic fiscal and performance audits.

It is not only a question of reorganizing resources into the Mayor's Office, it is also about making key changes in how services are delivered. Many of the dollars now spent on prevention are not targeting the youth most at risk. In addition, as LAPD Chief William Bratton and Sheriff Lee Baca agree, we can not arrest and imprison our way out of the gang epidemic which plagues our region. Dollars and services must be redirected to effective prevention and also intervention and re-entry programs to reach youth already involved in gangs or the criminal justice system.

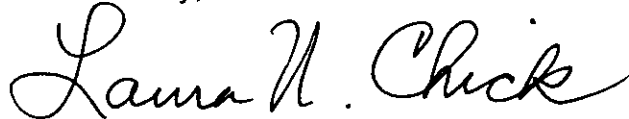
The City has traditionally overseen various gang programs by monitoring their compliance with contract requirements. Instead we need to move to an outcome based model where specific performance measures are tracked and evaluated. For decades we have not been asking and answering the right questions: "How are we doing in achieving the goal of eliminating gang violence? How can we do it better?" The only way to accurately answer is to write measurable goals into the solicitation for services end and evaluate performance regularly. We must go out to bid on our anti-gang contracts by December 2008.

Los Angeles has historically awarded agencies multiple contracts year after year after year without holding them accountable by tying the dollars to proof that desired results have been achieved. The era of social service dollars based only on political tradition and relationships must end.

While it is essential that the City get its own house in order immediately...it must also turn simultaneously to form effective regional partnerships. It is so plainly logical and clear that one very key partnership must be directly with the LAUSD. It is also important to build and expand upon the impressive, collaborative effort begun by Los Angeles County CEO Bill Fujioka with the Executive Steering Committee.

In closing, I am well aware of the challenges to create the Anti-Gang Office. The last thing we need to do is get bogged down in bureaucratic obstacles, turf and power struggles, and mistrust. No more studies... it is time for action and results...**NOW!**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura N. Chick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L" and a prominent "N".

LAURA N. CHICK
City Controller

Los Angeles City Controller

Blueprint for a Comprehensive Citywide Anti-Gang Strategy

February 14, 2008



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Executive Summary

Blueprint for a Comprehensive Citywide Anti-Gang Strategy

Concerns over gangs and their societal impact are felt throughout the world. The havoc they wreak is a true human tragedy. These misguided youths attack the basic fabric of a city and its communities. Innocent lives are lost—both the victims of gang violence and the wasted futures of the gang members themselves—individuals and families are forever scarred and the vibrancy of a community is drained by the presence of gangs. The economic toll on the City and its residents is also immeasurable due to the loss of community earning power and impeded access to the untapped potential of the gang infested area's people and their neighborhood.

After reviewing the Advancement Project's comprehensive assessment of the gang problems plaguing Los Angeles in early 2007, the Mayor and City Council requested that the City Controller conduct an independent evaluation of the City's social service and gang prevention delivery systems.

The study's main objectives are to identify major city and other entity initiatives, determine how well they are integrated, review the existing practices and processes in place to deliver anti-gang programs, compare with best practices, and recommend ways to improve the service delivery system in light of the emerging citywide funding reductions for education, training and family supportive services that were reviewed.

This report outlines a blueprint for a comprehensive citywide anti-gang strategy. The key elements of this blueprint are to:

- Create a single office to coordinate youth and family services
- Develop regional partnerships with LAUSD, LA County, and other local governments
- Conduct community-based and department-wide needs assessments
- Redirect funds to the gang reduction strategy
- Reinvent youth and family services
- Establish rigorous performance measures and conduct evaluations of both city and contracted programs

Similar to the Advancement Project report, we urge the City to establish a new organizational structure to develop and implement citywide gang reduction and youth development programs, including participating in a regional partnership to address the gang challenges the City faces. This new office must house key youth development programs throughout the City, and will have the authority and be accountable for developing and implementing an effective and efficient anti-gang strategy. The City must take an approach that incorporates more coordination between agencies, and must be based on demonstrated community-level needs. Based on this, the City should reinvent and streamline existing youth development and anti-gang programs that are currently provided by numerous city departments and refocus funding priorities.

The key goal of this report is to finally deliver an effective City-wide anti-gang strategy in an expedient, accountable, and transparent manner. For this reason, we recommend that the Mayor's office take the lead in this effort. Only the Mayor has the authority and clout to bring all City departments together and provide regional leadership.

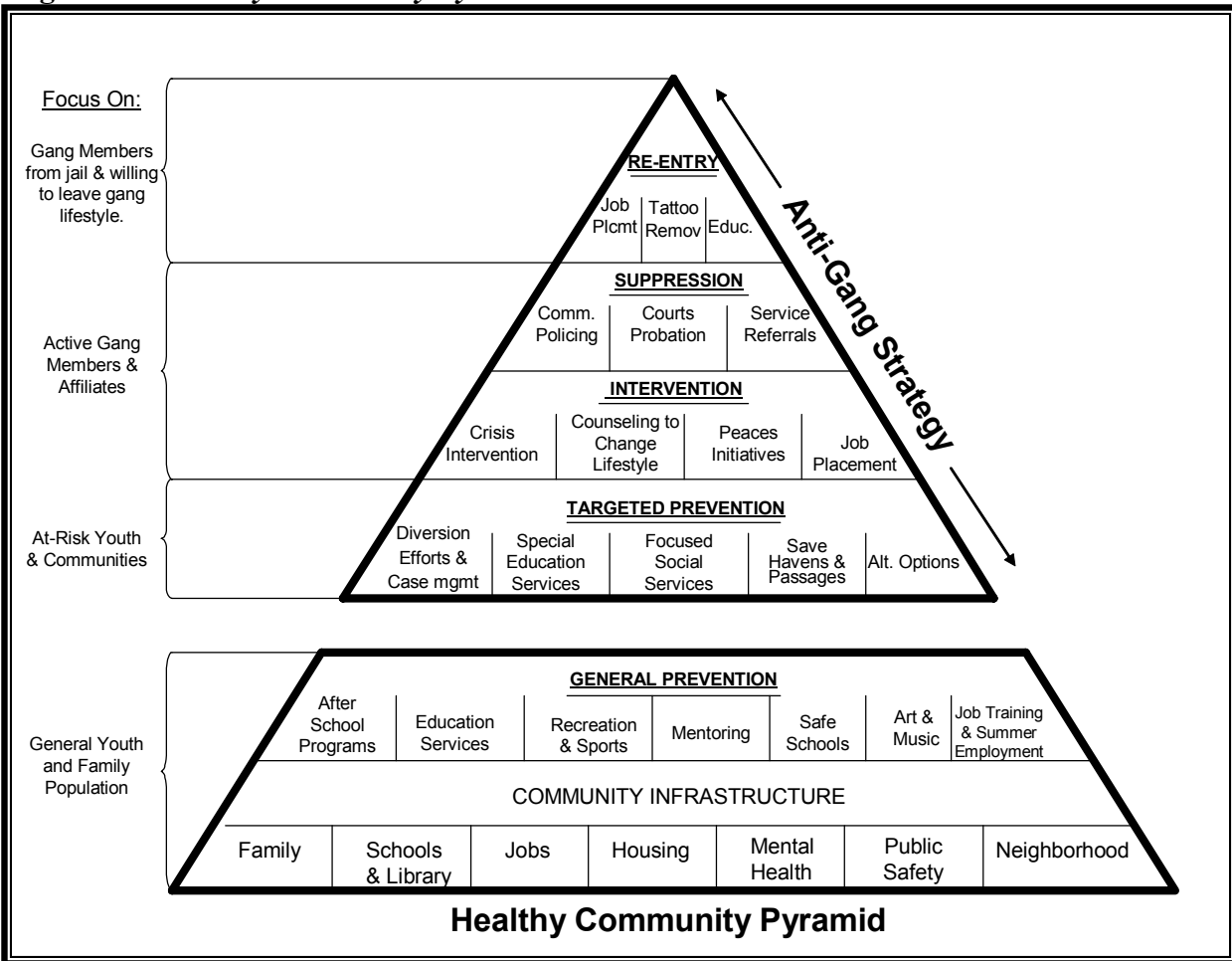
This new strategy and reorganization *will not* require additional funding, but will require redirecting existing funds to more targeted programs, eliminating duplication and streamlining programs, and implementing performance-based contracting and monitoring practices. A number of these important steps require significant changes in the way the City has historically approached its anti-gang efforts. Changing some of these approaches will require the City's political leaders to support initiatives that favor a citywide solution to the gang problem, at times to the detriment of more parochial departmental or community interests. In the end, the City can accomplish more with the resources it has if it strategically and organizationally focuses these resources.

Better coordination and collaboration on anti-gang programs is needed desperately both within City departments and between the City and its regional counterparts. Since it is widely known that gangs do not respect artificially set municipal or governmental boundaries, the City of Los Angeles' gang problem is clearly a regional problem shared with Los Angeles County, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and numerous other cities and school districts in the area. As such, the best solutions to the problem would be through regional partnerships and not limited to those undertaken solely by City government within its city limits. In keeping with this reality, the blueprint we suggest for the City includes fostering and developing a regionalized approach to the gang problem with LA County, LAUSD and others. And while we are encouraging such regional partnerships, we also emphasize approaches the City should take to address the problems within its own City-sponsored and funded anti-gang programs and activities. We advocate that both the regional and citywide initiatives be put in motion simultaneously and immediately.

Moreover, since each of the City's communities affected by gangs is unique and different, the societal, infrastructure and individual needs of each area will vary. Only through a comprehensive, community-level and citywide department-level needs assessment will the City be able to marshal the appropriate mix of youth development and anti-gang services to address the underlying causes of each community's gang problem. Budgetary and programmatic decisions must be based on these assessments.

On the following page, our "*Healthy Community Pyramid*" in Figure 1, melds the basic needs of the City's communities and its residents at its base, with increasingly focused targeted prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry programs in its upper levels. In concept, communities' basic needs make up the foundation of the pyramid addressing the root cause of gang involvement, while each group of services provided up the pyramid focuses on youths with unique individual needs. By definition, the community's needs and those addressed by general prevention are not focused only on gang members, affiliates or those who have a high risk of becoming gang members.

Figure 1. “Healthy Community Pyramid”



The anti-gang strategy portion of the pyramid includes targeted prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry programs for at-risk youths and communities generally experiencing a gang problem or transitioning to one. The interventions become narrower and more focused on gang members as one moves up the pyramid. However, it is essential that efforts not be limited to one level of the pyramid and that ongoing attention is paid to each level. A brief description of the various program types follows (refer to Appendix A for complete definitions):

- **Community Infrastructure**—Provide basic services necessary for a community including workforce development, recreation, public safety, housing, economic development, and family services.
- **General Prevention**—Address all members of a community and are intended to build healthy communities in which gangs are unable to flourish. Programs include education, recreation, arts, and job training.
- **Targeted Prevention**—Offer selective prevention and diversion strategies and are designed to impact high-risk *communities* and/or *individual* high-risk children and youth based on risk factors. The goal of targeted prevention is to preclude

children and youth in at-risk communities from joining a gang or participating in gang activity.

- **Intervention**—Intervene during gang-related conflicts (*community*) as well as impact *individual* gang involved youth typically through the use of community and faith-based street outreach workers and school-based intervention teams.
- **Suppression**—Target serious and chronic offenders and involve the use of the criminal justice system to officially sanction behavior through arrest, prosecution, and incarceration.
- **Reentry**—Focus on individuals who have decided to leave the gang lifestyle as a result of diversion, intervention, and/or suppression efforts and are preparing to reintegrate into the community.

This blueprint calls for the City to reposition its departments and redirect its funding priorities to provide the range of services covering the entire pyramid. Most notable will be transitioning the youth and family development efforts out of the Community Development Department (CDD) into a newly established Anti-gang Office that is given a range of responsibilities for targeted prevention, intervention and reentry, including community needs assessments for such services. This new Anti-gang Office would also negotiate new contracts with community-based organizations (CBOs) and religious-based organizations (RBOs), provide accountability and outcome measures, evaluate and oversee activities to measure results, coordinate multi-agency collaboration, conduct research on best and leading anti-gang practices, and provide training to agencies regarding how they can meet the new contract requirements and to City departments on anti-gang strategies.

The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) will continue its primary role of suppressing gang activity, and City departments such as the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP), Housing (LAHD), CDD job and economic development, and community redevelopment will need to better coordinate their efforts in building a stronger community infrastructure in gang challenged areas. Also, to overcome past coordination and collaboration difficulties, City leaders will need to hold the various general managers to account for effectively bringing the City's varied resources to bear against the gang problem. Measurable outcomes and program evaluation will be critical part of this reorganization. This will provide transparency and accountability to the public and City leadership.

The key elements we recommend for the City's gang reduction strategy are as follows:

- I. Create a new organizational structure, "Anti-gang Office" within the Mayor's Office to facilitate the expeditious consolidation, development, implementation, and coordination of citywide youth development and gang reduction programs. Through Executive Directive and periodic reporting to the City Council, mandate inter-departmental collaboration and accountability.
 - Transition all of the City's key youth development and gang reduction programs to the new Anti-gang Office, including those currently housed in CDD's Human Services and Neighborhood Development Group, and other City departments and

commissions. Certain programs—as they pertain to the primary missions of other departments—should remain with the departments they are currently housed.

- Establish a Gang Reduction Unit within the new Anti-gang Office to coordinate, track, and leverage programming resources that remain in other City departments, such as the RAP, LAPD, LAHD, the City’s proprietary departments, among others.
- Enhance linkages between law enforcement and service providers through much-improved referral networks and joint programming.

II. Continue to develop and build on existing regional partnerships with LAUSD, LA County and other local governments to improve current environment of conflict and non-cooperation.

- Build and expand upon recent County efforts to develop partnerships between the new office, program practitioners, executives, and elected officials among the City and its regional partners such as LA County and LAUSD to create an environment of collaboration and coordination on anti-gang efforts.
- Encourage regional cooperation and coordination to reduce unmet needs and duplication of services.

III. Conduct community-based *and* department-level citywide needs assessments.

- Identify needs of the communities each department serves and cooperatively analyze what programs and services are lacking and what programs and services should be provided to fill any gaps.
- Require needs assessments performed at each City department at least once every five years, with periodic annual reviews to reassess needs.
- Require funding decisions be made in consideration of both community-wide and department-wide needs assessments.

IV. Increase funding for the gang reduction strategy by redirecting a substantial portion of the \$19 million allocated to programs that currently do not have well-defined strategic objectives or outcomes—specifically the Neighborhood Action (NAP), “Strategically Targeted”, and Neighborhood Development (NDP) programs—to expand funding to targeted youth development and gang reduction programs.

- Cease across-the-board funding allocations and reductions by ensure funding decisions are based on community needs and demonstrated performance of service providers.
- Identify, based community- *and* citywide-level needs assessments, the best method of filling identified gaps, and reissue Requests for Proposals (RFP) within six months to identify the best service providers to deliver those services.
- Establish contract provisions and monitoring practices that create incentives for optimal performance and accountability for service delivery.

V. Reinvent youth and family services in the new Anti-gang Office.

- Create streamlined youth and family development programs, and expand anti-gang programs that do a better job of targeting those most at risk of gang involvement.
- Expand intervention and reentry programming to ease the transition of those in gangs to society.
- Increase oversight of the implementation of this new strategy, given the challenges of implementing this model in other jurisdictions, by requesting the City Controller to conduct follow-up audits of the progress of the new office and of the status of each of the recommendations contained in this blueprint. These audits should occur every six months after the beginning of implementation and throughout the first two years of implementation.

VI. Conduct rigorous performance evaluations of both City and contracted programs.

- Develop an evaluation model as part of the redesign of youth development and gang reduction programs. This model must address both short-term reduction in risk factors and increases in protective factors, and long-term impacts on the program participants themselves.
- Evaluate the unique impacts of targeted prevention, diversion, intervention, reentry, and suppression efforts as distinct components to an overall strategy.
- Create a research and evaluation unit within the new Anti-gang Office that relies on both City personnel and partnerships with the surrounding research community, and conduct both process-oriented and outcome-oriented evaluations on a long-term basis.

We address each component of this blueprint in the following sections of the report.

To achieve the study objectives, we conducted hundreds of interviews with the key City, County, and LAUSD officials; additionally, we conducted field visits to many of the service providers' sites, including schools, parks, recreational centers, and community-based organizations. Moreover, as part of this project, we contracted with two leading experts on gangs studies to participate and assist in our review—Jorja Leap, PhD, from University of California, Los Angeles, and Scott Decker, PhD, School of Criminal Justice and Criminology at Arizona State University. Their extensive research on gang-related issues in Los Angeles and throughout the nation—such as the organization, activities and effectiveness of prevention and intervention responses—has been invaluable throughout our study. We have incorporated their work and comments throughout our report, including our recommendations. Numerous other academic, social service, community and justice experts, and involved stakeholders also provided valuable insights and issues as we conducted the study.

Section I—Create a Single Office to Coordinate City-wide Anti-gang Services

Given the political priority and regional nature of the gang problem, the City must immediately establish a new strategy that presents a single voice, possesses the authority and responsibility to lead and coordinate the City's efforts, and can be held accountable for success or failure in furthering the City's youth development and gang reduction efforts. As widely discussed throughout academic studies and city-commissioned reports, the City's current anti-gang approach is an uncoordinated assortment of youth, family development, and social service programs, intervention, suppression efforts, job training and placement, and recreational programs dispersed throughout the city with little or no coordination among the departments providing the programs. This lack of coordination has resulted in some departments unknowingly providing similar services to those provided by other departments as well as created gaps in service delivery. Furthermore, these issues have generated significant inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in undertaking the City's gang and youth development challenges.

Because the gang problem is a regional and citywide challenge that needs to be addressed now, the City must significantly improve how it delivers its anti-gang efforts. Further, given the pressing nature of gangs and their impact and the immediate budgetary implications of the City's new strategy, we believe the most expedient method to creating a single voice is for the Mayor's Office to take the initial lead by consolidating and coordinating the City's efforts as soon as possible. To assure that implementation occurs as intended, we recommend that the City Controller conduct follow-up audits of the progress of the new office and of the status of each of the recommendations contained in this blueprint. These audits should occur every six months after the beginning of implementation and throughout the first two years of implementation. We also recommend that the City Council consider requesting that the Office of the City Administrative Officer and the Chief Legislative Analyst to conduct interim or special reports to the Council, as needed, to assess the efficient and effective delivery of anti-gang services, and to assess whether some other organizational model, such as a traditional city department or agency, would better serve the City's residents.

We offer a detailed blueprint for the City to guide the necessary step to achieving a successful youth development and gang reduction strategy. To improve the way anti-gang efforts are carried out, we recommend the following measures:

- ***Reinvent the City's youth and family programs by consolidating and coordinating activities***
- ***Create a new City structure to advance the City's youth development and gang reduction strategy***
- ***Link already existing City youth and family services resources***

In the following sections, we provide examples that illustrate the negative outcomes when an adequate structure is not in place to effectively coordinate programs and services. This reorganization and restructuring will not require additional funding. We

believe that this can be accomplished by redirecting existing funds to more targeted youth and family development and gang reduction programs, as discussed in Section IV and V of this report. We also believe that efficiencies resulting from streamlining programs and service contracts, eliminating duplication of effort, and improving performance-focused monitoring activities will enable the City to optimize service delivery without additional resources. In the end, the City can accomplish more if it strategically and organizationally focuses the resources it has rather than continuing with the currently defused structure.

Furthermore, the Los Angeles region's inability to work together in a constructive and accountable manner renders the city unable to identify the services a community needs in a comprehensive way, and whether the distribution and accessibility of services within the communities could be improved—all of which results in duplicated services and unmet needs. We also provide examples where recent efforts to bolster coordination have occurred and the outcomes of the efforts can be strengthened via a more structured approach to assessing the needs of communities.

Reinvent the City's Youth and Family Programs by Consolidating and Coordinating Activities

Currently, the City's anti-gang approach is an uncoordinated and scattered mix of youth, family development, and social service programs, intervention and suppression efforts, job training and placement, and recreational programs provided at an estimated cost of \$160 million, according to the Mayor's Gang Reduction Strategy Report. In fact, more than a dozen departments assert they operate anti-gang and youth development programs for the City's youth population. However, little coordination and communication exists amongst these city departments, which has resulted in some departments unknowingly providing services similar and likely overlapping with those delivered by other departments. Moreover, some of the so-called "anti-gang" programs are actually programs that target the *general youth population* as a whole and are not limited to at-risk youth. For example, a few of the City's major programs that are scattered throughout City department and aimed at the general youth population include, among others:

- Department of Recreation and Parks' (RAP) after school clubs, sports programs, camps, youth aquatics, and golf academies;
- Community Development Department's (CDD) summer youth employment;
- Personnel Department's LA CityWorks;
- Department of Cultural Affairs' (DCA) Neighborhood and Community Arts Program;
- Los Angeles Fire Department's (LAFD) and Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) Explorer programs; and
- Mayor's "LA's Best" after school program.

While the programs listed above are aimed at the general youth population and are critical to building healthy communities, the City invests only a small portion of the estimated \$160 million in Los Angeles' youth programs are to target the needs of "at-

risk” (i.e. low to moderate income, underperforming schools, high crime, child abuse, etc.) individuals and communities. Because so few programs are specifically focused on “at-risk” individuals and communities and even fewer aimed at gang populations, effective coordination is especially critical to ensure that these programs are placed in communities where the need is greatest and program efficiency and effectiveness can be maximized. The City’s generally uncoordinated prevention programs targeted at youth in *at-risk communities* include:

- CDD’s Family Development Network (FDN), Youth Opportunity System (YOS) (including the three Youth Opportunity Movement sites), and Youth & Family Centers (YFC)
- RAP’s Clean and Safe Spaces (CLASS) Parks Program
- LAPD’s Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT)
- Commission on the Status of Women’s (CSW) Young Women from Adversity to Resiliency (YWAR) program
- Commission on Children, Youth, and their Families’ Neighborhood Network 4 Kids, Safe Corridors, and Kid Watch LA programs
- Mayor’s Safe Havens/School Safety Plans
- Harbor Department’s (Harbor) Gang Alternative and Top Sail Programs
- Department of Water and Power’s (DWP) Youth Services Academy (YSA)
- Los Angeles World Airport’s (LAWA) Wings to Fly Mentoring Program

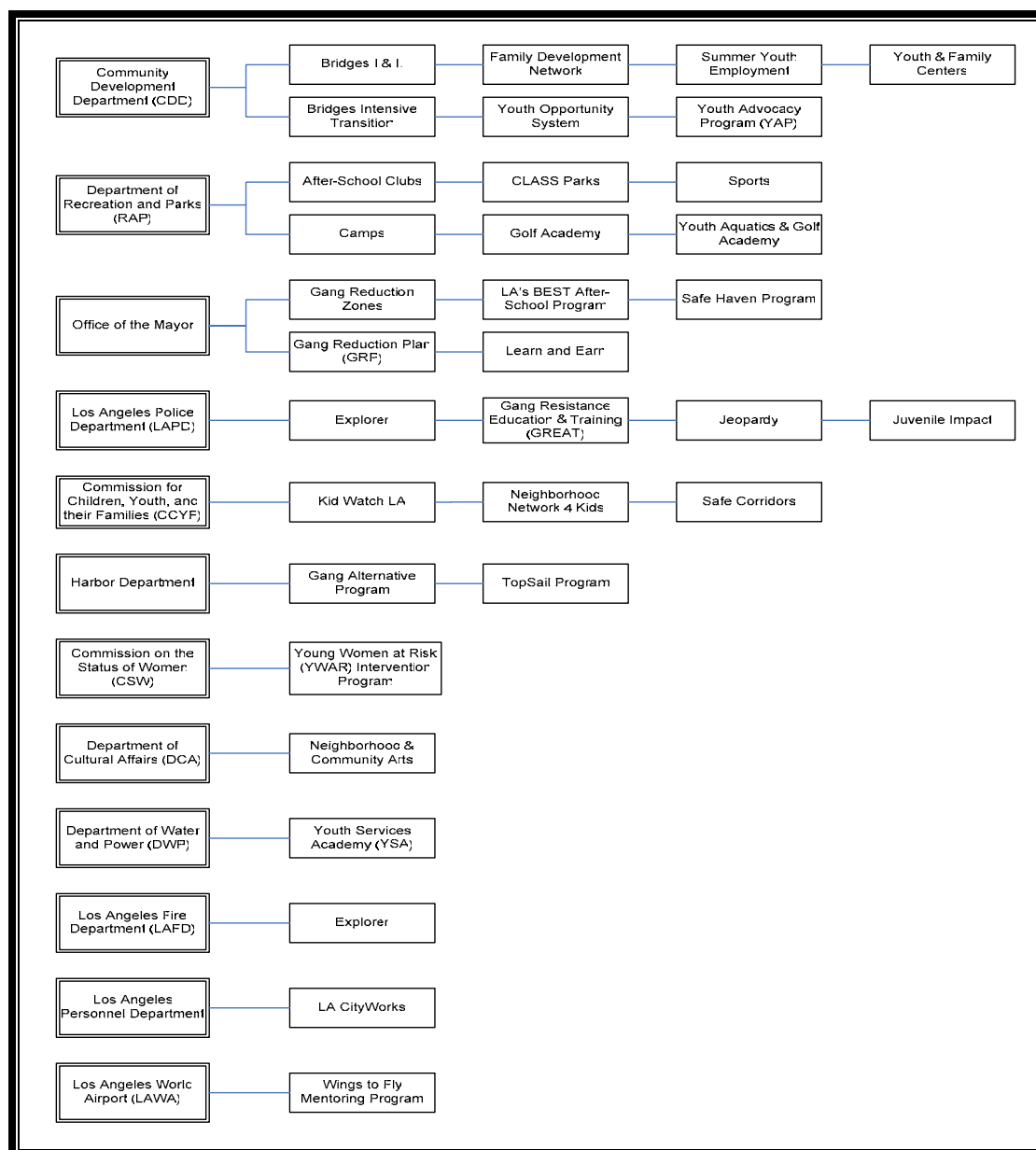
Moreover, the City offers even fewer programs intended to directly deliver targeted “individual” prevention, diversion, intervention, and reentry programs to reach those individuals at high risk of either joining gangs, in the early stages of gang membership, or gang members wanting to leave the gang lifestyle and reintegrate into the community. Such programs are essential in order to reduce the attractiveness and sustainability of gang life. The small number of programs that do exist include: CDD’s Bridges I & II programs and Intensive Transition, LAPD’s Jeopardy and Juvenile Impact programs, and the Mayor’s Gang Reduction Program—though, surprisingly, the coordination of CDD (given its central role) and these critical programs has been critically lacking.

As illustrated on the next page in Figure 2 “*Current Organization of the City’s Major General Youth and Family Development and Anti-Gang Programs*,” the City’s general youth and family development and anti-gang programs are widely disbursed throughout City departments. The CDD plays the most significant role in the City’s non-suppression related youth and family programs. The City must coordinate efforts to successfully combat youth gangs and provide services to the City’s youth and families. Such coordination depends to a large degree on having a single, unified voice—a leader—to take the City to the next level. The disjointed nature of the current approach, the lack of authority and accountability, and the fact that entities are administering anti-gang and youth development programs that are outside of their core mission requires the consolidation of all the City’s youth and family and anti-gang programs under a single office. Such programs that are dispersed throughout the City and that should be consolidated include all of CDD’s Human Services and Neighborhood Development

(NAP) programs, the proposed Gang Reduction Zones (GRZs), Boyle Height's Gang Reduction Program (GRP), Safe Havens/School Safety Plans, LA's Best, and other related programs provided by city commissions such as Status of Women, Children Youth and their Families, and Human Relations.

At the same time, there are some programs that relate more specifically to the primary mission of other City departments, such as RAP's CLASS Parks and programs administered by the City's proprietary departments, which are often funded with restricted funds. In these cases, the programs should remain with the existing department, but must be coordinated with the core of the City's anti-gang efforts.

Figure 2. "Current Organization of the City's Major General Youth and Family Development and Anti-Gang Programs"



*In addition to the major service delivery diagram above, there are many additional smaller programs throughout the City in departments such as the City Attorney's Office, Library, etc.

CDD has long recognized the need to make organizational changes to better coordinate its youth and family services. In fact, CDD's current General Manager identified as a top priority the disjointed structure of CDD's youth and family development programs. Indeed, since the consolidation of all youth and family development programs in CDD's Human Services and Neighborhood Development Group that began in late 2006, Los Angeles' youth and families have increasingly become a central focus of the Department, and led the new General Manager to instill a new vision for the Department: "to create jobs and to strengthen families." While removing the previously disparate programs from their silos was an important first step, coordination between them has remained slow-going. We believe that the steps described in this report are needed...and needed *now*.

Despite the efforts by CDD to consolidate some youth and family development programs, a void remained as the City grappled with who would lead a new youth development and gang reduction strategy, and struggled to determine which resources would be at this leader's disposal. This lack of institutional leadership has led others to attempt fill that role, whether through the Mayor's Office, the Human Relations Commission, the City Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development, or others. While steps have been taken to fill this void, creating a dedicated office to the future of Los Angeles' youth and their families is the first step toward ensuring consistency, stability, and an institutionalized commitment to addressing the City's gang problem.

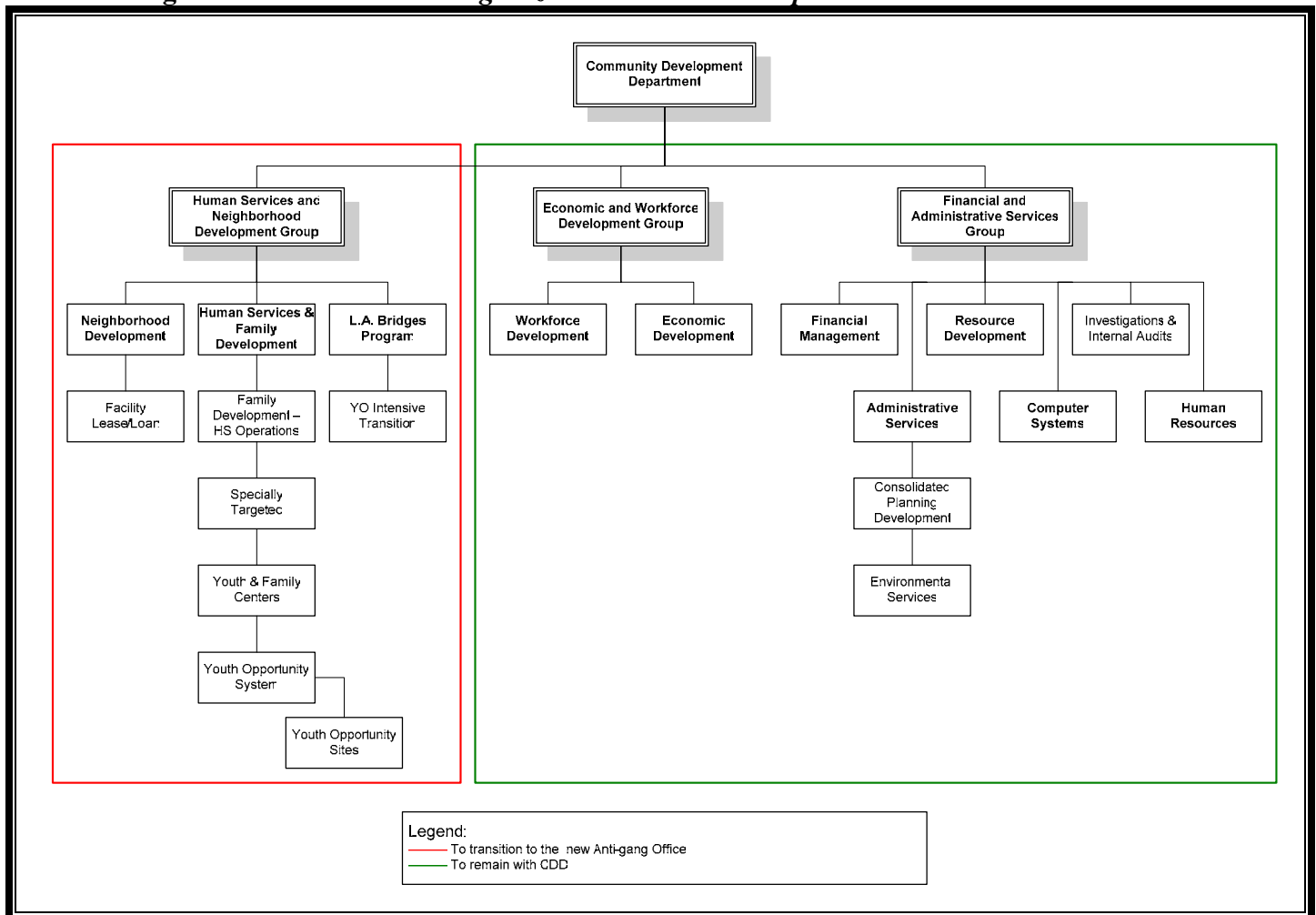
Creating an organization within the Mayor's office responsible for the City's gang reduction strategy will allow for better coordination of the City's youth, family, and anti-gang programs and services. It will also boost communication with other City department programs with similar goals and objectives, such as RAP's CLASS Park program, that remain in their current organizational structure. The Mayor's Office will be the voice of the City when dealing with regional partners, will be charged with the responsibility of coordinating anti-gang efforts of the City's departments, and, with this responsibility, will be held primarily accountable for demonstrated success and reporting to the Public and City Officials.

Create a New City Structure to Advance the City's Youth Development and Gang Reduction Strategy

Because the City's youth and family programs are administered in various departments that do not routinely collaborate, the City must reposition and unify its youth and family programs, including anti-gang programs. Los Angeles is not alone among US cities in this regard. As such, creating a new Anti-gang Office should neither be a reflection on CDD or its dedicated staff, nor should it be considered a vote of no-confidence in their efforts. Rather, it is a reflection of a new era in the City's challenge to fight gangs, to reduce their impact on the residents of Los Angeles, and, more generally, to serve the City's youth and families.

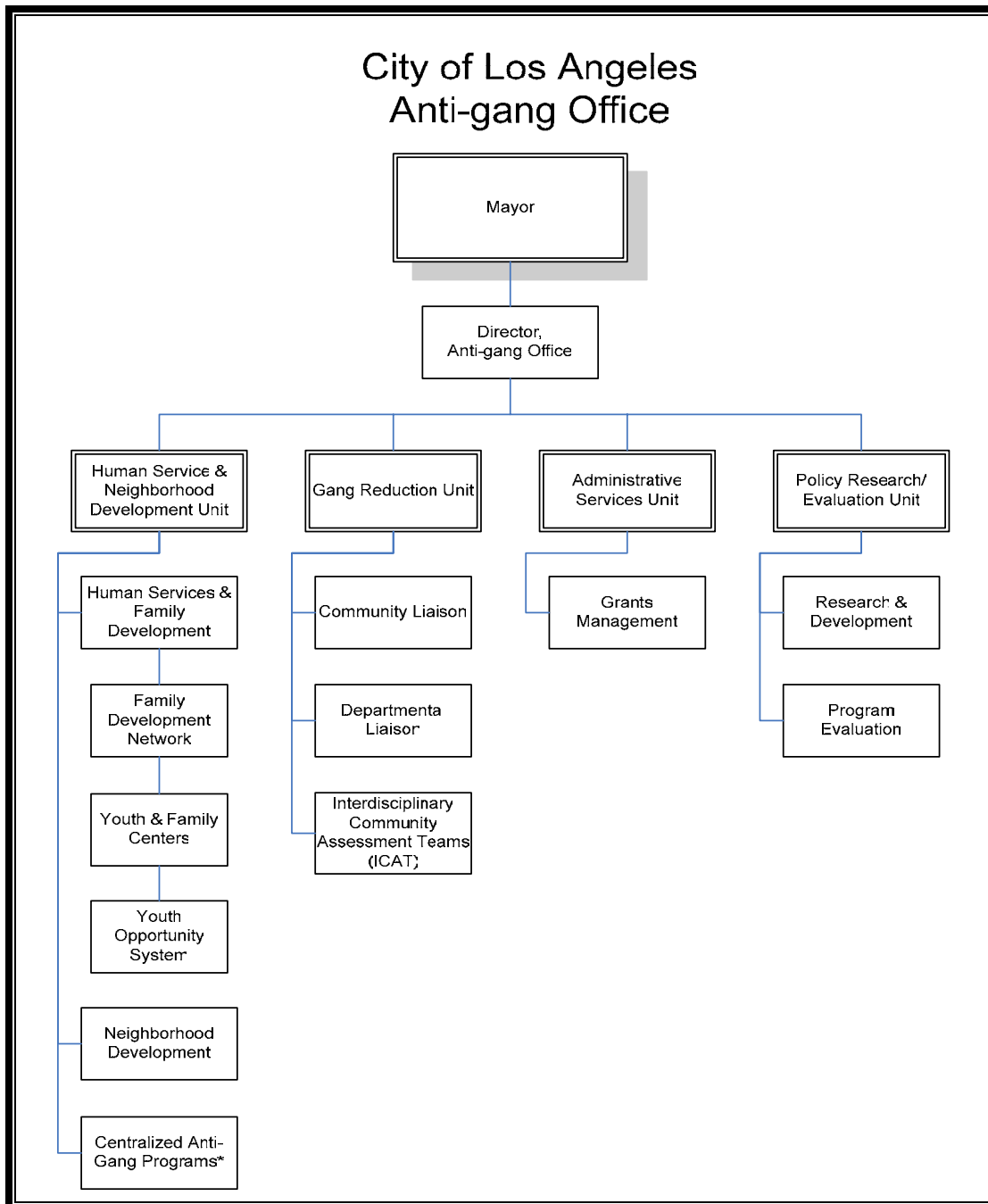
In keeping with this reality, the blueprint we suggest for the City to begin immediately addressing its gang problems involves a dramatic change in the current way efforts are carried out. First, the Mayor’s Office must establish centralized leadership to coordinate the City’s key programs administered through various city departments. In order to achieve the level of coordination, leadership, and accountability needed to advance the City’s anti-gang efforts, we recommend that the City create a centralized, single voice to represent the City in its anti-gang partnership efforts. The first step in creating a single voice is to transition the City’s youth and family development and anti-gang efforts out of CDD’s Human Services and Neighborhood Development Group and allow CDD to continue functioning with a focus on economic and workforce development—activities integral to a revised mission as illustrated in Figure 3 “*Current CDD Organization Chart with Proposed Transition*.” Rather than consolidating all of the City’s existing youth, family and anti-gang programs in CDD, we believe transitioning these programs into the new Anti-gang Office within the Mayor’s Office will create this single voice, this unified approach to delivering youth development and gang reduction services and programs, to be necessary.

Figure 3. “Current CDD Organization Chart with Proposed Transition”



To create a single voice, we recommend that the City transition its widely dispersed youth and family development and anti-gang efforts that are currently housed in CDD's Human Services and Neighborhood Development Group into a newly established City office within the Mayor's Office as depicted in Figure 4 *"Proposed New Structure of the Anti-gang Office."*

Figure 4. "Proposed New Structure of the Anti-gang Office"



* This includes Bridges I, Bridges II, Gang Reduction Zones, Boyle Height's Gang Reduction Program, Safe Havens/School Safety Plans, Parenting, LA's Best, and any other programs that should be transitioned to the new Anti-gang Office from City commissions such as Status of Women, Children Youth and Families, and Human Relations.

This new multi-faceted, structured approach should seek to bring together not only other City departments and agencies but also other cities, Los Angeles County, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and a multitude of regional entities facing similar challenges with gang activities. The new Anti-gang Office should facilitate coordination among key city departments to strategically focus and leverage citywide resources, identify community needs, and hold programs accountable for positive outcomes.

At the same time, the creation of a new office to oversee activities previously under the purview of CDD, while a significant endeavor, is not unprecedented. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Mayor and City Council determined that the high priority placed on assistance to the aging population and expansion of affordable housing required the creation of new departments designed to focus on these specific challenges. As a result, the City created the Department of Aging and the Department of Housing. Shortly thereafter, the City and the County executed a joint powers agreement to establish an agency dedicated to serving the specific needs of Los Angeles' homeless population: the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. While subsequent reviews of these agencies by the City Controller have revealed many opportunities for improvement, the creation of these agencies has established the organizational infrastructure to provide focused attention on some of the City's most pressing challenges. To date, such an infrastructure does not exist for youth development and gang reduction services in Los Angeles.¹

In reviewing options for the new Anti-gang Office's permanent placement, we considered the City's existing commissions and departments and found that none are currently positioned to take on this role. Specifically, the Commission CCYF is a largely advisory commission charged with coordinating services and managing a small minority of children's programs including Safe Corridors, Kid Watch LA, Neighborhood Network for Kids, youth councils, a child care center, and others.² While this Commission is currently refocusing its vision, role, and operations under new leadership, its role has been advisory in nature and currently does not appear to be positioned to assume the role of directly managing the City's core youth and family development and gang reduction programming. If anything, we see opportunities for this Commission to become an integral part of the new Anti-gang Office.

Additionally, naming the current General Manager of CDD as the leader of the City's youth and family development and anti-gang strategy would place this critical function as a priority over CDD's other functions, which include workforce development, economic development, and the administration of hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant funds, resulting in the neglect of critical activities upon which the City depends.

¹ Raphael Sonenshein, *Los Angeles: Structure of a City Government* (The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles: 2006),

² Per Administrative Code §8.317 "The Commission shall be a focal point within the City to coordinate the City's efforts to serve children, youth and their families, enhance the programs of City Departments, make policy recommendations to the Mayor and City Council, annually review and update the City's legislative policy with regard to children, youth and family issues, and advocate for children, youth and families both within the City structure and the community."

No other department in the City appears positioned to assume this role, as they all have primary missions that relate only marginally, if at all, to reducing gang activity. Each of the City's other departments focus the majority of effort and attention on delivering their primary services, such as RAP, LAHD, and redevelopment, which prevents them from taking on the overall responsibility of effectively coordinating all of the City's youth and family programs. Given the complexity, sensitivity, and immediate need for increased coordination of City efforts, creating a dedicated Anti-gang Office is essential to optimize the role of all departments involved in the City's anti-gang strategy.

After considering several options for placing responsibility over implementing the City's anti-gang strategy, we concluded that creating an Anti-Gang Office within the Mayor's Office was the most viable option to immediately undertake the gang-related challenges facing the City. Our recommendation consolidates critical youth development and gang reduction programs into an Anti-Gang Office, and requires broad collaboration with other City departments. Moreover, the Mayor and the Anti-Gang Office will build upon the work already being done to establish regional partnerships, and participate in the resulting regional steering committee.

Not only does the Mayor's Office represent the most expedient alternative, but it offers the highest level of visibility, authority, and accountability in representing the unified voice of the City—thus reflecting the high-priority and urgency of a new gang reduction strategy.

In reviewing options for this organization's permanent placement, we considered the City's existing commissions and departments and found that none are currently positioned to take on this role, and we also analyzed the possibility of creating a new department. None of these options provided the level of transparency and accountability or the ability to immediately and expeditiously implement the needed changes.

We recognize that creating a new office will have its challenges. All youth development programs in CDD have an emphasis on education and some are strongly linked to job training and development, requiring the new organization to be integrally coordinated with the City's workforce development service cluster, including CDD and many other City departments. Without a track record or assurance of permanency, a new office may be met with some hesitancy, and even resistance, by decision makers. The change would also require movement of city staff between the Anti-gang Office, CDD, or other city entities, which may result in some administrative challenges. Further, given the necessity to assure a successful implementation, transparency and accountability must be incorporated into the implementation process.

To provide independent oversight of the Anti-Gang Office, the City Controller shall conduct follow-up audits of the progress of the new office and of the status of each of the recommendations contained in this blueprint. These audits will occur every six months after the beginning of implementation and throughout the first two years of implementation. Furthermore, the City Council can request that the City Administrative Officer and the Chief Legislative Analyst conduct interim or special reports as requested.

Moreover, this blueprint *will not* require additional funding, and we do not suggest that additional resources are required to implement our recommendations. Rather, we believe that this can be accomplished by redirecting existing funds to more targeted youth and family development and gang reduction programs, as discussed in Section IV and V of this report. We also believe that efficiencies resulting from few—though more specifically focused—service contracts, creating streamlined programs in lieu of the several existing siloed programs, eliminating duplication of effort, and improved performance-focused monitoring activities will further enable the City to optimize a new service delivery structure without additional resources. In the end, restructuring existing resources will enable the City to make gang reduction specifically, and youth and family development in general, a top City priority. Without doubt, the Anti-gang Office will be forced to operate with limited, perhaps insufficient, resources particularly given the City’s current budget challenges. Regardless, the City can accomplish more with the resources it has if it strategically and organizationally focuses these resources, than it can accomplish in the current City structure. By creating this organizational infrastructure now, the City will be in a much improved position to optimize youth development and gang reduction programming when needed additional dollars are identified and become available in the future.

The new Anti-gang Office cannot fulfill its mission and create the intended results without the commitment of other City departments, such as LAPD, RAP, CDD workforce and economic development, and the proprietary departments. It will initially be the responsibility of the Mayor’s Office to assure that City departments positively and constructively participate in the City’s new approach to coordinate citywide efforts in building community infrastructure as well as providing general youth development and targeted prevention programs for at-risk youth. As discussed at the close of this section, we believe the appropriate mechanism for such a mandate is for the Mayor to issue, monitor, and enforce an Executive Directive.

Link Already Existing City Youth and Family Services Resources

As noted, a wide array of youth-focused programs will remain in a number of different city agencies, even with the creation of a fully dedicated anti-gang and youth development organization. This requires the kind of coordination and leadership from the new Anti-gang Office that has been seriously lacking in the past, and the identification of opportunities to leverage existing resources and programs throughout the City.

Overall, it appears that many of the City’s existing at-risk youth and gang related services and programs are located in the appropriate geographic locations—those communities with high crime, high population, high poverty, high rates of child abuse, low education, etc. However, while the departments or organizations delivering such services may know where the problem areas are, they continue to place their individual programs and services in “silos” within those communities without coordinating or leveraging with other organizations providing similar services. Moreover, departments are not positioned to provide all needed services and do not work with other departments to fill service gaps. However, when coordination does not exist, the effectiveness of the efforts by one

department can be significantly reduced or fail because another department having the needed programs or resources has not been notified about the need—or worse, is simply not interested in working together. The following are just a few examples where linkages and coordination should be currently developed or enhanced.

- Lack of Coordination between RAP and CDD’s Bridges Programs and Youth Opportunity System: The YOS and Bridges’ programs (both administered by CDD) have a need for increased recreational opportunities for their participants, which will provide at-risk youth alternative and productive ways to spend their time. While some program directors developed their own recreational facilities, most do not have the means to develop recreational components that could compliment their primary service delivery and fulfill this need. Such a circumstance cries out for coordination of services.

Surprisingly, we did not find a single instance where program administrators and directors sought to partner or collaborate—on a consistent basis—with recreation directors at nearby RAP facilities, particularly those with CLASS Park programs, despite the fact that both groups administer programs to virtually the same youth and communities. Furthermore, a 2006 independent evaluation of CLASS Parks indicates that while it appears to be a great model allowing community centers to serve as a resource for a wide range of recreational and social service programs, additional resources and services are needed to optimize their potential.

Providing programs in silos not only reduces potential effectiveness of programs, but also illustrates how resources that are already present within communities are overlooked as City and program managers pursue resources they can call their own. City departments and agencies as well as regional partners should identify services that compliment each other, and work together to develop models for partnering with other entities to optimize the use of currently underutilized resources.

- Lack of Commitment to Linked Programs Reduces Effectiveness: In another example, RAP and LAPD have instituted a coordinated program—LAPD’s 63 “Drop-In” centers, including one at each of RAP’s 47 CLASS Parks. The Drop-In program is intended to have police officers visit centers at least once a week to meet with recreation leaders to discuss any issues and problems the center is facing, such as gangs, drugs, truancy, and violence at parks. Park rangers have found not all LAPD officers make these visits to centers but believe that the visits are important as the increased police presence exhibited in their park visits throughout the past year has had a positive effect on park safety.

While the efforts of these two agencies show that coordination is valuable and a step forward in providing safe parks, improvements still need to be made. Specifically, even though the Park Rangers and LAPD have developed a ranking system to prioritize the need for police presence at each Drop-In center on a scale of 1 to 3 based largely on crime statistics and input from RAP personnel, it does not appear that the priority ranking has any effect on the frequency or number of

site visits performed by LAPD or the amount of time spent by officers at the drop-in centers. For example, according to a November 2007 Audit Summary prepared by RAP based on officer “sign in” logs, visits at the 32 “priority 1” drop-in centers varied widely from 0 to 75. While at times there may be occasions where emergencies interrupt a visit, the inconsistencies within similarly prioritized parks all in high crime areas are noteworthy.

Specifically, Ramona Gardens and Wilmington Recreation Centers received no visits while Gilbert Lindsay Community Center and Jordan Downs Recreation Center received 75 and 52 visits, respectively.

Moreover, a “priority 3” drop-in center—Rancho Cienega Sports Complex—received 26 site visits, which is more site visits than at 27 of the 32

“priority 1” centers. To this end, a system that stressed accountability would encourage the use of these priority rankings to more effectively coordinate with LAPD and other critical agencies.

LAPD “Drop-in” Centers	
Priority 1 High Risk:	32 Centers
Priority 2 Medium Risk:	16 Centers
Priority 3 Low Risk:	15 Centers

While some “priority 1” drop-in centers, such as Jordan Downs Recreation Center, reported a large number of site visits during November 2007, the overall inconsistency of visits demonstrates that a method is not in place between RAP and LAPD to effectively coordinate efforts and ensure officers are committed to consistently performing site visits at high priority drop-in centers. As a result, parks deemed to have the greatest need of site visits at drop-in centers may not receive the attention necessary to adequately secure the parks, thus making not only the drop-in center program less effective but also reducing the potential effectiveness of the recreational programs. Although RAP states that they notify LAPD Community Policing commanding officers about divisions not complying with the program’s visit requirements, the agencies should work with the new Anti-gang Office to develop a partnering workable and agreeable to all parties and to which the parties actually adhere. By doing so, the partnership will better meet the needs of the communities they serve, fulfill the goal of the drop-in centers, and act as a model for future inter-department partnerships.

From LAPD’s perspective, since RAP and LAPD began prioritizing Parks site visits, the crime rate in parks with drop-in centers has decreased, and as a result, LAPD resources were allocated in other areas of the City in order to target emerging crime areas rather than the parks. Based on LAPD’s belief that the crime rate decreased in some parks over the last couple years, LAPD changed its priorities for establishing police presence at certain parks. According to LAPD and RAP, they reevaluate their joint efforts each November to analyze the needs of each of LAPD drop-in centers. However, RAP was unaware of a priority

change as they continue to track visits and request LAPD presence when absent based on the previously agreed-upon priorities.

Moreover, building better linkages among service providers within the City and throughout the Los Angeles region will also require the new Anti-gang Office to implement a functional referral network. Ideally, any program designed to address the needs of “at-risk” youth relies heavily on identifying and diverting youth to social service programs and providers before requiring the involvement of law enforcement sanctions. Within the City’s existing structure, no one agency has the resources or the expertise to meet the full spectrum of needs of any individual client. A robust referral system can act as the primary method of providing a broad array of wrap-around services to youth and their families, no matter what their individual needs may be.

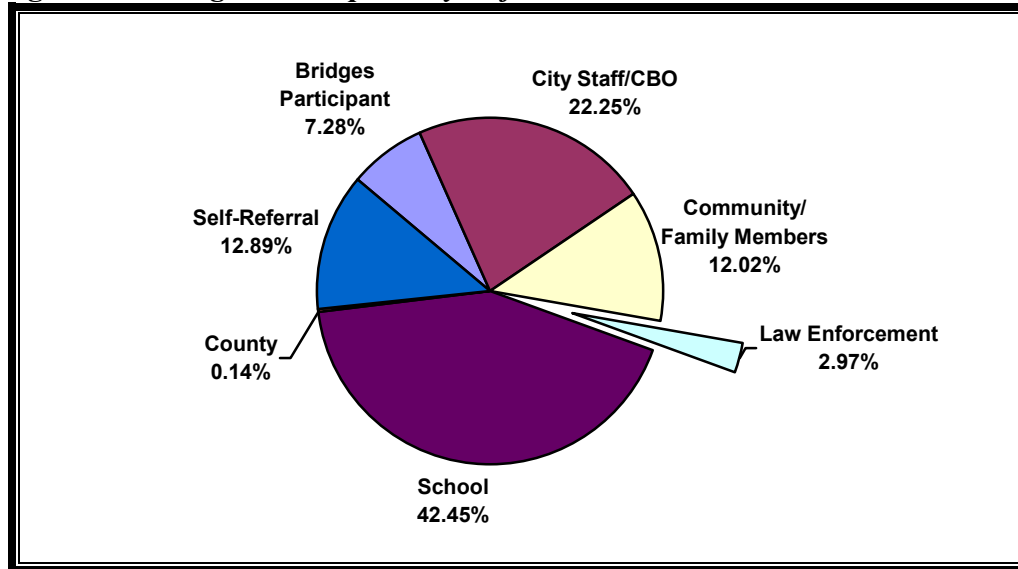
Of continuing concern is the lack of an effective continuum of services for youth most “at risk” of general delinquency or gang involvement. Youth must not be allowed to fall between the cracks, regardless of which program, community-based organization (CBO), or governmental agency has jurisdiction. The City must ensure that each program and each agency serving the City’s youth do not present a “wrong door” or a roadblock to other needed services. CBOs frequently told us that CDD placed the onus on service providers to identify and develop relationships with referral partners, and repeatedly indicated that referral networks could be strengthened with the assistance of CDD, particularly in developing relationships with the County, LAUSD, law enforcement, and others. CDD has long recognized the need for referrals by law enforcement, other government agencies, and service providers, as a mechanism to achieve the provision of “wrap-around” services to those in need. However, this system of referrals has received mixed success. Below are several examples of necessary improvements that must be made in the City’s referral network:

- Linkages between Law Enforcement and Service Providers: A strong referral process is necessary to link youth and families with the service they need. A referral process also helps the City identify and focus resources on youth deemed to be at highest risk of gang involvement. While suppression is the primary purpose of any law enforcement agency, all law enforcement agencies we spoke with recognized that they offer a critical link between at-risk youth and needed social services. Several of the City’s programs are aimed at youth in direct need of diversion services. However, this referral network is deficient in linking “youth at highest risk” to the City’s primary targeted prevention program—Bridges I. In fact, we believe that this disconnect between law enforcement and the Bridges I program is a primary factor contributing to the difficulties Bridges faces in identifying and serving youth at highest risk of gang involvement, as discussed in Section V of this report.

Referrals for the LA Bridges I program are drawn from an array of different sources, including LAUSD, a variety of CBOs, County service providers, City staff, community and family members, LAPD, the City Attorney, and others. Despite contractual requirements to work with law enforcement, in particular, to attract participants into the program, we found a strong relationship between

Bridges agencies and LAUSD, and unsatisfactory linkages between Bridges agencies and law enforcement and LA County entities, as revealed in Figure 5 on the following page.

Figure 5. “Bridges Participants by Referral Source 2005-2007”



Source: Integrated Services Information System (ISIS)

Referral data for Bridges II was not available at the time of our review. However, CDD management indicated that most Bridges II participants were identified by intervention workers, and that law enforcement had no formal referral relationship with the Bridges II program. In contrast, our fieldwork revealed strong relationships between LAPD and Bridges II service providers, and that while formal referrals may not be integral to the Bridges II program, LAPD will often notify specific CBOs when incidents occur in the hopes that the CBOs will provide a resource to help mediate the peace between gang violence.

Similar to the deficiencies in law enforcement referrals in the Bridges I program, YAP is an example of an attempted referral program that if administered well could prove successful. The program was designed as a partnership between CDD and LAPD to provide diversion referral services for youth ages 6 to 17 and their families. As part of the program, LAPD officers refer youth at risk of delinquent behavior to CDD’s FDN. However, a recent audit of the FDN program by the City Controller found that the number of referrals from LAPD were far below expectations, resulting from a lack of participation and commitment by both LAPD and CDD. However, contractual requirements to serve “at-risk” youth led FDN service providers to seek referrals from other sources, such as the Los Angeles County Probation Department. After the Controller’s report, CDD statistics over the last 18 months revealed a substantial improvement in the number of LAPD referrals received—nearly 500 “at-risk” youth. Because of the relatively successful linkages between LAPD and FDNs in referring youth to YAP services, the City determined that it would no longer allow the YAP program to continue receiving referrals from Probation. In doing

so, CDD terminated one of the most successful referral networks it has developed. Between August 2006 and March 2007, the City received nearly 425 referrals from Probation and reports receiving none as of April 1, 2007. It is unclear whether these “at-risk” youth ever received the services they needed.

Moreover, CDD’s Youth Opportunity-Intensive Transition (YO-IT) program was initially designed to provide reentry services for youth leaving the Probation Department’s detention camps. Referrals into this program were largely acquired by YO-IT staff who conducted outreach at the camps to youth who could be served once they were released. In early 2007, according to CDD management, the County Probation Department reconfigured its referral system, thereby ending this practice. Since this change, YO-IT has been relying entirely on minimal referrals received from Probation, which has caused a decline in program participation. Currently, only one Youth Opportunity Movement site still engages in the type of pre- and post-release services engaged in previously. It is essential that the City enhance its pre-release activities within probation camps in order to connect youth with the transitional services they need.

Law enforcement agencies often have the first encounter with highest “at-risk” youth and can be an invaluable asset as an agent of change in the City’s communities. While law enforcement provides some limited intervention and diversion programs, working closely and in collaboration with social service program providers and by acting as “referring agents,” officers can be a critical link to the City’s programs and agencies.

- Referrals between LAUSD and City Departments: As illustrated in Figure 5, the relationship between Bridges agencies and LAUSD appears to be functioning effectively—comprising over 42 percent of the program’s total referrals. At the same time, CDD data indicates that referrals from LAUSD to the YAP program were virtually non-existent, and there did not appear to be a strong institutional link between FDNs or Youth Opportunity sites, and LAUSD as a whole. Therefore, even though it appears that linkages between LAUSD and Bridges are relatively strong, overall improvements can be made. One opportunity for improvement is with LAUSD’s implementation of Coordinated Safe & Healthy School Plans, which provide schools with templates to create their school specific safety plan. These plans include crisis contact sheets and a listing of available resources in order to promote referrals. City Departments should partner with LAUSD to help establish a regionally-based referral network as facilitated by the Anti-gang Office.
- Referrals between City-Supported Service Providers: The above cases have illustrated the need for increased referrals into anti-gang programs to ensure youth at highest risk of gang involvement receive the services they need. However, it must be recognized that, in many cases, anti-gang programs are in a position to refer their youth to other support services, such as job training and placement services. Nowhere is this more relevant than in reentry services, which are discussed at greater length in Section V of this report. Several agencies have

reported that both the City and the County have imposed on them the full responsibility to coordinate with other CBOs and for building referral networks.

Several intervention and reentry service providers have conveyed to us the barriers faced by their clients in trying to receive services from CBOs that are not focused on serving the delinquent, gang or criminal populations. In some cases, intervention workers are forced to refer clients to service providers for needed “wrap-around” services, but these agencies may not be equipped to handle them. As a result, according to intervention workers, those in need of services are turned away. Ultimately, many CBOs that are needed to provide “wrap-around” services are primarily designed to serve the entire population of the City, not just those trapped in the gang lifestyle. As a result, staff at some of these centers, including WorkSource and OneSource employment development and job placement programs, may not be sufficiently equipped and trained to address the unique needs of previously hard-core gang who might walk through their doors. To address this, the City could either fund existing anti-gang CBOs to provide these services themselves (thus creating duplicative services and inefficiencies), or the City could enhance the service delivery at already existing CBOs to ensure their ability to provide intensive services to those with special needs (via a functional referral network). We recommend the latter.

- Referrals to and from County Services: Los Angeles County provides a great deal of social services through multiple departments. However, the City does not have an adequate referral network even though both entities serve the same youth population, particularly children in schools. We heard from several officials (law enforcement, schools, prosecution, probation, etc.) that there are gaps in services, such as in mental health and health care. Additionally, while the City has several pilot projects underway to help link County mental health services with law enforcement, such as the Boyle Heights Gang Reduction Program, stronger referral networks throughout the City are necessary to help youth at high risk. As illustrated in Figure 5, County referral sources account for a minuscule percentage of LA Bridges participants, and virtually no YAP participants. This is partly due to perceptions among County officials that City-supported CBOs do not offer the right mix of services or because they are unaware of the services available in this area. In particular, when we interviewed staff from the County Department of Children and Family Services-Multi-Agency Response Team (MART)—considered one of the most successful in partnering service providers and law enforcement—we learned that gang youth served by MART are rarely referred to City-funded programs because those CBOs are perceived to be ill-equipped to handle their specialized needs. Whether this is real or perceived, City officials need to ensure that the services offered through its various social service providers are known to non-City entities in order for an effective referral network to take root, and must consider whether additional or different services should be provided to meet a broader range of services faced by County-based clients.

Current CDD referral data are consistent with prior findings related to inadequacies in the City’s overall referral network. In 2000, the prior City Controller released an audit of the

Bridges programs that found that there was a general lack of important linkages between the program and key stakeholders, such as other service providers, schools, and law enforcement.³ In 2006, the City Controller released a report on CDD's Family Development Networks, which revealed similar dysfunctional linkages between law enforcement and targeted prevention programs, and between FDNs and other "wrap-around" services such as employment development and placement. The Controller's study found that only 39 percent of FDN clients were referred to any other service provider, and showed even weaker linkages between service providers and CDD's WorkSource Centers—a primary component of the FDN model.⁴ Our review of the Bridges I, YAP, and YO-IT programs revealed that while substantial improvements appear to have been made in some areas, the City's referral network requires significant improvements, as recommended below.

While many factors contribute to these broken linkages, none of these agencies have in the end made a top priority of establishing functioning collaborative relationships. Ultimately, the City cannot eliminate barriers between program silos, cannot ensure youth receive the wrap-around services they need, and cannot achieve a satisfactory "no wrong door" system until each City agency and each of the regional partners—both private and governmental—commit resources to make it happen. Creating these linkages are critical to the integration of services amongst each of the regional partners.

To mandate the level of cooperation required for success, it is crucial for the Mayor to issue an Executive Directive requiring key City departments to collaborate in specific ways. We recommend that the Mayor require the head of the Gang Reduction Unit within the new Anti-gang Office to participate in an intra-City gang reduction steering committee with LAPD, City Attorney, RAP, CCYF, CSW, Human Relations Commission, workforce and economic development activities, the City's proprietary departments, and other key parties. Together, these departments should devise an inter-agency strategic plan within six months outlining specifically how the resources of each can be leveraged in the City's gang reduction strategy. For example, while we recommend that CBOs partner with CLASS Parks to develop service-oriented drop-in centers, the logistics of this partnership should be outlined in a strategic plan. In another case, we recommend that the gang reduction strategy leverage the resources of proprietary departments to enhance educational and employment opportunities; these partnerships should be outlined in the strategic plan, and should fall under the purview of the steering committee. Oversight of this inter-agency collaboration must begin with the steering committee.

As mentioned previously, to ensure accountability for success, not only must the Mayor issue, monitor *and* enforce an Executive Directive mandating coordination among key City departments, but there must be transparency and accountability throughout the implementation process. Periodic reporting must address the demonstrated success and

³ City of Los Angeles, Office of the Controller, *Results of a Performance Audit of the LA Bridges Programs*, 31 March 2000.

⁴ City of Los Angeles, Office of the Controller, *Performance Audit of the Family Development Network Program in the Community Development Department*, 14 November 2006, 27.

progress of the new Anti-gang Office, the office's progress in implementing the gang reduction strategy and the challenges faced, and the progress of each of the City's partnering departments. Throughout our hundreds of interviews during the course of this study, the general managers and their staff expressed desire to be part of the City's new strategy to reduce gang activity throughout the region. Some recognized the need for reorganization as well as the need to "give and take", even if it requires programs moving between departments. Based on these interviews, the City's departments seem poised for action. This section of the report calls on City leadership to make it happen.

Recommendations

Overall, the City should establish a clear, comprehensive citywide approach to addressing its growing gang problem. In developing a City-wide approach through a formalized structure and community-level assessments, Los Angeles will be better positioned to closely coordinate its anti-gang efforts and ensure that unmet needs are being addressed and that no unnecessary duplication of services is occurring. Additionally, the City should:

- Create a new Anti-gang Office initially led by the Mayor's Office that would have responsibility to:
 - Provide a single voice and centralized leadership in anti-gang efforts.
 - Assume responsibility of all of the City's youth development and anti-gang programs, such as CDD's Human Services and Neighborhood Development programs, the proposed GRZs, GRP, Safe Havens/School Safety Plans, Parenting, and LA's Best programs.
 - Analyze anti-gang and youth development programs in all of the City's departments, agencies, and commissions, and determine if there are additional programs that should be transitioned to the new Anti-gang Office.
 - Develop a Gang Reduction Unit within the new Anti-gang Office to coordinate, track, and leverage all of the City's programs (including those in other city departments) aimed at "at-risk" youth and communities, including targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry programs.
 - Manage departmental-level activities related to youth and family programs, and coordinate those programs within the new Anti-gang Office, and ensure the collaboration, integration, and communication of related programs administered through other departments.
 - Provide oversight for community-level and citywide department-level needs assessments.
 - Expand efforts or establish new anti-gang programs where deficiencies or gaps in service are identified to assure a seamless continuum of services for at-risk children.

- Build on current relationships with LA County and LAUSD executives and elected officials to create an environment of collaboration and coordination and take a leadership role to facilitate communication amongst city departments and regional partners by breaking down past barriers that impeded cooperation and collaboration.
- Refocus the City's funding methods to strategically allocate its limited dollars to core programs directly related to anti-gang efforts.
- Establish oversight, monitoring, and reporting requirements to create accountability for performance delivery through improved CBO contracting practices and City-coordinated evaluations focused on results.
- Provide CBO training to understand and meet the new contract requirements and to City personnel to build expertise and to identify anti-gang strategies that reflect positive program outcomes.
- Issue, monitor, and enforce a Mayoral Executive Directive establishing an inter-departmental steering committee of agency heads to develop a strategic plan outlining specifically how they will partner and leverage efforts of each agency and to meet periodically to oversee progress in implementing the plan.
- Request that the City Controller conduct follow-up audits of the progress of the new office and of the status of each of the recommendations contained in this blueprint. To provide sufficient oversight of the implementation process, these follow-up audits must occur every six months after the beginning of implementation and throughout the first two years of implementation.
- Consider requesting that the Office of the City Administrative Officer and the Chief Legislative Analyst conduct interim or special reports to the City Council, as needed.

In order to correct some current processes that do not foster coordination and should be improved, City departments and agencies should cooperatively:

- Analyze what services they provide that are complimentary and work together to develop models for partnering (where appropriate) with other entities so underutilized resources are tapped, such as joint use agreements, shared space, drop-in visits, and field trips. For example, as previously discussed, coordination between RAP and LAPD as well as between RAP and the newly-created Anti-gang Office could be improved to ensure increased opportunities and program effectiveness.
- Identify needs of the communities each serve and cooperatively analyze what programs and services are lacking and what program and services should be provided to fill any gaps.
- Work more closely together to identify services that each provides that directly impact the same youth that are receiving the services and coordinate efforts to eliminate duplication of services.

- Develop a referral network to ensure adequate coordination between law enforcement agencies, CBOs, and other service providers. In particular, referral networks should be developed between criminal justice partners (LAPD, Probation, State detention facilities, Courts, LASPD, and others) and the service providers that are capable of providing wrap-around diversion, intervention and reentry services needed by youth involved in the justice system. Referral networks must also be improved to link service providers to one another, particularly in linking family and youth services to workforce development agencies.
- Formalize and coordinate existing collaborative efforts that have demonstrated successful outcomes by incorporating those efforts into the City's new strategy. A more systematic approach to the existing collaborations could produce even more results that could be replicated and leveraged in other parts of the City.

Section II—Build Upon and Develop Regional Partnerships with LAUSD, LA County, and Other Local Governments

Los Angeles County has roughly 10 million people, which makes it the nation's most populous local jurisdiction, containing 88 cities (including the City of Los Angeles) with their own governments, a number of unincorporated areas, several school districts (the largest being LAUSD), and a county government system. Historically, the structure of numerous independent cities and a variety of unincorporated areas has made this region resistant to coordination across communities. Adding to the complexity is the fact that County supervisors and members of the Los Angeles City Council each have their own constituencies and are responsible to protect the interests of the area they represent. This dynamic makes dealing with issues surrounding split powers, responsibilities, and resources difficult and sensitive. With more than 65 percent of Los Angeles County unincorporated, responsibilities related to many services and programs are heavily split between the City and County departments and no single entity has authority over the region.

As with many big cities and their surrounding political jurisdictions, relations between Los Angeles County, the City of Los Angeles, and other regional partners such as the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), often reflect conflict and lack of cooperation. We have been told that several recent events (including LAUSD/City governance, Department of Water and Power (DWP) charges, and the County homeless plan) have exacerbated matters concerning cooperation. As a result, there has been significant lack of communication and coordination between and amongst all partners, contributing to the lack of progress made in addressing the full range of gang problems in the area.

This is unfortunate as each of the regional partners has individually devoted significant resources developing programs and services intended to improve educational opportunities, expand and improve affordable housing, and provide family support so that families and communities can prosper and children will be less vulnerable to gang recruitment. Leaders of the major regional stakeholders must seek to overcome the impediments carried forth by previous actions and work to assure collaboration and coordination of their respective entities on anti-gang efforts.

To accomplish the goal of developing regional partnerships, the following should be addressed:

- ***Build relationships with regional partners to improve the current environment of conflict and non-cooperation***
- ***Continue to bolster recent successful efforts by the City and regional partners to collaborate and coordinate***
- ***Coordinate critical service clusters with the County and LAUSD***
- ***Ensure the participation of key regional stakeholders in deliberations to award contracts to service providers***

- *Participate in a regional executive level committee to solidify efforts to resolve communication and coordination barriers and advance the region's gang reduction efforts*

In the following section, we provide examples that illustrate the negative outcomes when such a structure is not in place for regional partners to communicate and coordinate as well as where efforts to bolster coordination have occurred and the outcomes of those efforts can be strengthened through a more structured approach to assessing the needs of communities.

Build Relationships with Regional Partners to Improve the Current Environment of Conflict and Non-Cooperation

While relationships between all regional partners must improve, one of the most critical segments of non-cooperation that impacts Los Angeles' youth and families involves the City and LAUSD. Currently, LAUSD operates more than 700 K-12 schools (excluding charter schools) within the City's boundaries and the vast majority of the City's youth attend schools in the district. As such, a healthier relationship between the City and LAUSD must be cultivated as the school district's efforts often overlap with City programs more than with any other regional partner. We provide several examples focusing on LAUSD and the City where coordination efforts between the two entities must improve.

City Departments Should Better Coordinate Efforts with LAUSD

The school district offers many constructive programs that the City should consider when designing and implementing its own service programs. For example, the following represent a small sample of LAUSD services that the City could leverage as it serves Los Angeles' youth:

- Crisis Counseling and Intervention Services (CCIS): These services are designed to restore and maintain the learning environment of a school after crisis or disaster and are part of LAUSD's overall emergency response and crisis management and safety plan. CCIS partners with other district services including School Police, Youth Relations, the Office of Emergency Services, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, the Office of Human Relations, Diversity & Equity, and the Division of Student Health and Human Services to provide support and technical assistance, collaborate with local, state and national agencies to facilitate crisis response and recovery services.
- Youth Relations: This program is responsible for identifying, monitoring, and preventing unsafe situations that might impact students or staff at schools. Its services are aimed at improving student relations through several elements: mediation and conflict counseling for middle and high school students that have experienced gang related trauma; "Heart Program" (Human Efforts Aimed at Relating Together) brings together natural leaders who try to be part of solving issues at schools and provide the opportunity to help other students in need; and,

acting as the liaison between the City's Bridges II program providers and LAUSD.

- Office of Human Relations, Diversity, and Equity: This office seeks to foster a healthy District, school, and community culture where all stakeholders are enfranchised so that all students lead safe, purposeful, and academically fruitful lives. Efforts include the Secondary Transition Education Program (STEP) implemented after the Jefferson High School conflict in 2005, which involves groups of 9th graders. The 120 students are chosen and visit different universities, and attend human resource meeting and a camp to learn team building and communication skills necessary to be active members of society and to ease the transition to high school. The office also supports the Human Relations, Diversity, & Equity Council formed to ensure all students that attend LAUSD are treated equally, without hatred for race, religion, background, sex, or sexual preference.

While LAUSD administers crisis counseling and youth services teams (divisions that provide assistance to schools during crisis, including gang related), these efforts are not coordinated with city program providers and gang intervention workers hired by Bridges II community-based organizations (CBOs). Even though both entities are present at crisis situations at schools, the two work independently—and sometimes contradictorily—as they attempt to provide similar services to the same affected youth. From LAUSD's perspective, the district is not necessarily uncooperative but has barriers for protection from external sources and finds that organizations outside of the school district have not inquired as to what anti-gang or youth development services and programs the school district needs. LAUSD believes the City, specifically the Community Development Department (CDD), sends CBOs to the school district to provide services without communicating with the district. Instead, services and programs are forced on the designated school without any input from LAUSD, which results in duplication and/or inappropriate delivery of services and programs or rejection of services by LAUSD. While CDD acknowledges that communication is lacking between the City and LAUSD, CDD assumes that the school district and CBO will negotiate the services needed.

While it is doubtful that either the City or LAUSD sees value in duplicated crisis intervention services, opportunities exist to work collaboratively to identify unmet needs to fill service delivery gaps. LAUSD identified one possibility in mental health support services provided to the City's youth. According to LAUSD, it has several programs (Crisis Counseling, Youth Relations, Human relations, etc) that provide immediate crisis help to students when crisis events occur at a school—however, this help may last up to only a week, and after that there is no on-going support for youth that have suffered trauma, including gang-related trauma. However, the current relationship between LAUSD and the City makes the coordination of services difficult.

In addition to poor coordination, miscommunication occurs even when collaborations are attempted—all of which results in further straining the difficult relationships amongst these agencies. For example, LAUSD's Human Relations, Diversity, and Equity

Division and the City’s Human Relations Commission have not communicated effectively during crisis situations on school campuses where both agencies were involved as was the case during the Jefferson High School racial fights in 2005. It appears that a lack of understanding of each entity’s role as well as a lack of agreement as to what services students might require has created confusion between the entities—all of which make it difficult to handle a crisis situation in a clear, effective manner. The absence of formal delineations of roles and responsibilities also leads to other misunderstandings. For instance, even though no formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) exists between these two organizations, LAUSD stated that the City sent the school district an invoice for the Commission’s efforts during the Jefferson High incident, which the school district perceived as the city acting as a “vendor” and not a partner.

Although the City and LAUSD have attempted some coordination efforts, such as forming a committee after the Jefferson High incident to review the resources offered in a one-mile radius of the school, map information (number of single moms, lack of CBOs, etc), and determine how to allocate and redirect resources, no results or recommendations have resulted. Resident needs will remain unaddressed unless regional partners can work together.

Another example demonstrating the lack of coordination between the City and LAUSD involves an area of the mid-San Fernando Valley of approximately 8.4 square miles with two middle schools—Mulholland and Portola Middle Schools. Each middle school offers LAUSD Beyond the Bell Division’s “Angel Gate” anger management program (only 26 city-wide), which is noteworthy as LAUSD states it is provided only to their

LAUSD’s “Beyond the Bell”

Provides free before and after school services, including comprehensive childcare, sports and outdoor activities, supplemental and extended learning programs, summer school, volunteering, and “Angels Gate.” Beyond the Bell also is the coordinator of the Bridges I program on school campuses.

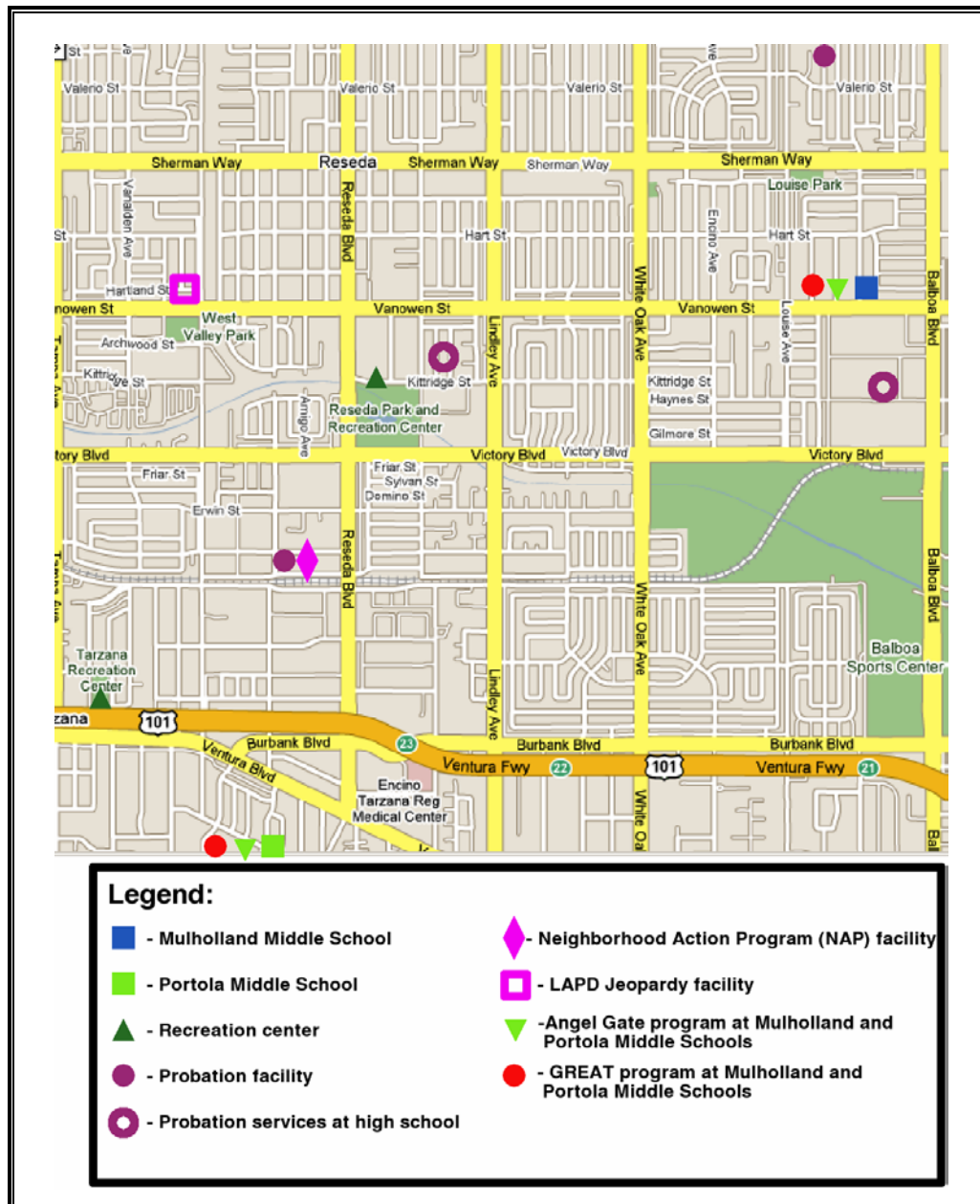
most “at-risk” students. Students enrolled in Angel Gate participate in two camping trips designed to build anger management, social skills, and address environmental issues at schools. The camping trips are followed by sustained aftercare provided at home school sites for up to two years, depending on the grade levels of the student participants. Although LAUSD identified Mulholland and Portola middle school as having some of the district’s students that are at highest risk, neither

school has a Bridges 1 program or other youth development program on-site or nearby to provide these students additional support services. In fact, aside from Angels Gate, the youth programs administered in the areas where the two schools are located are heavily law enforcement focused and are offered predominately by law enforcement agencies.

As illustrated on the following page in Figure 6 “*Community Centers and Program Locations in the Mid-San Fernando Valley Area,*” there are 8 law enforcement programs in the immediate community—5 programs provided by the County probation department (2 at high schools), 2 Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Gang Resistance

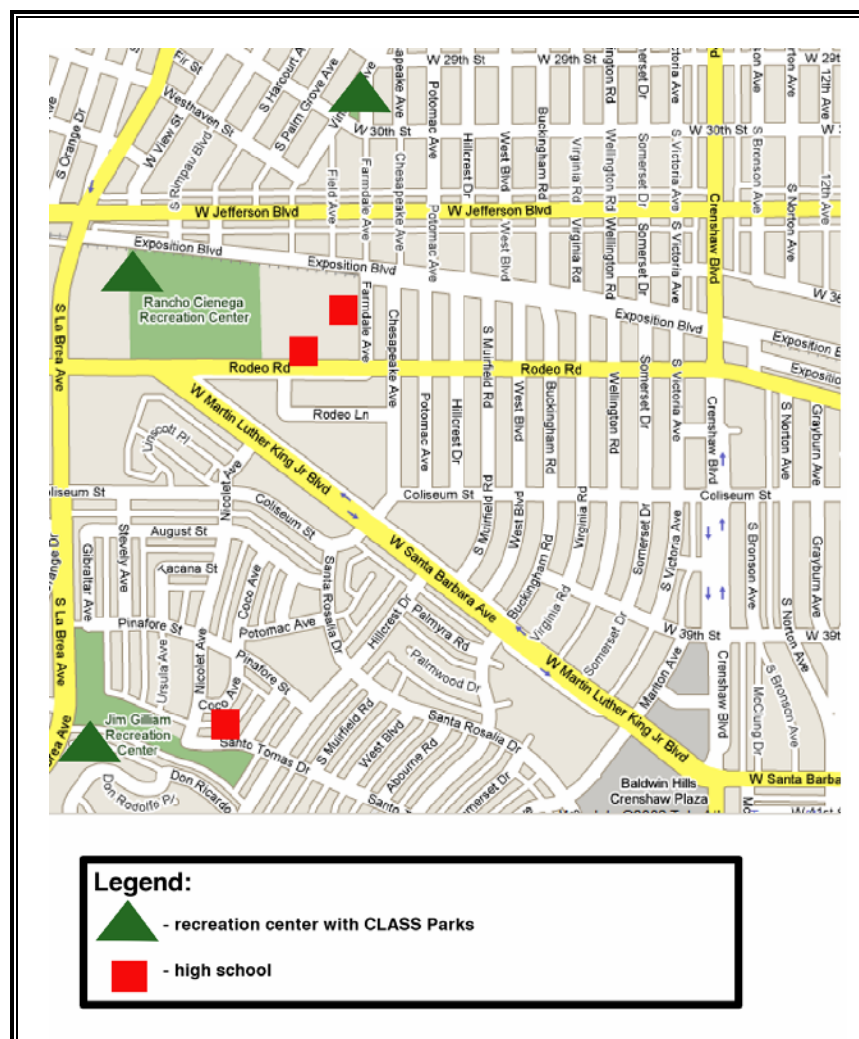
Education and Training (“GREAT”) programs, and LAPD “Jeopardy” program. Moreover, CDD offers only a Neighborhood Action Program (NAP) Center, which is the Tarzana Treatment Center that specializes in addiction treatment programs for youth and adults, which is generally paid for through health insurance of the participants and is not coordinated with any of these other programs. Additionally, the Tarzana Treatment Center is not located in the part of this community where the highest poverty rates exist and it is likely not serving the most at-risk population.

Figure 6. “Community Centers and Program Locations in the Mid-San Fernando Valley Area”



Moreover, while two Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) recreation centers are located near Mulholland and Portola Schools, these centers offer several sports programs and one has fee-based childcare, but neither provide any youth development programs, such as those offered at Clean and Safe Spaces (CLASS) Parks (which targets middle school students), to support students at these two middle schools. Yet, as illustrated on the following page in Figure 7 “*Recreational Facilities in Baldwin Hills*,” a section of another community, Baldwin Hills, includes three recreation centers (Vineyard, Rancho Cienega Sports Complex, and Jim Gilliam) within an approximately 2 square mile area that are located near three high schools and no middle schools and each of the three recreation centers have a CLASS Park program. Because the CLASS Parks program targets middle school youth, it begs the question as to why Mulholland and Portola middle schools that are classified as high risk by LAUSD have no CLASS Parks at their nearby recreation centers while another area has three CLASS Parks but no nearby middle schools. These examples illustrate how lack of coordination and collaboration between entities engender/create service gaps, under-served populations, and ineffective allocation of resources.

Figure 7. “*Recreational Facilities in Baldwin Hills*”



LAUSD and RAP Facility Efforts Have Generally Lacked Coordination

There is yet another source of conflict between the City and LAUSD that reduces the desire of either party to work together. Many in both entities expressed the perception that facilities are constructed without any consideration of the input or needs of the other entity considered. It is well known that the Los Angeles area is significantly “park poor”—both in terms of the playing fields offered at school sites as well as the number of park facilities.⁵ Studies have concluded that one way to begin to overcome this issue is for LAUSD and RAP to share the use of parks and schools to make optimal use of scarce land and public resources—which actually has recently slowly begun to occur. With this as a starting point, the City and LAUSD must build upon these recent efforts.

While RAP has executed a limited number of joint-use agreements with LAUSD, it appears that schools built in the past do not easily allow for joint use of facilities because the two entities did not work together during the design and development of the school or park facilities. According to LAUSD, many school recreation areas cannot be easily accessed without opening up the campus and classrooms to the general public, which has resulted in destruction of property and theft of school equipment. Consequently, some principals have not allowed the community to access school facilities outside of school hours regardless of whether a joint-use agreement is in place. According to RAP, even some recently built facilities were developed without City or RAP input, which impacts the ability for joint-use.

One illustration of this disconnect occurred at the new Contreras High School. This school has an Olympic-sized swimming pool that LAUSD would like RAP to operate outside of school programming hours for the benefit of the surrounding community. However, the pool has been indefinitely closed to the public because LAUSD and RAP have been unable to reach agreement concerning the location of the pool’s locker room (public access), number of lifeguards needed, and the overall cost to the city to run the pool in the summer. Thus far, the vast majority of the pool use has been for school physical education classes. Unfortunately, the school has also experienced individuals in the community breaking into the facility to use the pool.

Additionally, RAP officials as well as LAUSD administration have indicated that even when joint-use agreements are in place, many times the agreement is not fulfilled because of a breakdown at the local level. Specifically, LAUSD principals may operate autonomously and have discretion in allowing RAP to utilize the facilities. Thus, principals may refuse access regardless of any agreement between RAP and LAUSD administration as illustrated by the principal-instigated school grounds closure described above.

⁵ “Parks and Park Funding in Los Angeles: An Equity Mapping Analysis” issued in May 2002 by the Sustainable Cities Program at the University of Southern California.

Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris and Orit Stieglitz, “Children in Los Angeles Parks: A Study of Equity, Quality, and Children’s Satisfaction with Neighborhood Parks.” University of California at Los Angeles, Department of Urban Planning, 2002.

City of Los Angeles, Office of the Controller, *Performance Audit of Recreation and Community Services in the Department of Recreation and Parks*, 5 January 2006.

Further, according to RAP, some school principals have not allowed students to access RAP fields, even in cases where the fields are located immediately next to the school (such as Costello Recreation Center and Dena Elementary School). It is unclear as to the rationale for such restrictions but either the principals are not interested in working cooperatively with the City or believe that education code requirements would not permit it. Moreover, LAUSD's joint use requirements mandated dedicated staffing and other resources be provided by RAP. This lack of collaboration is unfortunate as some of these schools lack green space and have only "blacktop" play areas whereas the recreation center has a large field that is typically underutilized during the day. Thus, the children are left without areas to play during school hours while fields and playground equipment nearby steps away are often nearly empty.

However, there have been some recent improvements between LAUSD and RAP in these joint-use matters. According to LAUSD Board of Education, funds have been set aside to support and encourage joint use in the New School Construction Program with a plan to leverage those funds by attracting funding from other civic groups and/or agencies to provide additional facility resources to the wider Los Angeles community. LAUSD states that they are making it a priority to seek joint use opportunities with any public, nonprofit, or private partner who seeks to pool its resources with theirs and contribute to the long-term operations of a school facility for the benefit of both the school and the community at large.

- A recent example of this new effort is LAUSD Board of Education's authorization of \$300,000 to establish a Boys & Girls Club community youth center at Markham Middle School in Watts—set to open in 2008. The Community Youth Center Project represents a partnership with the Watts/Willowsbrook Boys & Girls Club and the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office. Most significantly, this is the first time LAUSD has created an on-campus youth center. In addition to LAUSD's contribution, the Boys & Girls Club will contribute \$150,000 for on-site staff, activities, materials, equipment, and other program-related items, while the City Attorney's Office will contribute \$100,000 toward the purchase and installation of the two modular buildings that will comprise the facility.

However, according to LAUSD, one of the main reasons for creating the youth community center is because it believes the city-run parks do not provide adequate staff supervision, leading to complaints from parents that homeless people and gang members loiter in parks. As such, LAUSD plans to expand the community youth center concept to deliver a comprehensive bundle of services, including mental health, job training, after school enrichment, etc. Currently, the facility will only house a Boys and Girls club after school program; however, LAUSD is in the process of forming additional partnerships, including one with a preventative care agency to provide health services.

Although LAUSD has agreed to partner with the City Attorney's Office, it has no plans to apply this concept with other city departments, such as RAP. According

to LAUSD, it is too difficult to implement a new program and involve outside entities; it makes the process too cumbersome. However, LAUSD plans to start working with various groups in the City to implement the concept to another school in the spring. The new Anti-gang Office's Gang Reduction Unit could facilitate the coordination of LAUSD and the city to develop community centers, determine the services to be provided, and leverage each entity's resources.

- Despite RAP being absent in the Markham Community Center project, there are several recent examples of joint-use efforts between RAP and LAUSD. One important example involves RAP beginning to work closely with the New Construction group at LAUSD assist in the design of new schools facilities (gyms, multipurpose rooms, fields, pool, etc) that can be jointly used—thus, broadening the availability of recreation opportunities to the wider community. One example of this collaborative design effort can be seen in the Green Meadows Park and the adjoining high school that will be a seamless facility, creating an academic and recreational center of the community. Both the City and District are coordinating efforts to allow the sharing of the park and the school facilities by the students and members of the community. Other instances of coordination between LAUSD and the City, including Jefferson New Elementary School, Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies' (LACES) Sports Facility Complex, and North Hollywood New Elementary School.

City and County Workforce Development Efforts Lack Coordination

One of the City's areas of service delivery tied to anti-gang efforts consists of programs to foster jobs and employment. Ironically, these efforts illustrate the lack of coordination that plagues so many city initiatives. The City and County offer nearly identical workforce development programs in several of the same locales. For instance, the City and County both provide funding to two WorkSource centers—one in Marina Del Ray and another in Sun Valley, with the intent to leverage resources by sharing the costs of providing employment services and reaching more participants than either could accomplish alone. In practice however, the City and County operate these centers separately and it appears that little coordination occurs and in fact these entities compete for the same clients.

While many City and County agencies have incorporated youth workforce and employment opportunity programs in their operations, these entities are operating in silos. To increase the effectiveness of the workforce service delivery, a more cohesive strategy is needed throughout the City and County agencies.

Continue to Bolster Recent Successful Efforts by the City and Regional Partners to Collaborate and Coordinate

While there have been some recent efforts and attempts at collaboration, such as LAUSD, RAP, CDD, Probation, District Attorney, and LAPD, these efforts have been localized, small scale, ad-hoc in nature, and lacking structure, planning, and coordination.

Nevertheless, examining these provides valuable insight and tools for building the City's new structure and approach for coordinating anti-gang efforts. These efforts also testify to the ability of the City, LAUSD, and County responsibility to work together in a highly effective manner. Some of the best examples of cooperation appear to have grown between organizations operating within the areas of greatest need.

- In 2006, in an effort to foster more cooperation and reduce violence in the Watts area, Councilmember Hahn commenced weekly Watts Gang Task Force (WGTF) meetings. These meetings continue to be well attended and include residents, law enforcement officials, RAP, LAUSD, Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), gang interventionists, and CBOs. Officials from RAP believe the WGTF is a positive force that provides participants a forum to network with other area service agencies and form collaborative and coordinated partnerships, resulting in better service to the residents utilizing the Nickerson Gardens recreation center. The following highlight a few of the positive collaborative results occurring from the WGTF:
 - Children and Family Grief and Loss Counseling provided several sessions of free grief counseling for the children that experienced a number of gang-related murders and shootings occurring over a two week period at Nickerson Gardens Housing Development.
 - City Human Relations Commissioner connected the Nickerson Garden's Recreation director with donors for each recreation facility in Watts as well as introduced the centers to the "Earn-A-Bike" program.
 - LAPD provided extra security at a recent successful hip-hop concert at the Nickerson Gardens Recreation Center where no major incidences occurred.
- In February of 2007, LAUSD and the L.A. City Attorney's Office started the Markham Middle School Safety Initiative with a goal of fostering a safe school environment in and around the campus. The majority of the students at this school reside in four different housing developments in Watts—representing essentially 4 rival gang neighborhoods. Simply walking to and from school poses a danger for these children every day.

The LA City Attorney invited the Watts area recreation center directors and coordinators to meet with the Markham Middle School staff to discuss solutions to address the increasing violence and behavioral issues at the school. Because the recreation staff have developed connections and rapport with students, and in some cases may be more influential than the teachers, school administration requested RAP help supervise lunch time recreation. As a result, the RAP

recreational director and volunteers created a homeroom “Character Building Lunch Sports League” comprised of mixed teams from each housing development.

Together, RAP staff at Markham Middle School and the City Attorney forged a positive working relationship and are in the process of teaming up to purchase 2 vans for RAP staff to safely transport children after school to the housing development presenting great opportunities for RAP to recruit youth who may not otherwise know about the recreation center programs. However, at other nearby schools, communication attempts have not been as successful.

- In 2003, the County Board of Supervisors implemented a new initiative to address gang violence, which calls for a close collaboration between law enforcement agencies and communities affected by gangs. Currently, as part of these county-wide efforts, the Interagency Gang Task Force (IGTF) meets once a month to provide a forum for discussing anti-gang efforts, including pilot programs, funding, reentry efforts initiatives, and community involvement, among others. IGTF members included representatives from various City and County departments, LAUSD, as well as community-based organizations. The IGTF’s intent is to develop a collaborative approach to fighting gangs through coordinated suppression, intervention, and targeted prevention programs. Cooperatively, the participating agencies and organizations can respond to gang issues and bring together education, law enforcement, prosecutorial agencies, parks, and community based organizations. One of the most prominent community organizations evolving, in part under the umbrella of the IGTF, is the San Fernando Valley Coalition on Gangs, comprised of community leaders and representatives from community based organizations as well as county departments and agencies such as Probation, RAP, and City Attorney’s Office. The IGTF also has a regional component. Specifically, LAPD, LA Department of Children and Family Services, LA City Attorney’s Office, LA Human Relations Commission as well as other LA City and County entities are represented in the group. According to Coalition members, the success of the organization is reflected in its member commitment to solving gang problem at a community and local level first and including both county and city infrastructure and services into their strategy.
- The City’s Community Law Enforcement and Recover (CLEAR) program, funded by the Department of Justice (DOJ), is organized around the goal of helping “recover” gang-infested communities through a comprehensive program of collaborative suppression, intervention, and targeted prevention. Each CLEAR site has an Executive Committee comprising members from law enforcement and social services agencies. The community outreach and social services component of the program is largely supported and coordinated through a Community Impact Team (CIT). The law enforcement component, or Operations Team, includes LAPD, District Attorney, City Attorney, and Probation while the social services component is comprised of community members as well as public social service

agencies and community based organizations. The CIT serves as eyes and ears for the community, helps prioritize problems, and provides the Operations Team strategies and feasible solutions to local gang problems. For instance, through CIT, the Operations Team is able to work closely with local schools and community centers to help identify high risk youth as well as active gang members. As part of a coordinated effort between Operations Team and CIT, CLEAR sites also serve as referral agencies identifying youth in need of services and helping families as well as individuals get counseling and other social services.

- LAUSD has also started implementing Coordinated Safe and Healthy School Planning Committees at schools to design and apply a safety plan that fits the schools' needs. This plan is required to include resource mapping, physical environment of schools, school responsibilities, violence prevention and intervention, school discipline/attendance, crime prevention, nutrition, physical education, health education and services, and parent and community involvement. With the school principal having the ultimate responsibility, the committee is comprised of students, parents, staff, and the community, including law enforcement representatives who are charged with working cooperatively together to ensure the school safety plan is implemented and updated.
- Youth Relations Office within LAUSD began forming "Safety Collaboratives" at several high schools in 2004 in response to increasing violence and racial tensions on and off campus. The collaboratives bring together the schools, local law enforcement, the LA County Commissions for Human Relations, the LA City Human Relations Commissions, and nonprofit organizations to identify problems and develop solutions.

While the above highlighted initiatives are excellent examples of successful collaborative outcomes, most of these efforts are informal, lack structured commitment, and operate on a volunteer basis, potentially limiting the ability to address community needs. Such collaborative measures should be formally incorporated into the City's new strategy that requires a more systematic approach to coordination and evaluation.

Coordinate Critical Service Clusters with the County and LAUSD

While this report focuses primarily on one service cluster—youth and family services—there are three additional service clusters that are essential in any anti-gang and community development effort. General community development (including housing, commercial, industrial and overall economic development), social disorganization, social bonds among youth, and potential issues of inequity in service delivery throughout the City are significant factors to consider in how the City addresses the gang problem. The regional partners must ensure collaboration and coordination also occurs at these levels in order to reduce Los Angeles' gang activity and creating safe communities for all Angelenos:

- Workforce Development: It has long been established that neighborhoods with higher employment rates and greater economic opportunities are less likely to become hotbeds of gang activity.⁶ Because early work experience in the job market contributes to future success in the job market, the City's current urban teen unemployment problem must remain a top priority, and workforce development programs must be harnessed to any anti-gang strategy. In addition to the long term benefits of youth employment, the City will reap short term benefits as well: youth engaged in education and employment are less likely to engage in delinquent and gang activity.⁷

Recognizing the importance of employment, many city departments have established workforce development programs of various types—some directed at the City's youth, some directed at “at-risk” youth, and some at adults. While CDD remains the hub of the City's workforce and economic development activities, many City departments have been proactive in enhancing employment and economic opportunities throughout the City, including: Department of Public Work's (DPW) Summer Employment Program, RAP's CLASS Parks and youth hiring/volunteer programs, LA CityWorks and Hire LA Youth, the local jobs placement program through DWP, Harbor, Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD), HACLA, California Restaurant Association (CRA), Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), and Los Angeles World Airport (LAWA). All or most of these city departments meet monthly with the Mayor's Office to discuss workforce and economic development activities and objectives. While CDD's efforts culminated in its November 2007 release of an Economic Development Strategic Framework, the City has yet to adopt or implement a City-wide economic development strategy focused on the most needy neighborhoods. In some respects, the collaboration between CDD and these other departments appears to be some of the strongest efforts we've seen in the City, though there is still room for improvement. Much more can still be done, however—particularly as it pertains to how these efforts can be leveraged in the City's gang reduction strategy.

Beyond these City efforts, however, the County offers similar Workforce Investment Act (WIA)-funded workforce development programs. As mentioned earlier, we found at least two cases where the City and the County both provide funding to the same WorkSource Centers—one in Marina Del Ray and another in Sun Valley. However, despite the clear overlap in workforce development activities between the County and the City, there does not appear to be sufficient coordination between the two in leveraging the resources of the other. Interviews with City personnel revealed that regular communication and functional

⁶ William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor* (New York: Vintage Press, 1996).

See also The Advancement Project, *Citywide Gang Activity Reduction Strategy: Phase III Report*, 2007.

⁷ Neeta P. Fogg and Paul E. Harrington, “The Teen Disconnection in Los Angeles and its Neighborhoods”. Center for Labor Market Studies, November 2004.

See also Neeta P. Fogg and Paul E. Harrington, “One out of Five: A Report on Out of School & Out of Work Youth in Los Angeles and Long Beach,” Center for Labor Market Studies, November 2004.

collaboration does not exist between the County and City workforce investment boards, or the WIA program administrators.

Likewise, LAUSD as well as local community colleges operates many educational institutions that are specifically designed to address workforce development and vocational opportunities for the region's youth and adult populations. For example, LAUSD's Division of Adult and Career Education provides learning opportunities and employment training to adults and in-and out-of-school youth with programs relating to California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids, Health Careers, and Industrial Education. Along with the City's and the County's workforce development efforts, those of LAUSD comprise an additional silo—with increased coordination, the efforts of each could help to optimize their overall impact in increasing regional economic opportunities for those in need.

Moreover, while the City maintains reasonable performance measures for the workforce development activities of CDD, and while CDD has developed a substantive scorecard detailing its successes and weaknesses in comparison to its stated goals and objectives, it remains to be seen whether other City department are as well equipped in assessing their impact on the City's overall workforce and economic development strategy. What is certain is that the City does not have any readily identifiable way to determine the impact of all of its workforce development efforts, or the total resources dedicated to these efforts, nor did we find one for the region.

To have a long term effect on gang activity in the Los Angeles region, any comprehensive gang reduction strategy must use the coordinated efforts of the City, the County, and LAUSD to create jobs and economic opportunities in the City's most economically depressed communities and provide the necessary education and training. However, while many City, County, and LAUSD agencies have incorporated youth workforce and employment opportunity programs in their operations, these entities generally operate in silos. To increase the effectiveness of the workforce service delivery, a more cohesive strategy is needed throughout the City and County agencies.

- Housing, Economic and Community Development: It has also been well established that reducing urban blight, revitalizing urban areas, and enhancing economic opportunities are crucial factors in reducing crime in general. According to the Advancement Project, "Los Angeles has the worst affordable housing climate in the entire United States and persistent residential segregation that impacts the social and economic infrastructures of communities."⁸ Recognizing this, both the City and the County dedicate significant resources to housing, economic and community development, much of which is funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

⁸ The Advancement Project, *The Reentry Reinvestment Project*, 2007, p. 107.

Four city departments operate programs addressing urban development, including LAHD, HACLA, CRA and CDD (as well as less involved departments such as RAP, DPW, DWP, Building and Safety and others). These departments employ various assistance, lending, community building/developing, and clean-up programs designed to reduce urban blight, revitalize neighborhoods, and increase affordable housing throughout the City (i.e. fixing the proverbial “broken window”). It is evident, however, that these agencies focus their pursuits to fulfill departmental primary missions, do not have established structures to coordinate efforts, and are not organizationally positioned to achieve overarching or citywide strategic objectives.

In contrast, the same set of departments in the County were also distinct and uncoordinated until they were grouped together under one umbrella—the County Development Commission. This Commission includes the County Community Development Department, the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACOLA), and the County Redevelopment Agency.

Overall, the issues of leveraging of public investment and public interest to create job growth, providing a stable supply of quality affordable housing and improving the quality of life by providing access to key social services in each City neighborhood—these issues if properly addressed must have an impact on eradicating gang problem in the Los Angeles community.

- Law Enforcement Involvement: While this study focuses on social service delivery programs aimed at youth development and gang reduction, the gang intervention and suppression efforts of the law enforcement community play a crucial role in dealing with immediate effects of the City’s gang problem. Through our review, it is apparent that while most service providers throughout the City lack coordination with one another, the law enforcement community seems to provide some of the best examples of coordination and cooperation across agencies. While all efforts have not always been equally successful, there appears to be existing coordination between law enforcement agencies as they pertain to intervention and suppression programs, including LAPD, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD), Los Angeles School Police Department (LASPD), County Department of Probation, City Attorney’s Office, and District Attorney, among others. Some examples of law enforcement cooperation include:
 - County Juvenile Justice Criminal Prevention Act (JJCPA) established to cooperatively (city, county and other entities) develop and maintain a comprehensive plan documenting the condition of each local juvenile justice system and proposals to fill identified service gaps. In 2007, LAPD received nearly \$500,000 in funds through JJCPA for youth programs targeting juvenile delinquent youth and gangs where police and probation officers patrol designated high juvenile crime areas, perform truancy sweeps, curfew enforcement, and control gang activity at or around 48 designated sites.

- The JJCPA's countywide Gang Intervention Program service is not limited to law enforcement professionals but is aimed at incorporating suppression, intervention and targeted prevention services provided by probation officers, school officials, law enforcement agency officials, and CBOs. The JJCPA has created a network where CBOs specializing in gang intervention services assist the Probation Department and other gang activity-focused law enforcement agencies and violence. The collaboration between CBOs, the Probation Department, and other law enforcement agencies has been one of the crucial elements in the County's efforts to combat the rise of gang violence. Coordination efforts have included regional task forces that develop community specific plans for a specific region to address increasing gang violence. These task forces also help coordinate pilot programs and initiatives in their respective areas with other communities with similar programs. According to the many interviews we conducted with the program participating agencies, one critical factor that determines program success in this collaborative effort is the continuous exchange and flow of information on gang-related crime and youth at risk. For instance, the San Fernando Valley Coalition on Gangs holds monthly meetings of its members where community-based organizations and community leaders discuss current issues relating to the evolving gangs dynamic in the area. Gang crime data is reviewed and discussed, and local organizations are involved in the decision-making process to redirect community efforts to fill existing need. For example, in a particular community, faith-based organizations played a major role in supporting youth and families at risk. It is important to note that the success of such community involvement in this case depended on volunteer efforts from City staff, County staff as well as local community centers and non-profit organizations. What remains to be seen and evaluated, however, is if these efforts can result in long-term reductions in gang crime. What is promising about these activities is that they mirror successful problem solving approaches in cities like Boston, Indianapolis, and St. Louis.
- School-Based Supervision is another example of cooperation in addressing youth delinquency and gang reduction, consisting of a partnership between the County Probation Department, schools, community based organizations, and mental health providers that targets "high risk" kids with or without prior offence records. Probation officers perform onsite visits at schools located in communities impacted by multiple risk factors such as high crime rates, juvenile crime, substance and alcohol abuse, child abuse, and poverty (90 high schools, 30 middle schools, and 5 elementary schools) to monitor student behavior and school activities as well as to build rapport with "high risk" students that demonstrate poor academic performance and anti-social behavior. The goal of the program is to improve behavior, academic performance, attendance, and prevent juvenile delinquency and ultimately reduce crime. Surveys related to the

School-Based Supervision program suggest a perception of an increase in school safety as this program has allowed probation and school officials to address gang violence directly on school campuses.

- Additional collaboration and communication efforts have involved programs that are targeted to get children to and from school safely. For example, under the Safe School declaration, regional Los Angeles law enforcement agencies, including LAUSD, LASPD, LAPD, and Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) are working to create more secure environments around schools and on students' paths to and from class. This pilot program will provide extra law enforcement around 20 school locations (located in or near the City's proposed Gang Reduction Zones) for a period of 30 days. First-time evaluations of crime data around 20 middle and high schools located in or near the City's proposed Gang Reduction Zones (GRZs) will be compiled and shared between LAUSD and LAPD to allow LAPD and LASPD to identify trends, examine patterns and deploy necessary officers and resources to prevent and combat campus criminal activity.

While cooperation efforts among law enforcement are commendable, law enforcement activities related to anti-gang efforts have, for the most part, not been connected to the social service and youth development activities of other departments and agencies. The partnerships described above have not been effectively integrated into any city plan. Because of this, the City should ensure that all key agencies and departments, including those that provide law enforcement, are represented in the City's new Anti-gang Office and structure in order to provide comprehensive services to communities in need.

Ensure the Participation of Key Regional Stakeholders in Deliberations to Award Contracts to Service Providers

While sufficient and objective needs assessments must be conducted to determine which services should be implemented in various Los Angeles communities, City officials must ensure that all key stakeholders are invited and participate "at the table" offering input on how services will be provided and who will provide them.

Our discussions with LAUSD regarding the coordination between its own crisis counseling and youth services teams and Bridges II gang intervention workers revealed how the uncoordinated actions of both groups in crisis resolution efforts can result in inefficient—and sometimes contradictory—efforts. As noted previously, the city directs services and programs appropriate at the schools without input from LAUSD, which results in duplication and/or ineffective and inefficient delivery of services and programs or rejection of the services by LAUSD.

We were told of numerous specific situations that we believe further illustrate the importance of having key regional stakeholders participate in contract deliberations with service providers. While we learned that some interventionists are professional and provide meaningful services that we believe should be expanded (as described more fully

in Section V), we were also told of numerous instances where service provider staff failed to show up at schools as agreed upon, arrived on school grounds under the influence of alcohol, acted in ways that glorified the gang lifestyle to students, and caused disruption on school grounds where school police were required to get involved. We listened to accounts of instances where service providers have been short staffed and attempted to resolve this problem by recruiting random individuals from nearby parks to work with children at schools without any idea of the background of these individuals. In a jurisdiction with a very large gang problem and insufficient resources to fully address the problem, the underlying cause that allows these situations to occur cannot be allowed to continue.

The first critical step in facilitating collaboration between the City, the multitude of other service providers, and regional partners must occur when the City issues new Requests for Proposal (RFPs) and contracts with for future service delivery programs. Moreover, the new Anti-gang Office must implement a process that will ensure that a background investigation of all individuals that interact with children and that the individuals have passed minimum requirements and qualifications. Currently, only the individuals that actually sign a contract with CDD are required to undergo a background investigation. They must also work together to determine the minimum requirements that allow individuals to work with children as well as the best method to deliver the services as LAUSD, City, County, and Court systems all share in the responsibility in determining who should be on school campuses and who is allowed to work and be around children.

Participate in a Regional Executive Level Committee to Solidify Efforts to Resolve Communication and Coordination Barriers and Advance the Region's Gang Reduction Efforts

Since it is widely known that gangs do not respect municipal boundaries, the City of Los Angeles' gang problem represents a regional challenge shared with Los Angeles County, LAUSD and numerous other cities and school districts in the area. All of these entities play critical leadership roles in developing a successful and comprehensive gang reduction strategy. Consequently, the best solutions to the problem must include regional partnerships and are not limited to those undertaken solely by City government within its city limits. As such, the City should participate in a regional level executive committee to solidify efforts and overcome past barriers that have prevented successful communication and coordination of the region's anti-gang efforts.

While we know of numerous initiatives and task forces encompassing key public organizations throughout the City and County, greater efforts are needed to institutionalize formal collaboration between regional partners. A promising endeavor is the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors call—in 2007—for a comprehensive countywide public health strategy to respond to gangs and violence. According to the Advancement Project, the Los Angeles County Executive Officer assembled an Executive Steering Committee that includes the County CEO, Advancement Project representative, District Attorney, LAPD, Sheriff, LA Mayor's Office Representative, County Superintendents, and ICA President. While this report focuses significantly on

the creation of a new Anti-gang Office to better facilitate intra-City coordination, it is imperative that the Mayor send the leader of his new Anti-gang Office to be the voice of the City in collaborating with regional partners in a structured way, such as participating in the County's new Executive Steering Committee as well as working with other regional partners, such as LAUSD, to ensure all key players are represented.

Recommendations

The failure of coordination exemplified by the numerous examples throughout this section illustrates the need for better communication and coordination between program operators, schools, and other agencies. Specifically, the City and LAUSD officials must:

- Make it a priority to work together to break down past barriers that have impeded past attempts at program-building, communication, and coordination.
- Identify needs of the communities each serve and cooperatively analyze what programs and services should be provided to fill any gaps.
- Identify services that each provides that directly impact and compete for the same youth that are receiving the services.
- Develop a crisis action plan prior to any crisis or emergency occurring that outlines each entity's (LAUSD, CBOs, City departments, etc) role and responsibility so that confusion and conflict can be eliminated. This crisis plan can also identify what student information can be shared, which must be in compliance with education code and federal laws such as the Family Rights and Privacy Act.
- Create a formal MOU that delineates the roles and responsibilities of each entity.
- Design facilities and develop programs and services to meet the needs of their shared community while ensuring that their efforts are not duplicated by the other and resources are fully maximized.
- Replicate and expand recent efforts to work together in designing new facilities (schools, gyms, multipurpose rooms, fields, pools, playgrounds, etc) that can be jointly used by the entities as well as can contribute to and coordinate the availability of recreation opportunities to the wider community.

In addition, to improve regional communication and coordination efforts, the City must:

- Include and integrate LAUSD throughout the City's new approach to building a comprehensive anti-gang structure. For example, LAUSD must have a representative on each Interdisciplinary Community Assessment Team so that the district's perspective is expressed and considered when identifying community needs.
- Identify methods of linking City-supported service programs and LAUSD in a way that allows each to leverage the resources of the other. For instance:

- Similar to Bridges I co-location in certain LAUSD middle schools, additional co-locations can be established for other youth and family services (such as Family Development Networks (FDNs)) to better facilitate “wrap-around” services to the City’s youth.
- Further, the City must not limit these linkages to middle schools, but must consider expanding them to elementary and high schools on a broader basis than is currently being done.
- Enhance the referral network between all of the City’s youth and family services and LAUSD, not just those associated with gang activity.
- Work with all regional partners to provide services to the community in a cooperative manner so that services are not duplicated and so unmet needs are addressed in the most effective manner. In doing so, the City should:
 - Identify positive citywide and regional results and activities that can be evaluated, replicated, and leveraged in other parts of the City.
 - Build upon existing regional collaborative efforts and ensure those efforts are formally incorporated into the City’s new structure for a more systematic approach rather than an ad hoc type of approach.
 - Ensure that all key agencies and departments, including those that provide law enforcement, are represented in the City’s new Anti-gang Office and structure in order to provide comprehensive services to communities in need.
- Ensure the participation of key stakeholders in deliberations when developing service programs and when determining which services will be provided and which CBOs will be contracted to provide them. This includes key regional stakeholders such as LAUSD and the County, as well as other City departments such as RAP, LAPD, and others when developing RFPs and evaluating proposals of service providers.
- Implement a process that will ensure a background investigation of all individuals that work for CBOs, including those individuals employed by subcontractors, and interact with children has been conducted and has passed minimum requirements.
- Request that the Mayor issue, monitor, and enforce an Executive Directive that requires the new city Anti-gang Office to participate in a regional executive committee (such as the County’s Executive Steering Committee) to build relationships, facilitate communication, and break past barriers between City, LA County, and LAUSD executives as well as elected officials. This Committee should also include representation from LAUSD and the County’s other 88 cities.
- Develop service cluster-based collaboratives with key regional partners in areas of workforce development, housing and urban development, and law enforcement.
- Integrate and coordinate workforce development programs as part of any anti-gang strategy, specifically targeting urban teens and harness distinct efforts of the

City, the County, and LAUSD to create jobs and economic opportunities in the City's most depressed communities.

Section III—Conduct Community-based and Department-wide Needs Assessments

While our recommendation is based on a regional approach to fighting gangs, the success of an anti-gang program hinges upon developing a meaningful citywide strategy for identifying and delivering an optimal mix of services that target the gang problem at its root. As gang researcher James Howell noted, “No two gangs are alike and no two communities’ gang problems have the same dimensions”.⁹ A coordinated approach must include general and targeted prevention, diversion, intervention, reentry programs, as well as suppression efforts—but these efforts must be based on the unique needs of diverse communities. In the past, the City has largely placed the responsibility of identifying needs on the service providers themselves. This not only distanced the program administrators from the people in need of services, it also encouraged a system of service delivery where supply dictated demand. In spite of this—or perhaps because of this—the City has begun changing its approach. Similar to the Gang Reduction Program (GRP) implemented by the City as a pilot project in Boyle Heights in 2003, our blueprint suggests that the City should build and expand on this model and establish community-based Interdisciplinary Community Assessment Teams (ICATs) within a Gang Reduction Unit of the new Anti-gang Office.

The ICAT teams will be primarily responsible for performing in-depth community-wide needs assessments and developing strategic plans at each of the Gang Reduction Zones (GRZs) proposed by the Mayor and other selected areas transitioning or challenged by gang activity. However, these community-level needs assessments will be limited to those communities that have been designated by the Mayor as “top priority” and, as such, there is a risk of neglecting the needs of other City areas. To address the needs of the vast majority of other City residents, we also recommend that each City department perform critical youth development and gang reduction programs perform department-level needs assessments relative to their respective missions. Further, we emphasize the importance of allocating citywide resources based on the results of both of these efforts.

Our blueprint recommends establishing sufficient mechanisms and structure to ensure that the needs assessments occur in methodical and comprehensive ways. Specifically, we recommend that the City:

- ***Create Interdisciplinary Community Assessment Teams (ICAT) for selected communities***
- ***Develop community-based needs assessment methodology***
- ***Mandate department-level needs assessments citywide***
- ***Establish a process for identifying gaps in services***

⁹ Howell, James C. Howell, “Menacing or Mimicking? Realities of Youth Gangs.” *Juvenile and Family Court Journal* 58, no. 2 (2007): 39.

Create Interdisciplinary Community Assessment Teams (ICAT) for Selected Communities

To ensure that the City's to combat gang activity are effective at a community level, the City must establish processes to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the gang problem and the resources available in the most impacted communities. Our blueprint recommends creating community-based teams—the ICATs—that will be responsible for coordinating and conducting needs assessments at a local level, and ensuring that anti-gang programs are tailored to the specific needs of every community. These teams will be coordinated by the Anti-gang Office as a multi-agency effort conducting community-based needs assessments, creating strategic plans to address the gang challenges each community faces, making decisions related to services and programs, and establishing the roles and responsibilities of each in delivering needed services, among other activities. This approach will foster coordination among key city departments and regional partners, resulting in the City's ability to strategically focus and leverage its resources, identify service gaps or unmet needs of particular communities, and deliver programs that are held to account for positive outcomes.

Consistent with the Mayor's Gang Reduction Strategy of April 2007 that identified eight proposed GRZs—areas with highest gang crime, poverty, unemployment, low education levels, and poor school performance, among other issues—we propose the City continue focusing its efforts on GRZs, and, similar to the existing Community Impact Teams (CITs) establish ICATs for every GRZ. As of December 2007, the City identified eight GRZs within six different Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) divisions, including Foothill, Hollenbeck, Hollenbeck-Ramona Gardens, Newton, Northeast, Southeast-Jordan, Southeast-Imperial, Southwest-Baldwin Village, with plans to expand into additional 10 areas (see Appendix C for the location of proposed GRZs). However, the teams must also be nimble enough to reposition as communities change.

While presently there are numerous task forces and regional groups, teams, and committees that are organized to fighting gangs, these groups and their efforts are disjointed. The ICAT process should establish a structure to develop tailored approaches that fit the needs of individual communities. For example, a key component to the City's existing Gang Reduction Strategy is to focus law enforcement efforts in the GRZs. The suppression component—the Community Law Enforcement and Recovery (CLEAR) Program—is operated through a collaborative effort between LAPD, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD), County and City Attorneys Offices, and County Probation. Alongside these, however, is the necessity to provide community-based social support services needed most in gang infested areas. This component includes conducting an inventory of services available in the GRZ, surveys and interviews throughout the area to determine the critical need and gaps in services, with the purpose of bringing a more collaborative approach to providing youth and family services in the high gang crime areas. While we believe that the existing CITs at CLEAR sites provide some of the essential community involvement component, our recommendation is to create such teams that are positioned to make immediate impact on the improving the quality of life in communities that are most impacted by gangs. Specifically, the existing CITs located at each CLEAR operational site include representatives of area residents,

community organizations, business people and other stakeholders. Their primary function is to coordinate with the law enforcement team assigned to the CLEAR site to help identify community-specific issues relating to gangs.

However, the existing CITs do not typically include research experts and city department personnel. Moreover, the newly created ICATs will be different from CITs in that in addition to being vested in communities through involving community leaders, they will include manager-level City employees empowered to make executive decisions to help allocate citywide resources and have an immediate impact on solving gang-related problems in a designated community. ICATs will consist of key City and County

Interdisciplinary Community Assessment Teams (ICATs) will consist of representatives from:

- Anti-gang Office (new)
- Community Development Department workforce and economic development
- Department of Recreation and Parks
- Los Angeles Police Department
- Community Redevelopment Agency, LAHD, HACLA
- Human Relations Commission
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Los Angeles County Departments (e.g. Department of Children and Family Services, District Attorney, Sheriff, Probation, Mental Health, DCSS, etc),
- Research specialists, and
- Other community stakeholders (e.g. Community Impact Teams representatives from CLEAR sites and other existing Community Task Force Groups)

department managers, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and existing task forces as well as community leaders and other stakeholders. Much like CITs at CLEAR sites, or the regional steering committees of the County's Interagency Gang Task Force (IGTF), ICATs will include expert representatives of key entities as well as other additional members, including the new Anti-gang Office, LAPD, Community Development Department (CDD) workforce and economic development, Department of Recreation and Parks

(RAP), California Restaurant Association (CRA), Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD), Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), Human Relations Commission, LAUSD, Los Angeles County Departments (e.g. Department of Children and Family Services, District Attorney, LASD, Probation, Mental Health, Department of Community and Senior Services (DCSS), etc), research specialists, and representatives from the existing community-based task forces engaged in the anti-gang efforts in each respective community (e.g. Watts Gang Task Force (WGTF) and others).

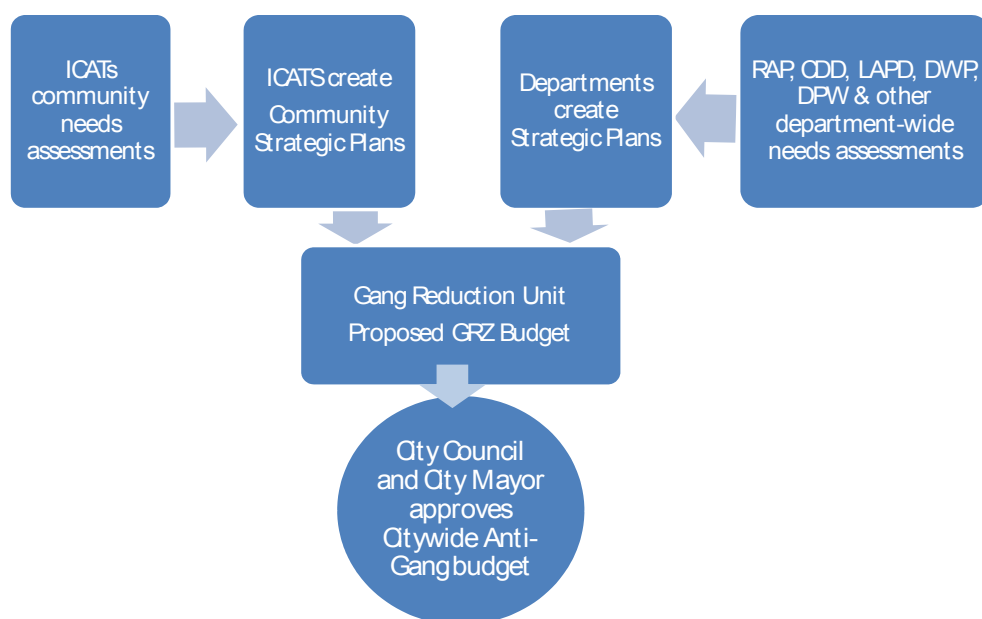
ICATs should build on the promising model of CITs, but the existing teams should be restructured to facilitate effective reporting and citywide coordination of efforts. Specifically, the ICATs should operate within the framework of citywide anti-gang program and have reporting structure to support the new Anti-gang Office. Further, ICATs can provide a model for city-wide efforts to make regional improvements. As such, ICATs will:

- Identify services no longer useful or effective due to population or other changes.
- Coordinate and holistically assess the needs of each community and identify the types of programs and services to be provided to fill identified gaps.
- Formalize and coordinate existing collaborative efforts that have demonstrated successful outcomes by incorporating those efforts into the City’s new strategy. A more systematic approach to the existing collaborations could produce even more results to be replicated and leveraged in other parts of the City.
- Collaborate with evaluators to determine program effectiveness and/or determine if changes to the program are needed.

While during our review, the City was in the process of conducting needs assessment studies in the eight GRZ areas, the City must ensure that these needs assessments efforts are well coordinated and considered in light of the community-wide needs as well as department-wide needs in the City. By mandating a strong and effective communications structure through ICATs and the new Anti-gang Office, the City will be better positioned to address the changing community priorities as they relate to the gang issues, and ensure that community-wide assessments are in line with the citywide anti-gangs strategy. Further, the ICATs involvement in the communities will maintain continuous community involvement and foster continued investment among the coordinating parties which is crucial in building viable long-term solutions to the gang problem.

Below, Figure 8 depicts the key steps in the suggested “*Citywide Anti-Gang Needs Assessments Process*” beginning with the community-based needs assessments, performing citywide department-wide studies, and, finally, prioritizing the needs for services and making budget decisions based on the strategic plans that were developed as a result of the aforementioned needs assessments.

Figure 8. “Citywide Anti-Gang Program Needs Assessments Process”



Develop Community-Based Needs Assessments Methodology

Many attempts have been made by leading researchers to develop an approach that addresses the fundamental gang problem at its root. These studies have examined the underlying causes of gangs to find those key ingredients that will keep communities healthy in the short- and the long term. However, individual neighborhoods may call for different solutions, and the answer to finding the right strategy lies in creating a comprehensive approach for understanding and addressing the unique needs of every community facing gang-related issues. As the needs of communities evolve, the City's approach to addressing these changes must also evolve.

Throughout the region, there are several major initiatives funded by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)—all of them have a community-based needs assessment component. As part of the Mayor's Gang Reduction Strategy, the City is in the process of conducting needs assessment studies for the 8 GRZs. This approach, however, appears to be disjointed and uncoordinated, with consultants preparing these community-level needs assessments as they work in silos themselves, without any point of coordination among themselves or with other City initiatives. Needs assessment activities are often performed in silos without critical determinations outside of the particular program of what services are needed and where they are needed. Further, many of the City departments outsource social services and allow contractors to assess community needs that often market the services the contractor provides. As a result, the results can be biased toward the contractor wanting to "prove the need" in order to get a contract with the City department. The City must engage communities itself to identify the services to be provided prior to contracting with services providers. Our blueprint recommends developing a Citywide comprehensive needs assessments methodology by identifying unique core community needs (basic community infrastructure—family, jobs, housing, etc.), and building on promising methodologies currently in use.

Existing GRZ Needs Assessments Require Coordination and Expansion

The Mayor's Gang Reduction Strategy describes a targeted approach to providing a mix of social services coupled with intense suppression efforts. The proposed GRZs integrate prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts in areas reflecting highest crime levels, low school achievement index, high truancy rates, significant school dropout rates, severe poverty levels, limited economic opportunities, and other socio-economic indicators that contribute to environments with gang problems.

As part of the GRP model, the City has established the following goals:

- Identify needs at the individual, family, and community level and address those needs with a coordinated, comprehensive response.
- Inventory human and financial resources in the community and create plans to fill gaps and leverage existing resources to support effective gang reduction strategies.

- Apply the best research-based programs across appropriate age ranges, risk categories, and agency boundaries.
- Encourage coordination and integration in two directions: vertically (federal, state, and local) and horizontally (across communities and program types).

The needs assessments model currently employed in the GRZs includes important components, such as developing a thorough inventory of services and resources, and determining where additional resources are needed. Some city departments (e.g. RAP) and regional partners are currently undergoing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping to inventory their services and programs for this very purpose—however, their efforts are not coordinated. In addition to mapping community resources, the City should also consider mapping the location of program participants. While confidential information should be guarded strictly, mapping participant addresses will reveal critical information regarding program accessibility and utilization in designated GRZs. This information is critical to future needs assessment and performance evaluation efforts. Interviews with City personnel revealed that the capability to conduct accessibility and community utilization analyses through GIS mapping appears to currently exist using address data in the City’s Integrated Services Information System (ISIS), though this capability is currently not utilized.

Further, we cannot emphasize enough the need for reliable and valid quantitative *and* qualitative data in the needs assessments as the quality of data will help make sound decisions and take appropriate action. Generally, the City has been using gang crime statistics to select the existing GRZ sites for the implementation of the CLEAR law enforcement component. However, a wide array of demographic, social, and economic factors should be carefully considered in conjunction with gang statistics to identify areas for further expansion of the GRZs and CLEAR sites into other communities throughout the City. We recommend the City incorporate the following steps as future needs assessment are conducted:

- Develop an empirical understanding of gangs, including use of definitions, tracking gang crime data, reliance on agencies that compile gang-related statistics

Information obtained from schools and community-based organizations, law enforcement, hospitals, self-report and victimization surveys, and juvenile justice systems serve as valuable information sources to help understand the nature of gangs and help develop an approach to eradicate gang activity.

- Build upon existing efforts to construct an inventory of existing services and programs

An inventory of services is useful in enumerating the available resources and gaps in resources to be filled. In designing an effective response strategy to gangs, best practices suggest using a combination of prevention, intervention, and suppression in an integrated framework. Depending on the nature of the underlying problem in the individual community, the strategy for addressing this problem will change from community to community. Therefore, when evaluating the results of the inventory of services review, it is important to identify goals and

objectives that are specific to the individual community, and to correctly categorize programs and services linked to clients and neighborhoods.

➤ Identify sources of information to gather gang statistics and data

Sources of information should include: schools; social service groups; the juvenile court; hospitals; emergency rooms; information from the Computer Aided Dispatch system (CAD), especially shots fired, and the Record Management System (RMS), particularly if there is a gang identifier in the system; jails and prisons; the Supplemental Homicide Report data maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as part of the Uniform Crime Report; Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) research partners; the Youth Firearms Violence Initiative (YFVI) through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Child Fatality Review Panel; among others.

➤ Ensure the appropriate expertise is involved in the needs assessments

The failure to understand the nature, dynamics and dimensions of the local gang problem can lead to errors in the development of interventions for gangs, but also in order significant areas of public policy that affect gangs like families, housing, employment, schools and neighborhoods. If the community problems are not understood, the decision-makers are more likely to make a mistake about the anti-gang approach in that specific community. Therefore, ICATs should address questions such as: ‘What are we trying to change and how are we trying to do it?’ ‘What needs to happen in order to do that, and when must it occur?’ ‘Who is responsible for specific activities?’ We recommend beginning and ending each team meeting with these questions, as they are designed to maintain focus and accountability.

To ensure that the critical quality of life factors are considered in any community-based needs assessment study for the GRZs on a going forward basis, for expanding the GRZs, we identified 12 elements that should be covered in such studies, including the demographics and urban overview, economic factors, educational factors, child welfare, health and mental health, law enforcement, gang intervention and street peace, criminal justice, public safety, community capacity, community infrastructure and leadership, and gaps and disconnects. These factors are clustered as follows according to common themes.

1. Demographics and Urban Overview

- ✓ Population density
- ✓ Housing density
- ✓ Household Composition
- ✓ Geographic Mapping: streets, cul-de-sacs, parks, etc.
- ✓ Population Change
- ✓ Land use patterns

Much of this information is available through various mapping services and information available on line. If the appropriate platform is utilized, the time and cost impact can be minimized. However, it is critical for any needs assessment not to evolve into an exercise in information technology and virtual knowledge. Such mapping must be accompanied by community observation, however brief.

2. Economic Factors

- ✓ Poverty levels
- ✓ Jobs and Household Income
- ✓ Poverty levels among single parents
- ✓ Levels of joblessness: short-term and chronic
- ✓ Specific measure: out-of-school, out-of-work youth
- ✓ Concentrations of poverty among single parents

This information must be two-fold. Before focusing on the specific measure of unemployed youth, it is necessary to obtain an adequate measure of the community economics. Again, much of this material can be acquired through mapping, census measures as well as city, county and state statistics.

3. Educational Factors

- ✓ Levels of educational attainment per family
- ✓ School Academic Performance Index at all levels
- ✓ Drop-out levels
- ✓ Truancy and Attendance Levels
- ✓ Disciplinary Actions and “Opportunity Transfers”
- ✓ Ethnographic School Profiles

Material for this cluster must be collected in concert with LAUSD. Establishing such a relationship through the needs assessment will be critical as service delivery and evaluation unfold. LAUSD statistics and information on students will have to be delivered in ways that ensure student confidentiality while supplying accurate data. In addition to quantitative measures, it is critical to construct school profiles through the use of observation, focus groups and other qualitative measures.

4. Child Welfare

- ✓ Children and youth in foster placement
- ✓ Families engaged in Family Reunification
- ✓ Families engaged in Family Preservation
- ✓ Families involved with “First Five” child abuse prevention
- ✓ Cross-generational involvement in Child Welfare system
- ✓ Child abuse measures
- ✓ Children of single mothers living below the poverty level

Data for this component will have to be collected in concert with the County of Los Angeles. In the past information sharing between City and County has been challenging, fraught with misunderstanding and mistrust. The current atmosphere, however, suggests that such information sharing would proceed with less obstruction. Child welfare data will not be limited to the County of Los Angeles, however. It can also be obtained from clinics and non-profit organizations in the community. Additionally, this component must be integrated with Cluster Five. As such, all remarks made in relation to this cluster apply to cluster five.

5. Health and Mental Health

- ✓ Levels of physical health and well-being
- ✓ Levels of mental health and well being
- ✓ Levels of substance abuse and treatment
- ✓ Levels of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD/HIV)
- ✓ Levels of trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- ✓ Children and youth in mental health system

6. Law enforcement

- ✓ Levels of general crime, violent crime and gang related crime
- ✓ Levels of gang activity
- ✓ Street gang information: number, types, migration patterns
- ✓ Gang Involvement by Ethnicity, Race and Gender
- ✓ Nature of gang organization, structure and activities

The challenges in gathering Cluster 4 and 5 data are similar to those for collecting data from LAPD and related Los Angeles County law enforcement agencies. Historically, LAPD has been reluctant to share data although this practice appears to be changing. Nevertheless, information should be readily available surrounding all of these topics. Additionally, this information will have to be compared to and contrasted with data collected through Cluster 7.

7. Street Gang Intervention

- ✓ Street gang information: number, types, migration patterns
- ✓ Levels of gang activity and dynamics
- ✓ Gang Involvement by Ethnicity, Race and Gender
- ✓ Relationship between street and prison gangs

Data collected in this cluster will serve largely as a measure of the validity on the law enforcement statistics and information gathering. However, many intervention practitioners and “street peace” agencies do not function effectively in terms of data collection and recordkeeping. Because of this, alternative and qualitative measures should be employed, included focus groups and depth interviews, to collect adequate information on gang composition and activity.

8. Criminal Justice

- ✓ Number, demographics of youth involved in probation
- ✓ Incarceration and Recidivism rate
- ✓ Number, demographics, criminal record of individuals on Parole

This cluster will necessitate data sharing at the County, State and even Federal level and will consist largely of quantitative measures and data in statistical form. Information sharing established during community needs assessment should be maintained throughout the program implementation and evaluation process. Program needs and success should be linked “beyond” the community into the criminal justice system. It will also be critical to differentiate between youth involved in probation and even incarceration for the first time as opposed to career criminals.

9. Public Safety

- ✓ Community perceptions of safety, danger
- ✓ Safe passage programs
- ✓ Community watch programs

This cluster will require largely qualitative and ethnographic measures, though survey measures of public safety have proven useful in other communities. Community observation is critical to community needs assessment as are focus groups conducted with a cross section of representative community members. This cluster represents an attempt to assess community perception of threat and danger. Results of the needs assessment can also be used to establish a baseline against which program efforts can be evaluated. One of the most effective and important data collection methods that can be used to augment focus group is the community or “town hall” meeting. It is critical that the community play a role in such actions to ensure accurate needs assessment as well community buy-in and ownership.

10. Community Capacity

- ✓ Existing gang activity reduction services: prevention, intervention
- ✓ Existing youth development services: education, job placement
- ✓ Type, level, effectiveness of social services
- ✓ Type, level, effectiveness of related public health and mental health services
- ✓ Community Based Organizations
- ✓ Faith Based Organizations, Number and Current Programs
- ✓ Public-Private Partnerships

This Cluster, along with Cluster 11, is designed to identify and describe community assets or *strengths*. It is critical that the community needs assessment not focus exclusively on deficits. It is critical to map what services are available, where they are available, their hours, policy, age and reputation in the community and overall outreach. When possible there should also be observation, site visits and brief interviews with involved personnel.

Additionally, this component must be integrated with Cluster 11. As such, all remarks made in relation to this cluster apply to Cluster 11.

11. Community Infrastructure and Leadership

- ✓ Objective identification of community leaders (not self-designation)
- ✓ Civic resources
- ✓ Faith based resources
- ✓ Level of Business involvement and resources

12. Gaps and Disconnects

- ✓ Degree of linkage or disconnect between law enforcement (suppression) and other community assets
- ✓ Coordination of Intra-City agencies
- ✓ Coordination of City, County, State and Federal agencies
- ✓ Involvement of Schools
- ✓ Coordination of public private services
- ✓ Alignment of Location and Service delivery with gang activity
- ✓ Alignment of Available Services with Community need
- ✓ Quantity, Quality of Services
- ✓ Type and level of Service Collaboratives

As discussed previously in Sections I and II of this Report, cooperation, communication and coordination of efforts are essential in the community needs assessments process. The coordination between public and private services must also be examined through focus groups and/or in depth interviews. Most critically, whatever suppression efforts integrate (or do not) with other gang reduction activities must be assessed.

Mandate Department-level Needs Assessments Citywide

Overall, we found lack of coordination and, in many instances, lack of methodical needs assessment processes for City-wide anti-gang programs and departments. Presently, the City is relying on a variety of needs assessment models and practices. For example, the community-level needs assessment conducted as part of the Boyle Heights GRP and those conducted for the GRZs have been or are being conducted independently of those required to occur for the Consolidated Plan for CDD, LAHD, HACLA, and other departments funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In addition, a number of other ad hoc inter-departmental needs assessments occur in the forms of surveys, service provider interviews, questionnaires, community forums and the like that are not shared or vetted outside the program. However, none of these City efforts are coordinated to ensure that the results of these needs assessment studies are used in to addressing a City-wide anti-gangs program objectives.

Our blueprint suggests every city department should perform a department-wide assessment to inventory resources. The department-wide inventory of resources should

be tied to the department's goals and objectives. These needs assessments typically take time and resources, and we recommend these studies be conducted once every five years. The new Anti-gang Office should work to develop a "template" to be used by City departments. The department-wide assessments and the ICAT strategic plans should be submitted to the Gang Reduction Unit for review and preparation budgetary proposals related to anti-gang efforts.

The department-wide inventories of services should be compared to the identified needs of GRZs and, in concert, the community-level and department-level assessments should be considered in the resource allocation and funding decisions for the citywide Gang Reduction Strategy. Furthermore, the ICATs should meet regularly to review needs assessment results and strategic plans to coordinate resource allocations and funding to properly address anti-gang program goals citywide and region-wide.

Presently, the City and Los Angeles County have several initiatives that encompass a community needs assessment component. Building on existing best practices, the new Anti-gang Office's ICATs should ensure that the citywide approach addresses the needs of identified communities. The following are some examples of existing practices for conducting needs assessments throughout the City and County that can be built upon and better coordinated.

- Community Development Department: CDD Environmental Scan Task Force completed an analysis of need for 35 selected community planning areas identified by CDD managers. While CDD provides the vast majority of services targeting youth "at risk" throughout Los Angeles, the needs assessments for services provided by CDD have to be conducted in concert with other City and County departments that provide prevention, intervention, diversion, and suppression services in the communities being evaluated. In 2005, CDD identified top priority areas that appeared "most in need" and "underserved", based on the inventory of services, demographic and economic indicators including high youth poverty, low academic achievement, high single-parent family home, high unemployment rate, high rental units, high linguistically-isolated households, high percentage of youth under age of 21, and high percentage of households receiving public assistance. According to CDD's study, the following areas were identified by CDD managers:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Boyle Heights | 7. West Adams |
| 2. Westlake | 8. Wilmington |
| 3. Southeast | 9. Northeast LA |
| 4. North & East Central | 10. Mission Hills |
| 5. South LA | 11. Central City |
| 6. Wilshire | |

Each of these areas falls within proposed GRZs or adjacent to Gang Injunction Zone. CDD's methodology for performing needs analysis in these areas included performing an inventory of youth development services offered in those areas, the availability of affordable and available housing, among other factors.

- Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP): In 1999, RAP conducted a limited department-wide needs assessment that revealed a variety of issues that required community-specific solutions to concerns such as lack of access to school facilities for recreation, personal safety, and insufficient youth recreation, sports, and after-school programs. In 2000, based on the study, RAP developed the Clean and Safe Spaces (CLASS) parks concept to improve and expand 47 older, underutilized, and distressed recreation centers. CLASS parks focuses programming on youth development, empowerment, volunteerism, employment, recreation, and academic assistance as well as recreation facility repair and clean up.

At the urging of the City Controller in a January 2006 audit report, RAP began a large scale community needs reassessment study that it expects to complete in early 2008. The assessment includes:

- Analysis of existing facilities
- Inter-department workgroups (Library and DCA)
- Intra-department workgroups (between department managers)
- Surveys
- Interactive website
- Needs Assessment Advisory Group (RAP, environmental groups, recreation groups, CBOs, etc)
- Community workshops
- Focus groups
- Key person interviews

As part of this initiative, RAP has recently increased the number of staff in the planning area, including a systems analyst to develop GIS mapping of all of RAPs facilities and programs as well as other entities such as schools, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), libraries, and hospitals.

- Consolidated Plan: As part of the City Consolidated Plan mandated by HUD to receive federal funding, the City established the Citizen's Unit for Participation (CUP). The CUP conducts needs assessments that correspond to the five-year consolidated plan. All City departments funded through HUD and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grants, such as LAHD, HACLA, and CDD are required to include their needs assessment report as part of the Consolidated Plan. However, according to interviews we conducted with the City officials, the report does not serve as a practical tool to implement a collaborative approach on program design and community redevelopment planning.
- Countywide Efforts: At the county-wide level, Juvenile Justice Criminal Prevention Programs (JJCPP) generally receive grants from the DOJ and, as part a condition of funding, are required to demonstrate and identify community needs. Generally, these programs have a significant law enforcement component with collaborative efforts among LAPD, LASD, Probation, Los Angeles District Attorney, and as such, needs assessments are driven by crime statistics data, juvenile truancy records, and certain economic indicators. However, while the agencies are obligated to justify the regional location where the program will be

implemented, the location selection methodology, and the program outcome measures, there does not appear to be a comprehensive approach to evaluating the overall accessibility of social services at a community level to ensure that these social services are available to the youth in need. Nor is there a standard or comprehensive approach to determining the appropriate mix of services to be provided. Further, the issue of assessing availability of services as a continuum of services targeting every age group has not been addressed.

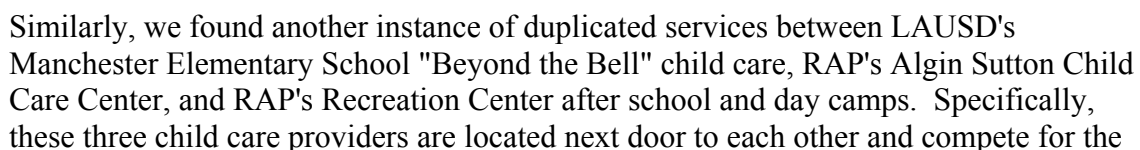
For instance, as part of Juvenile Justice Criminal Prevention Act (JJCPA) School-Based programs, the task of LA Probation and LAPD is to identify the high needs areas and implement an effective intervention program that helps curb juvenile crime and respond to identified needs in each community. The JJCPA requires a multi-disciplinary Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) in each county to develop a comprehensive plan for providing services to youth at risk as well as delinquent juveniles who have already entered the justice system. Many services and programs that are currently provided by the County Department of Probation, for example, are required to submit needs assessment studies as part of the program funding requirement. However, while the JJCPA programs targeting “at risk kids” focus on gathering information on specified statistics to evaluate the need as well as show program effectiveness, including juvenile arrests, incarceration, probation violations rates, probation completion rates, restitution payments and, community service completion rates, the needs assessment focus, in this case, is driven by the intervention and suppression efforts with little consideration for identifying the inventory of social services available to these “at risk” kids and determining the gaps in the continuum of services that are needed.

A different type of practice that is carried out by the County Housing Development Commission that is currently seeking community input by conducting a survey to evaluate the following factors: community services infrastructure (such as services provided, law enforcement agencies, community facilities, neighborhood services), housing development (affordable housing, fair housing, etc), and economic opportunities (business and commercial development, job training and placement services, small business assistance, business revitalization).

Establish a Process for Identifying Gaps in Services

Through hundreds of interviews, we found that there is a general perception that youth most “at risk” may not have adequate access to appropriate services, most of which would typically fall within the family and mental services category (service gaps are discussed further in Section V of this report). Overall the law enforcement agencies we contacted expressed a general concern that the City does not have adequate programs in place to target the “highest at risk youth”, or juveniles with a first or second offense. LAUSD also voiced concern regarding providing adequate mental health services to children who may be on the verge of joining gangs or committing serious crime.

Figure 9. “Proximity of Select Youth Employment Centers”



same youth to serve. RAP's child care center provides fee based services while Beyond the Bell and the recreation center provide free service, increasing the difficulty of RAP's child care center to provide its services. RAP staff acknowledged that the child care facility is underutilized and competes directly with Beyond the Bell as well as RAP's own recreation center programs. They also acknowledged that it may produce better results if it were strategically placed in a different part of the city.

Overall, to ensure that the City resources are coordinated and offered in a manner to effectively address existing community needs, the City should do a better job at coordinating needs assessments and allocation of services.

Evaluate Results and Build Community-wide Strategic Plans

After the community-wide needs assessments have been performed, the City must evaluate results in the context of existing resources and citywide priorities. As noted earlier, the community-based needs assessments for the GRZ areas alone would generally neglect the needs of communities outside the GRZ areas. Therefore, the needs identified in each selected community should be evaluated as they pertain to the services provided by all City departments serving the needs of the general public, such as RAP, LAPD general youth programs, CDD, and others. The newly established Gang Reduction Unit within the new Anti-gang Office must review the needs assessments results for both, the GRZs as well as the needs assessments prepared by City departments.

Once community needs and gaps in existing services are identified for the GRZs, the ICAT's would then prepare a strategic plan for a specific GRZ area for submission to the Anti-gang Office's Gang Reduction Unit to coordinate with needs assessments including those prepared by ICATs and those created by individual city departments. The new Anti-gang Office will submit the information for the Mayor's budget review which will be approved by the City Council. In addition, our blueprint places significant importance on building a citywide structure and mechanisms to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the Gang Reduction Strategy. Ultimately, the City *must* incorporate the needs assessments process into the planning, resource allocation and budgeting processes.

Recommendations

To ensure that City's anti-gang programs are designed to meet the specific needs of communities that are affected by gangs, the City should:

- Create Interdisciplinary Community Assessment Teams (ICAT) for selected communities
- Require all city departments to create department-wide strategic plans and provide information to the new Anti-gang Office's Gang Reduction Unit.

To ensure that the City's anti-gang programs are designed to meet the specific needs of communities that are affected by gangs, the new Gang Reduction Unit and ICATs should:

- Identify community needs and program gaps cooperatively, determine service provision to “fill in gaps.”
- Formalize and coordinate existing collaborative efforts that have demonstrated successful outcomes by incorporating those efforts into the City’s new strategy—namely the new ICAT efforts. A more systematic approach to the existing collaborations could produce even more results to be replicated and leveraged in other parts of the City.
- Coordinate and holistically assess the needs of each community and cooperatively determine the types of programs and services to be provided to fill gaps and ensure unmet needs are addressed.
- Identify which services are no longer useful or effective due to population shift or other changes.
- Collaborate with evaluators to determine program effectiveness or, when program effectiveness is limited, how programs can be refocused or altered to better serve in an individual community.
- Develop methodology for performing Citywide needs assessments so that they are effective, consistent, and accurate across departments and identify unique core community needs (basic community infrastructure—family, jobs, recreation, housing, etc.)
 - Building on the existing GRZ needs assessments methodologies, ensure that the community-wide needs assessments include the following elements:
 - Develop empirical understanding of gangs, including use of definitions, tracking gang crime data, reliance on agencies that compile gang-related statistics.
 - Construct an inventory of existing services and programs
 - Identify sources of information to gather gang statistics and data
 - Ensure the appropriate expertise is involved in the needs assessments
- When performing needs assessments to expand the GRZs the following components should be considered:
 - demographics and urban overview
 - economic factors, educational factors
 - child welfare
 - health and mental health
 - law enforcement
 - gang intervention and street peace
 - criminal justice
 - public safety
 - community capacity
 - community infrastructure and leadership

- gaps in services and unique community challenges
- Require each City department to perform needs assessments on a regular basis, at least every five years, Citywide to determine the specific anti-gang and youth development program needs (e.g. general or targeted prevention, types of intervention efforts, etc.)
- Establish a process for identifying gaps in services
- Anti-gang Office's Gang Reduction Unit must identify the costs associated with needs identified via ICAT's strategic plans, which should be used for preparation of budgetary proposals related to anti-gang efforts.
- ICATs should meet on a regular basis to discuss the changing needs community-wide and department-wide to quickly address evolving gang-relating issues

Section IV—Redirect Funds to the Gang Reduction Strategy

With significant declines in federal and State funding over the past five years, the City will have to make tough decisions regarding identifying community needs, and providing the resources to address those needs. Currently, many city entities find it challenging to clearly identify, define and distinguish core services to meet these needs. More significantly, critical targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry programs are grossly under-funded. If youth development and gang reduction is to be a top City priority, additional resources will need to be redirected toward these core service areas. Based on information derived from the substantive needs assessments described in the previous section, City officials will have the information they need to concentrate resources where they are needed most.

Redirecting existing funds will require difficult decisions, and will likely mean that some services—often valuable services, but not focused on gang reduction—may no longer receive City funding. However, if the City is determined to face the problem of gangs head on, such decisions will be necessary. It is true, as both the Mayor and the City Controller have recently implied, the City must be more diligent and more coordinated in identifying and applying for additional grant revenues.¹⁰ In fact, one program we reviewed reported that they lost potential grant revenues that could have significantly improved the program because they could not get the grant through the City’s bureaucratic approval process in a timely manner. The pursuit of additional resources for youth development and gang reduction is absolutely necessary. Nevertheless, immediate action to devise and implement a gang reduction strategy requires immediate funding, not the potential to identify future grant resources that may yield additional funds.

To accomplish this goal, City officials and administrators should:

- ***Redirect additional funding to core targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry services***
- ***Re-Focus a substantial portion of existing Neighborhood Action, Specially Targeted, and Neighborhood Development program funds toward the City’s Gang Reduction Strategy***
- ***Some consideration should be given to “special projects”***
- ***Stop citywide proportional funding allocations and reductions***
- ***Re-procure all youth and family service contracts within six months***
- ***Incorporate needs- and performance-based outcome measures in CBO contracts***

¹⁰ Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, “2008-2012 Housing and Community Development Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 2008-2009 Program Year 34 Action Plan,” Letter to the City Council, 9 January 2008.

City of Los Angeles, Office of the Controller Laura Chick, *Performance Audit of the City’s Grant Seeking & Administration Processes*, 4 December 2007.

- *Revise the consortium-based contracting approach*
- *Consolidate monitoring and evaluation activities and focus on program and agency performance rather than on outputs and compliance*

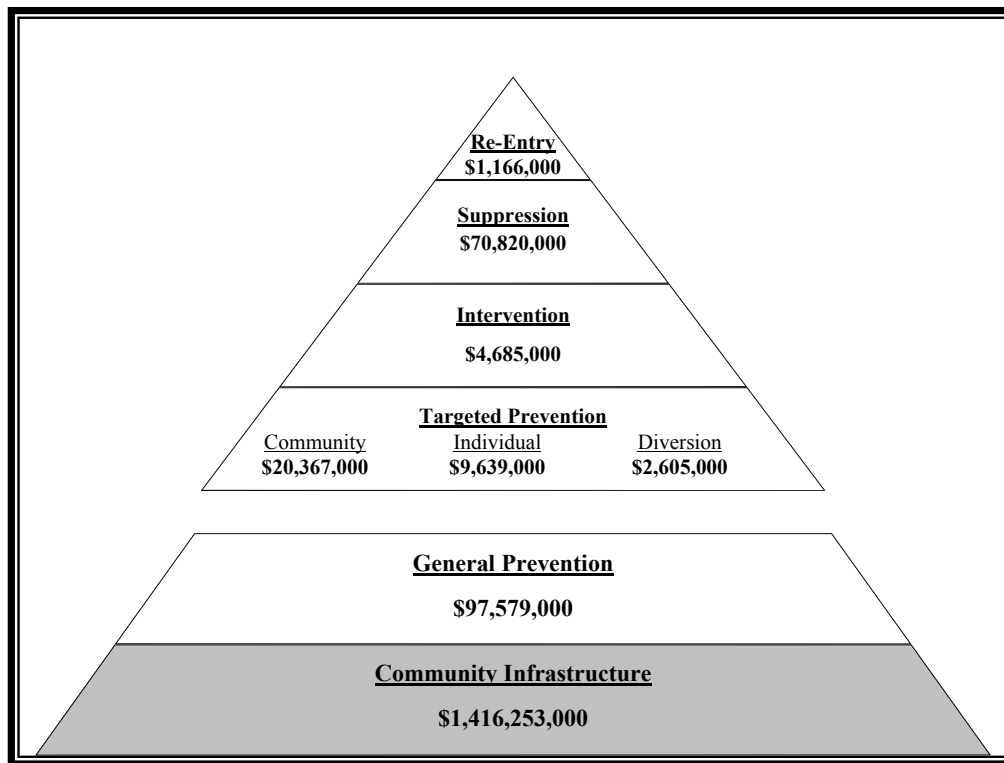
In the following sections, we describe how the City’s method of allocating funds to anti-gang and youth development programs does not adequately distinguish between core and non-core programs, or tie funding to strategic citywide priorities or objectives. Thus, the City is not able to consistently demonstrate that limited city dollars are put to the best use in addressing the most pressing gang reduction needs. Funding should begin with the core community-level services, with designated funding moving to more specialized, anti-gang programs. Once funding for programs is established, agencies must be funded on a performance- and need-based set of criteria.

Redirect Funding to Core Targeted Prevention, Intervention, and Reentry Services

Although the City has devoted substantial financial resources to address delinquency and gang reduction, our research suggests that these resources could be more effectively deployed by focusing on specific targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry services. Targeted, comprehensive efforts are far more likely to reduce these problems than the City’s current patchwork approach to program delivery.

The City’s current gang reduction approach relies extensively on an amalgamation of disparate programs that offer a variety of services to different groups throughout the City. However, much of the funding classified for “anti-gang” programs does not actually have a specific focus on targeted gang prevention, intervention, or reentry, but rather concentrates on general prevention and community infrastructure. While these broader, non-core programs are necessary for the growth and development of healthy communities, and do provide significant benefits to the communities they serve, the amount allocated to targeted gang programs is not in proportion to what would be expected within a comprehensive gang reduction and youth development strategy. Specifically, Figure 10 on the following page illustrates approximately how much is currently devoted to each type of service within the City’s overall social service delivery framework—see Figure 1 on page 6 of this report for the detailed Healthy Community Pyramid.

Figure 10. “Healthy Community Program Funding”¹¹



As is clearly evident, even with targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry combined, general prevention, suppression, and community infrastructure efforts receive more than forty times the funding resources than the services currently comprising the City’s gang reduction efforts. The City should recognize that this funding emphasis may solve acute safety “crises” without addressing the fundamental problem of gang membership; a problem that will remain unresolved. In fact, Irving Spergel and G.D. Curry found in a survey of law enforcement officials, that they believed suppression was the *least* effective of the four strategies.¹² To successfully implement a well balanced gang reduction strategy, targeted prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry services require proportionate funding. The following discussion of anti-gang funding—though not exhaustive—provides a basic understanding of the types of programs and services in each category, and the barriers faced by the City in attempting to reallocate any of these funds.

¹¹ The funding amounts depicted in this pyramid represent program allocations among more than a dozen City departments, and were derived from City budgetary documents, departmental program reports and contract documentation, independent analyses conducted by the Chief Legislative Analyst, and the Mayor’s Gang Reduction Strategy. We excluded most funding associated with two agencies—HACLA and CRA—due to their independent control over funding resources; as a result, this pyramid does not reflect hundreds of millions of dollars dedicated to the City’s “Community Infrastructure” development programs. Amounts were classified according to definitions described in Appendix A.

¹² Irving. A. Spergel and G. D. Curry. “The National Youth Gang Survey: A Research and Development Process,” in *Gang Intervention Handbook*, eds. A. P. Goldstein and C. R. Huff (Champaign, IL: Research Press, 1993), 359-400.

- ✓ **Targeted Prevention: \$32,611,000**—Targeted Prevention receives the most anti-gang money of any social service category. These programs include three distinct approaches to keep youth out of gangs, focusing on “at-risk” communities, “at-risk” individuals, and diversion services. As is evident above, the vast majority of the funding is directed at “community-level” prevention programs, and dwindles rapidly as the programs become more focused on addressing the needs of youth at highest risk of gang involvement.
- Community: Community-level prevention includes programming designed to target communities with higher levels of gang activity, and are intended to provide services to the general youth population within those communities. This includes Clean and Safe Spaces (CLASS) Parks—funded at \$6 million annually—which provide safe and supervised after-school and weekend educational, vocational, recreation and adventure based programs for youth between the ages of 11 and 15 years. Other examples include the Harbor’s Gang Alternative Program and Topsail program, the Department of Water and Power’s (DWP) Youth Services Academy, and the Los Angeles World Airport’s (LAWA) Wings to Fly mentoring program. Generally, funds used for these programs pertain to the primary missions of other City departments, or are comprised of restricted funds through the City’s proprietary departments. As such, we do not recommend reallocating these funds to other service areas but instead recommend increased accountability and focus.
 - Individual: Within at-risk communities, individual prevention programs specifically target those youth most at risk of joining gangs through more intensive case management, mentoring, life skills development, and a wide range of other services. Currently, the City only has one individual-level prevention program—Bridges I. While the following chapter discusses needed improvements to the City’s approach to individual-level prevention programs, we do not recommend reallocating these funds to other service areas, but recommend better targeting prevention efforts to serve youth most at risk of gang involvement.
 - Diversion: Diversion services target youth whose involvement with delinquency or gang activity is marginal, but which may lead them to more severe criminal or gang activity. These youth are usually referred to service providers from various law enforcement officials. Current diversion programs, such as the Youth Advocacy Program (YAP)—a component of the Family Development Network (FDN)—and Los Angeles Police Department’s (LAPD) Jeopardy and Juvenile Impact Program (JIP), appear to target the general delinquent youth population rather than focusing entirely on youth most at risk of joining gangs. Given the necessity of diversion programs as a whole, we do not recommend reallocating these funds to other service areas, though it is clear that additional resources are required to fund diversion programs better targeted at youth at risk of increased gang involvement.

Funding for these programs should be made more proportionate as the City implements its new gang reduction strategy.

- ✓ **Intervention: \$4,685,000**—Intervention programs are designed to provide mediation, treaty negotiations and violence interruption, as well as to convince gang members to leave the gang lifestyle in favor of more positive and pro-social activities. LA Bridges II is one of only a few programs operated by the City with this specific focus. While we believe improvements can be made, we do not recommend reallocating any of these funds, as it is clear that additional resources are required to fund intervention programs that better target youth who are ready to leave the gang lifestyle.
- ✓ **Reentry: \$1,166,000**—Reentry programs have been implemented to assist both previously incarcerated individuals and active gang members return to mainstream society. Since gang ties and affiliation are often initiated or reinforced during incarceration, reentry programs offer transitional services to individuals who want an alternative to the gang lifestyle. Services often include employment training, transitional housing, and tattoo removal. For example, the Community Development Department’s (CDD) Youth Opportunity-Intensive Transition (YO-IT) program and Youth Opportunity site (YO! Watts) offer reentry services to youth returning from county detention camps. With the least funding of any anti-gang service category, reentry services need additional resources.

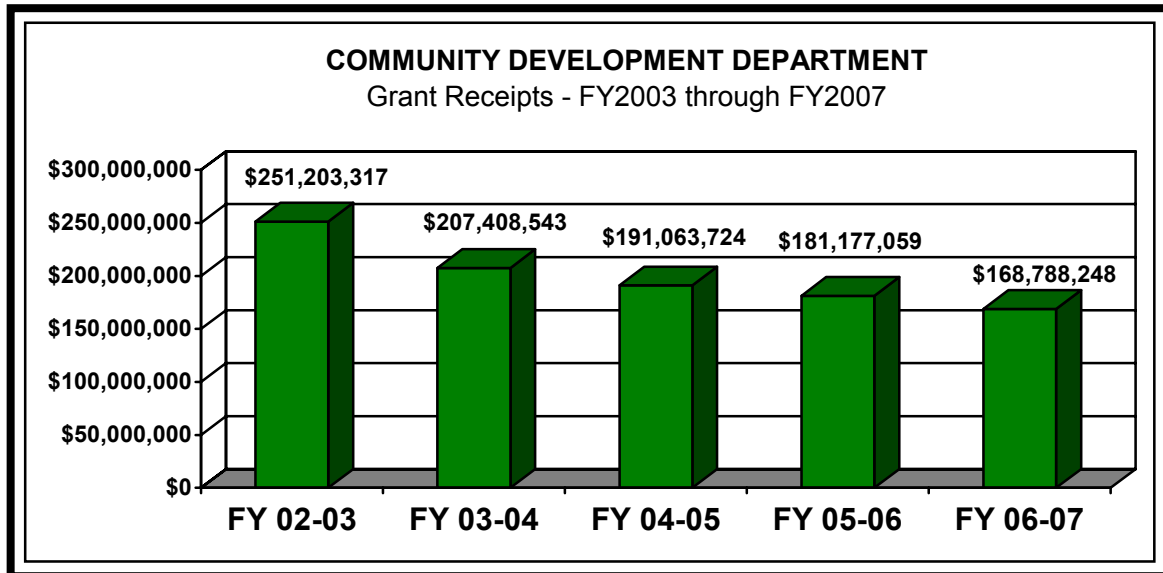
None of these areas receive sufficient funding. The question is—how can the City utilize existing resources to better target anti-gang efforts? While we do not believe that reallocating some of the City’s resources will result in a “sufficient” level of funding to adequately address the gang problem, we have identified \$19 million that could be redirected toward more strategic ends. With the prospect of additional funding being unclear, redirecting some of the City’s existing resources—particularly those that are not specifically targeted at well defined outcomes—becomes increasingly necessary to implement the City’s gang reduction strategy with any hope of success.

Refocus a Substantial Portion of Existing Neighborhood Action, Specially Targeted, and Neighborhood Development Program Funds Toward the City’s Gang Reduction Strategy

As noted above, the restrictions on the funding sources used for the City’s many anti-gang programs limit the City’s ability to refocus these funds. Nevertheless, the bulk of youth development and anti-gang funding is more flexible and is largely included in the programs administered by CDD’s Human Services and Neighborhood Development Group, which administers the City’s FDN, the Bridges programs, and other youth and family development programs. We recommend that \$19 million of these funds be refocused on the gang reduction strategy.

As Figure 11 on the following page illustrates, CDD—with the vast majority of youth and family program funding in the City—has suffered from a 33 percent decline in resources during the past five fiscal years. However, given the reductions in funding faced by CDD over the last five years, one of the first challenges to be overcome will be to identify funds that could be refocused with the least potential impact on the residents of Los Angeles.

Figure 11. “CDD Grant Receipts Fiscal Years 2003-2007”



Generally, grant receipts represented above are targeted as top City priorities: public safety, job training, homelessness, affordable housing, and family development, among others. While we make recommendations regarding how the City could better target its resources, our evaluation reveals that each of its youth development and gang reduction programs generally provide “core” services with the intention of achieving particular strategic objectives. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), core anti-gang services include counseling, drug treatment, job training, education and vocational training, mentoring, recreation, and other youth development services¹³—though others, life skills development, such as transitional housing assistance, tattoo removal, and additional services are discussed in the following section of this report. We did find, however, three programs—the Neighborhood Action Program (NAP), Specially Targeted Program, and Neighborhood Development Program (NDP)—funded at approximately \$19 million in aggregate, that were not designed to achieve any particular objective or measurable outcome. Given the immediate needs of the City’s anti-gang strategy, it is with these programs where we recommend the initial refocusing efforts to occur.

For some time, CDD’s goal in allocating funds appears to have been driven by the need to sustain existing agencies rather than to achieve any specific, long-term, strategic objective. In several cases, it appears that the City’s process for allocating funds has been less focused on identifying core programs and agencies that can *best* provide needed services to communities, but has emphasized funding the existing community-based organizations (CBOs) to allow them to continue to provide a broad set of services. As such, the City has adopted a “sustaining agent” role by providing millions of dollars to over one hundred CBOs without sufficient strategic objectives. This hinders the City’s

¹³ Institute for Intergovernmental Research. *OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: A guide to Assessing Your Community’s Youth Gang Problem*, 2002.

ability to optimize the impact of its limited resources. The City can maximize the impact of limited funding if it takes on a more prominent role as an “active agent” in procuring particular services strategically designed to address specific community needs. In the end, the City must begin eliminating the expectation that contracts and funding will continue indefinitely; it must end the perception of entitlement by emphasizing the importance of building sustainability without depending on the City for funding. Funding decisions must be linked to a citywide strategy that addresses gangs in a comprehensive manner and is held accountable for producing results.

In some cases, the criteria used to award funds to CBOs and departments under this umbrella methodology seems based on whether the agency “qualifies” under the provisions of the funding source—not whether the service offered by the agency represents the best and most strategic use of the funds. In the end, funding allocations have been spread among agencies with little deference to strategic intent, and without critical determination to cull out programs that were ill-defined, ineffective, or unrelated to any specific purpose. Furthermore, because these programs do not purport to be designed to achieve any specific objective or outcome, they have managed to escape the heavy scrutiny faced by several other, more focused programs, such as Bridges and the FDNs.

The following discussion of a selection of programs point to the reasons we believe \$19 million should be reallocated in a more strategic manner. This is not to say that the agencies providing services under these three programs do not provide valuable services, only that the substantial funding allocated to these programs should be focused to achieve particular outcomes that correspond to the City’s top priorities—of which gang reduction is only one.

➤ Redirect \$8 Million in Neighborhood Action Program Funding

During Fiscal Year 2006-2007, the City allocated over \$8 million to the NAP contractors. In early 2000, CDD launched a new system of human service programs made up of consortium-based FDNs designed to help families and individuals overcome barriers that prevent them from leaving poverty and become self-sufficient. NAPs, on the other hand, were intended to offer “human services that target special community needs, or fill identified gaps not supported elsewhere.”

However, these “community needs” were never identified by the City. Instead, the identification of the gaps in City services has been left largely in the hands of contracted CBOs, thereby allowing broad discretion on how funds are to be spent, and funding the services CBOs offer rather than those most needed. This practice inevitably encouraged contractors to price and provide services based on the level of available funding, rather than exercise a reasoned and coordinated approach to identify and fund the types of services needed and target the participants to be served. More significantly, it asked agencies to tell the City which services were needed, encouraging them to emphasize their services as those most needed.

The NAP umbrella program constitutes a broad array of agencies providing a wide range of services, coupled with little accountability to achieve particular outcomes demanded by the City. The consistency of services offered by these agencies varies widely—services ranging from English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to recreation activities using horses. More strikingly, with the same funding one NAP contractor is contractually required to serve upwards of 500 clients annually, while another is only required to provide services to 13 individuals. While most services provided by NAP agencies fall under the “human services delivery” umbrella, which can include after-school tutoring and case management, only a handful of the over 70 CBOs offer services that relate to gang youth—one agency we found offers counseling and tattoo removal services to formerly gang-affiliated individuals seeking to discontinue the gang lifestyle.

To fund these NAP agencies, the City adopted an across-the-board funding strategy to distribute approximately \$8 million in grant funding at the rate of \$100,000 per agency. Based on CDD’s ranking of each proposal received in response to the Request for Proposal (RFP), it recommended funding 75 agencies. According to CDD management, the remaining unallocated balance was set aside at the request of the City Council and subsequently used to fund 15 special programs that did not meet CDD scoring requirements.

With some restrictions stemming from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) service level cap of 15 percent and its restrictions on funding Community Based Development Organizations, CDD has discretion in reallocating some NAP funds to other, more focused service areas. In fact, according to CDD personnel, in 2007 recommendations were made to end the NAP program and instead augment the more targeted FDN program. However, there appears to be strong support among City policy-makers for funding as many CBOs as possible. CDD personnel expressed frustration that in the face of declining grant revenues they were unable to prioritize programs for funding, and believed it was unrealistic to expect significant measurable results from agencies that receive small amounts of funding.

Moreover—and this is particularly problematic for the City—without adequate performance evaluations, CDD is not able to demonstrate that some services or some agencies should be funded over others. One cannot argue that there are “enough” or “too many” services for low- to moderate-income residents. Without adequate performance evaluation information, the City is now in a position where it should reallocate funds to high-priority anti-gang efforts, while having insufficient information to demonstrate that some of the NAP programs should remain funded—a difficult, but necessary, decision given that it is likely that many of the NAP contractors do benefit youth.

➤ Redirect \$6 Million in “Specially Targeted” Funding

Likewise, the “Specially Targeted” program umbrella is not strategically focused to address specific community needs or to achieve identified outcomes. The City allocated nearly \$6 million during Fiscal Year 2006-2007 to fund 17 different

agencies—none of which, according to CDD personnel, were competitively solicited or awarded, but were based on the recommendations of City officials. With these funds, the City has never established a specific goal or outcome it wishes to actualize. Instead, agencies funded under this classification receive stand-alone contracts that were executed with little justification. While many of the services offered by these agencies are focused on serving youth, the types of services vary widely. One agency provides after-school art, music, dance, and theatre to 75 clients ages 5 to adult in order to promote social/emotional development. Another provides funding to maintain nine existing community gardens where low-income families can grow and market fresh produce.

With little justification for how these funds are distributed, and an overall lack of strategic focus, there can be little assurance that these funds were spent in the best interest of the City. Moreover, the funding for many of these contracts is simply renewed on a year-to-year basis—without any competitive RFP process—with new contract amendments extending the agreements. Several of the contracts we reviewed are now operating under their fifth and sixth amendments. Besides conflicting with the City's procurement guidelines, the manner in which these contracts were awarded diminishes the City's ability to assess program outcomes.

➤ Redirect \$5 Million in Neighborhood Development Program Funding

Unlike the NAP and Specially Targeted umbrella programs, the NDP does not fund agencies to provide services; rather it grants funds to non-profits for capital acquisitions and improvements, for the purpose of building an infrastructure that allows them to provide services to communities for years to come. In return for these loans, the agencies are obligated to provide services to residents for a designated period of time. These service infrastructure loans could provide a substantial resource to communities in need if only they were targeted in a more strategic manner. For instance, if community-level needs assessments reveal that specific social services are lacking, the City could either provide ongoing funding to agencies that provide services in those communities, or—through the NDP—it could loan the resources needed to build a service infrastructure in those communities that will enable service delivery for years to come.

The NDP administers, on average, thirty capital projects involving construction and/or purchase or sale of City-owned and community non-profit agency facilities. Typically, loans must be repaid in 20 years but some agencies have agreements requiring payback in as few as 5 years while others require payback in as many as 60 years. Loan amounts range from \$50,000 to over \$2 million. With these funds, the City hopes to assist agencies acquire and maintain reasonable accommodations for their operations. Services being provided in these facilities include transitional housing for domestic violence victims, 24-hour residential services for adults with mental illnesses, and job opportunities for visually impaired adults.

In contrast to the Youth Opportunity System (YOS) or the FDN, which function with specific objectives to increase family self-sufficiency, the NDP does not

function with any strategic objective or outcome in mind. Instead, the NDP awards funding to agencies meeting its basic criteria: that the capital project will be completed in a specific timeframe and is eligible for the grant. The emphasis on these two minimal criteria and a lack of strategic planning result in an unbalanced approach to community development that render specific community needs subordinate to the ability to meet criteria that are not linked to a larger strategy. With a more strategic focus, we believe that this program could be harnessed to achieve specific, measurable, and long-term results focused on targeted anti-gang efforts.

Despite the urgency to target specific community needs through programs that have demonstrated prior success, several individuals we spoke with stated that the actual process employed to millions of dollars is inconsistent with this. While CDD conducted analyses of applicants and made recommendations based on the City's and Mayor's priorities, changes to these recommendations during budgetary processes are not uncommon. While changes to budget plans are often in the City's best interest, the significant decline in available funding requires tighter controls to ensure these limited funds are directed toward the greatest need. Despite these realities, the City appears to be allocating grant monies in support of specific agencies rather than in support of specific programs, initiatives, or strategic goals. Given the City's need for targeted programming and its limited resources, we recommend that the City reconsider allocations to the NAP and Specially Targeted programs so that the City could better target resources to those programs most in need of resources and which have a record of proven performance. We also recommend that the City allocate NDP capital improvement dollars in a more strategic manner.

Some Consideration Should be Given to “Special Projects”

The need to target the City's limited resources to those programs with measurable objectives and provide designated core program services to those most in need is paramount. However, we also recognize that this shift may result in the unintentional defunding of critical services that have a significant impact on communities outside the anti-gang focus. Indeed, many of the programs funded through NAPs, Specially Targeted, and Neighborhood Development provide needed services from which the City can benefit substantially. In some cases, these programs are recognized as high performing, results-oriented programs and, in some cases, requests may be made by City officials to allocate funding to other higher priority areas that may not fall in line with existing programs. We also recognize that the rigorous RFP process that is usually employed to identify the best performing CBO is not perfect, and that there may be agencies the City chooses to fund outside of this process. These factors must also be taken into consideration when funding decisions are made. As stated by the Advancement Project: “In short, the ‘Rule of 15’ must be accommodated in a way that does not trump the ‘Rule of Best Practices.’”¹⁴

¹⁴ The Advancement Project, *City of Los Angeles Gang Activity Reduction Strategy Phase I Report*, 2006 p.9.

If the City chooses to continue funding some of these agencies as “special projects”, it should first take care to ensure that core services are funded at a proportionate level, and that additional “special projects” are subject to increased accountability, transparency and scrutiny. In the end, adequately funding an anti-gang initiative begins with difficult decisions and sacrifices, as it is likely that some agencies will suffer from funding cuts, while others may lose City funding entirely.

Stop Citywide Proportional Funding Allocations and Reductions

Funding should reflect identified community needs, barriers to service delivery in communities most in need, and the demonstrated success of the programs and agencies being funded. Of CDD’s programs serving youth and families, three of them (Bridges I, FDNs and NAPs) consistently allocated equal funding to most of the agencies providing services within each program, regardless of the unique circumstances and/or barriers present in the communities in which the agencies operate.¹⁵ The following table outlines current funding levels for each program:

Table 1. “Funding Allocations by Program—PY 2007-2008”

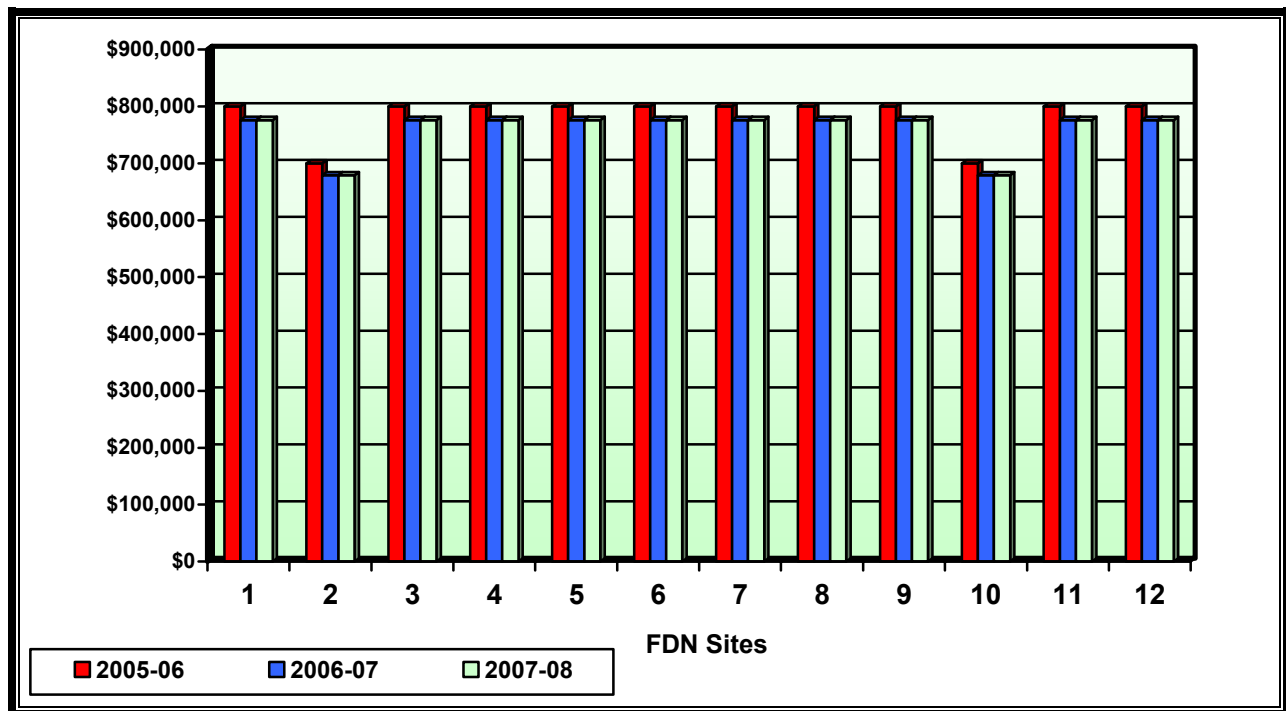
Program	Total Program Funding	Individual Annual Agency Funding Amounts
Bridges I	\$9,639,000	25 of 27 sites were allocated \$357,000.
Family Development Network	\$9,118,000	10 of 12 agencies were allocated \$776,000
Neighborhood Action Program	\$8,336,819	67 of 77 agencies were allocated \$89,470

Is it possible that 25 of the 27 Bridges I sites; 10 of the 12 FDN sites; and 67 of the 77 NAP agencies are in communities that reflect the same level of need and possess the same barriers to service delivery? And, is it possible that the contracted agencies in each of these communities have demonstrated the same level of success with the City resources allocated to them? Only comprehensive needs assessments and performance evaluations can determine.

- Family Development Networks: Funding allocations for the City’s 12 FDNs remain proportionate across the board. While some effort has been made to base funding criteria on poverty levels of each Community Improvement Planning Area (CIPA), no formal assessment of community needs was ever conducted. Further, despite the recognition that some service providers perform better than others, the FDN program agencies have been funded relatively equally over the last three program years, as Figure 12 below illustrates.

¹⁵ It should be noted, that in the case of the FDN programs, some efforts are underway to incorporate funding criteria based on poverty levels.

Figure 12. “Funding Support for the Family Development Networks, PY2005-2008”



- LA Bridges: In some cases, it is likely that the effectiveness of the program itself has suffered from this methodology because the program was expanded to other communities. While resources are generally concentrated in the communities with the most need, programs and funding originally designed to serve residents most in need have been expanded to other communities, perhaps spreading limited resources too thin so as to limit the effectiveness of any of its programs. When LA Bridges was initially conceived, CDD recommended that the City locate the program at 18 of the middle schools in the City with the highest levels of youth violence. However, the program was subsequently expanded to 27 middle schools, of which the remainder had lower gang activity when compared to the original 18. As such, the effectiveness of the Bridges program was diluted because community need was not the ultimate factor in funding decisions.

Moreover, recent funding cuts to the Bridges program have resulted in scaling back services. In particular, CDD management indicated that service providers were allowed to cut the number of “non-core” participants inducted into the program during 2007-2008 as a way to maintain service levels to “core” participants in the wake of decreased funding allocations. Again, these cuts were projected upon all the Bridges sites, with little regard for the schools that need services more than others. Such a strategy also leads one to question the impact on serving “non core” participants in the first place.

- NAP: When the program began in 2000, CDD agreed to allocate each agency \$100,000. But as grant resources have decreased over the last five years, funding

cuts have mirrored the City's across-the-board funding methodology; NAP agencies are now allocated \$89,470 each. As such, the effectiveness of these resources is challenged due to the fact that they are spread across a wide array of agencies in a non-strategic manner.

In some regard, this across-the-board funding methodology ensures that certain agencies are not perceived to be favored, yet the process does not allow agencies with greater capacity or better performance to receive additional resources, nor does it critically align funding with need or success.

In addition to eliminating across-the-board funding allocations, the City should reconsider its reliance on across-the-board funding cuts when faced with reductions in grant funds. Figure 12 illustrates that funding cuts incurred over the last few years have also been applied across-the-board. This trend has been replicated across other CDD programs that rely on grant resources to support their operations. In fact, the Mayor recently announced his "2008-2012 Housing and Community Development Five-Year Consolidated Plan" and "2008-09 Program Year 34 Action Plan" which describe how limited grant funds, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), will be allocated in the coming year. In his January 2008 letter to the City Council, the Mayor announced expectations that CDBG funds will be reduced by approximately \$24 million—or 21 percent—from the prior year.¹⁶ Under current reduction protocols, CDBG recipient agencies will be subject to the same cuts regardless of the types of services offered, the need for those services, the quality of those services, or the impact of those services on their respective communities. Although difficult to avoid, across-the-board funding cuts ultimately hurt top-performing agencies and the communities most in need. Across-the-board funding allocations generate the least value for the City's residents.

Re-Procure all Youth and Family Service Contracts Within Six Months

Another key element the City should consider when debating whether its service contracts adequately meet the needs of community residents is that many of these contracts have not been put out for competitive bid since the programs were implemented. For example, the LA Bridges program has not performed a comprehensive solicitation process since the program began 10 years ago; the NAP contracts have not been put out for bid since 2002; and the Specially Targeted contracts have never been subject to an openly competitive and deliberative process. Moreover, the FDN program attempted to conduct a RFP process for its service vendors in 2006, but the solicitation was canceled before decisions were made due to a technicality with the grant used to fund the program. As such, the FDNs have been operating under the agreements that were originally executed in 1999. Again, this does not provide for the most strategic use of limited funds in an area of critical need.

¹⁶ Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, "2008-2012 Housing and Community Development Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 2008-2009 Program Year 34 Action Plan," Letter to the City Council, 9 January 2008.

While these issues are exacerbated by an overall lack of policy direction in youth and anti-gang programming, the City continues to sustain the operations of over one hundred CBOs through contracts that are extended indefinitely. This situation not only creates a sense of entitlement among service providers, but also diminishes the effectiveness of program evaluation and accountability, and renders objective program evaluation non-existent because there is little incentive for them to perform beyond the minimum contract requirements.

We find it essential that the City reissue RFPs for all programs by December 2008 and incorporate the findings from this report, the Advancement Projects studies, the needs assessments that are currently ongoing, the findings of the City's Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development, and other ongoing efforts. The City should ensure that the youth and family programs are adequately streamlined and focus on core services before reissuing RFPs for the programs as they stand now. To do so, the City may need to extend existing contracts by no more than 6 months to afford adequate time for appropriate program re-development and needs assessments. Further, the City should stop supporting the entitlement mentality by eliminating funding relationships with the sole objective of sustaining agencies. NAPs and Specially Targeted programs should be defunded initially—though future funding of critical services should be reconsidered after other programs are satisfactorily funded. Finally, the City should develop and fund only those programs that are designed to address the City's most pressing concerns—of which gangs is only one.

Incorporate Needs- and Performance-Based Outcome Measures in CBO Contracts

Once the City has identified a community's core needs and determined the core services required to meet these needs, it must establish mutually beneficial relationships with services providers that can best meet the unique needs of diverse communities. This entails (1) identifying top-performing CBOs within communities in need—or, if there is a dearth of top-performing CBOs in a particular community, encouraging the establishment of CBOs with the skills and resources to succeed; (2) establishing contracts that afford CBOs sufficient latitude to provide unique services to diverse communities and to implement innovative initiatives; and (3) sustaining these critical relationships through performance-oriented monitoring, evaluation and consultation.

Historically, the City's funding of service providers has not been based on demonstrated needs and performance. In fact, in late 2006, the City Controller released a report of CDD's FDNs describing funding decisions that failed to adequately consider needs of individual communities, the relative importance of specific programs, or the anticipated or demonstrated success of individual agencies. We found that many of these service contracts simply did not provide incentives for CBOs to exceed minimum performance expectations. With continually limited resources, this contracting approach actually serves to discourage optimal service delivery.

While we discussed the necessity of allocating funds based on demonstrated need—through sufficient and well supported needs assessments—it is of equal importance that

funding be granted to only those programs and service providers (whether they be City-operated or contracted out) that have demonstrated optimum quality, responsiveness, and success in their service delivery. In short, funding decisions should be needs-based *and* performance-based. We have identified two methods in use that have shown success in restricting funding to top-performing agencies, as noted below.

- Performance-Based Contracting: The first method incorporates performance-based enhancements as a method for allocating resources among service providers that demonstrate effective use of those resources. Specifically, the City should consider establishing a direct relationship between an agency's program outcomes and the financial resources provided to that agency. To date, we have seen little evidence to suggest that the City's anti-gang and youth development programs have established this link and have opted instead to fund agencies using an across-the-board methodology. In order to build the relationship between funding and performance, the City must first develop performance measures—which are more specific and concrete than general indicators—that capture key program outcomes and community benefits. An effective indicator for a reentry program, for example, might be analyzing how many participants who successfully completed the program were re-arrested within a six-month period. Developing these measures is crucial in terms of assessing past performance and making future funding decisions.

Once useful performance indicators have been identified, sufficient analysis will be required to assess whether the funding allocations had a demonstrable effect on program outcomes in light of relevant barriers. These barriers may include, but are not limited to, language skills, transportation to program sites, poverty level, and education. These factors will impact how an agency performs relative to others offering similar services within the same programmatic framework. Special consideration must be given to agencies serving clientele with more challenging barriers because program outcomes may be more difficult to achieve as a result. However, the City could encourage agencies to serve clients with special needs by creating incentives (i.e. additional funding) to do so.

The final essential ingredient for a successful performance-based funding model requires a minimum level of funding to be allocated across agencies to maintain an agency's basic operations. Any additional financial allocations must be based on the goal of maximizing outcomes and facilitating value-added innovation among service providers. Such an approach would encourage efficient use of dwindling resources and maximization of program outcomes. Without these linkages between resource allocation and program performance, the City has little assurance that resources are being utilized to their fullest potential or whether residents are receiving vital services.

- Fee-for-Service Contracting: Another method that may be considered is incorporating either fee-for-service agreements, or incorporating fee-for-service components in a standard flat-rate contract that encourages contractors to exceed minimum performance standards. In this case, agencies are reimbursed for

services that are delivered to appropriate clients in accordance with guidelines for the type, duration and characteristics of the client. In this way, agencies are held accountable for providing the services that are expected. This is a mechanism for increasing accountability on the part of service providers and can be extended to include reporting requirements for services and clients.

The City's methods of allocating funds to anti-gang and social service programs revealed that the City does not formally distinguish between core and non-core programs, tie funding to strategic citywide priorities or objectives, and thus, is not able to consistently demonstrate that city dollars are put to the best use in addressing residents' most pressing needs.

Revise the Consortium-Based Contracting Approach

For at least the last decade, CDD has used a consortium-based approach to fund service providers in its more targeted programs: Bridges and FDNs. This approach effectively spreads funding to as many service providers as possible—which is consistent with the City's funding approach in general—while incurring the administrative responsibility and oversight of a limited set of contracts. In this model, contracted, “lead” agencies may oversee as many as five partner agencies, each contributing to the overall goal of the program. However, lead agencies may not feel empowered to hold partner agencies accountable for fiscal and program compliance and for performance, or may not want to. A 2006 report on the FDN program issued by the City Controller found that lead agencies did not always monitor their partner agencies, and that CDD allowed this gap in accountability to exist. It further found that when evaluating RFPs to determine which consortiums would be awarded contracts, CDD focused on the merits of lead agencies and did not sufficiently evaluate the merits of the partner agencies.

Despite these weaknesses, consortium-based models can have a positive impact on service delivery in Los Angeles. First, instead of one service location, consortiums require multiple service providers, each with their own facilities. As a result, it is more likely facilities will be accessible to those in need. Second, it institutionalizes collaboration, communication, and cooperation among service providers, which—as discussed—have been seriously lacking. Partnering CBOs with one another gives them an opportunity to leverage the resources each brings to the table, and to learn from each other in a collaborative environment. Third, with the necessity of providing a broad continuum of services to meet the diverse needs of unique communities, it is unlikely that one agency would be able to provide the wide range of services needed in a given community. Finally, while spreading funding to multiple service providers, the consortium-based approach encourages competing agencies to work together to achieve common goals and outcomes that pertain to specific City priorities—a substantial difference from the existing NAP and “Specially Targeted” model.

Therefore, for this approach to succeed, contracts with lead agencies must include incentives to build upon the strengths of this model: incentives for multiple locations and increased accessibility; incentives for enhanced collaboration, leveraging of resources, and referring clients within and outside the consortium; and incentives for successes of

individual agencies as well as the success of the consortium in achieving community-level goals and outcomes. But, beyond this, the City must ensure that lead agencies are empowered to oversee the practices of its partner agencies, and to identify areas of concern. However, the City cannot take a “hands off” approach to monitoring partner agencies, and holding them accountable for compliance and success. We believe that to achieve adequate oversight and accountability, the City must execute multi-party contracts with the consortium, not with just one agency. This will give the City contractual authority to monitor and audit the consortium as a whole, or individual partner agencies, as it deems necessary. We also believe that this can be achieved while requiring one agency in the consortium to remain as the “lead”, to ensure collaboration is achieved and administrative requirements are met, and to act as the primary liaison with the City.

Finally, it is possible that a small handful of service providers in select Los Angeles communities may be equipped and positioned to provide the broad continuum of services required in a Family Development Network, for instance. It may also be possible that some service providers have multiple locations that would alleviate any concerns regarding accessibility, or that in a particular community a “one-stop” service location may be more appropriate. In these cases, a requirement dictating a certain number of consortium partners may actually impede optimum service delivery. As such, we recommend that the City not institute a “minimum requirement” for consortium partners. Rather, it should, on a case-by-case, community-by-community basis, assess proposals to ensure that the proposed service delivery agency or consortium of agencies meets the needs of respective communities.

Consolidate Monitoring and Evaluation Activities and Focus on Program and Agency Performance Rather Than on Outputs and Compliance

Every department we met with recognized that some CBOs perform better than others. Each has expressed a willingness to hold underperforming CBOs accountable and to award contracts only to those CBOs that demonstrate success in the communities they serve. But, it also appears that accountability is not built into most program designs and is sparsely executed. Although CDD devotes a substantial proportion of its staff resources to monitoring CBOs, the focus is very much on compliance rather than identifying whether those agencies and services are positively impacting the community in a broader context. While this has been identified in various audits issued by the City Controller, it remains an issue today.

Moreover, there is significant duplication of monitoring efforts due to the disjointed nature of CDD’s programs and the reality that many agencies hold multiple contracts with the City. In particular, a single CBO may hold multiple contracts with the City to administer a number of programs, such as LA Bridges, FDN, NAP, and Youth Opportunities. Consequently, this agency would also be subject to the review of at least three different monitors from CDD, each tasked with reviewing aspects of their respective programs, with little or no linkages between programs. As such, many of the

CBOs we visited during our fieldwork described how this situation created a “bureaucratic nightmare” for their staff as they tried to accommodate the demands of several different authorities. Not only is this an inefficient practice, it erodes the time and resources available to service those most in need.

Rather, the role of the program monitor is to ensure compliance with the provisions of the City’s grant funding sources, particularly HUD and U.S. Department of Labor (DOL); ensure data is collected that permit substantive performance evaluation, as discussed in the final section of this report; evaluate programmatic and organizational processes for effectiveness and efficiencies; and—most importantly—to work with agencies to provide them the programmatic support they need to serve the City’s residents. This is not to be confused with program evaluation. Monitoring should be risk-based and should be sufficient to ensure (1) the City will pass a HUD or DOL audit, and (2) the accuracy of the data reported to the City by the agencies. All other monitoring and evaluation efforts should be performance-focused.

Although CDD has started to re-structure its program delivery methodology to leverage diminishing resources, more could be done to improve how services are offered to city residents. Specifically,

- ✓ CDD’s monitoring activities are impacted by the expertise and expectations of the monitors themselves. According to CDD officials we interviewed during our fieldwork, enhanced familiarity with industry standards and best practices, especially in the field of social services is essential. By encouraging staff to complete continuing education courses or obtaining certification in the social services field, agencies would benefit from the more constructive feedback provided during the monitoring process. It should be pointed out that CDD issued an Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in 2004 for an evaluation training program for its monitors, though this never came to fruition.
- ✓ Monitoring activities that do occur may not be sufficient. A review of monitoring programs, checklists, and reports revealed that monitoring was too focused on compliance, and not sufficiently focused on performance-related issues. In part, this is because monitoring efforts are often designed to mitigate the risk of losing federal funding. However, the City’s interests should extend beyond the risk of losing current resources—indeed, it should be concerned that it is not making the most of the resources it currently has. To achieve this, a balanced approach that provides proportionate compliance and performance oriented monitoring of agencies is needed to optimize service delivery, and to encourage CBOs to exceed minimum contracting requirements.
- ✓ Several CBOs noted that some program monitors do not exhibit the sensitivity required when working with some of the clients or case managers who deal with difficult life challenges. This complaint was rare, but given the nature of the kind of work being performed by many of the contracted CBOs, attention should be given to assure that interactions with CBOs and clientele are always constructive and in the best interest of serving those in need.

- ✓ CDD should incorporate incentives for agencies to perform beyond minimum contract requirements, as discussed earlier. Monitors, then, would ensure that the quality of services is not diminished by the increased quantity of clients.
- ✓ Monitoring could be more efficient if it were not isolated from other City activities. Monitors for FDN/NAP/YAP, YO System & Sites, Bridges/YO-IT, Youth and Family Centers (YFCs), Neighborhood Development, and Specially Targeted, currently review CBOs.

As a whole, the City's approach to developing, funding, and implementing programs designed to address perceived community needs appears to be disjointed, uncoordinated and ad hoc in nature. Under the current structure, the City lacks strategic approaches to address community needs through focused funding.

While prescriptions for a successful anti-gang and youth development social service delivery system are concurrently abundant and highly complex, the City does have achievable options at its disposal whereby positive improvements can be made. In particular, the methods employed by the City to allocate funding among service providers and community-based organizations should be re-structured to ensure resources are appropriately focused and funding priorities are given to "core" services. Unfortunately, the City's current contracting and funding allocation practices foster an environment where CBOs receive millions in general and grant funding with little other purpose than sustaining these organizations, thereby fostering a sense of entitlement and relegating the City to a passive role. While many of these organizations do, in fact, bring a variety of vital resources into some of the City's neediest communities, there is a fundamental disconnect between the decision-making process related to funding and the needs of the community as a whole.

Recommendations

To ensure that a proportionate level of funding is focused on targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry efforts, and to ensure an adequate level of funding accountability, the City should:

- Allocate additional funding to core targeted prevention, intervention and reentry services to create a more proportional approach to the City's overall gang reduction strategy.
- Refocus a substantial portion of existing \$19 million in NAP, Specially Targeted, and NDP funds toward focused, high-priority outcomes that correspond to the City's top priorities—of which gang reduction is one. In order to do so, we recommend that the City:
 - Reconsider allocations to the NAP and Specially Targeted programs so that the City could better target resources to those programs most in need and which have a record of proven performance.
 - Reduce the number of CBOs receiving small amounts of grant funds in order to achieve greater impacts in the neediest communities.

- Allocate Neighborhood Development capital improvement dollars in a more strategic manner, and particularly to augment gaps in social service infrastructure in the Gang Reduction Zones (GRZs).
- Eliminate across-the-board funding allocations and funding cuts when faced with reductions in grant funds.
- Reissue RFPs for all programs by December 2008. In doing so,
 - Ensure that the youth and family programs are adequately streamlined, focus on core services, and incorporate the findings from this report, the Advancement Project studies, the needs assessments that are currently ongoing, the findings of the City’s Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development, and other ongoing efforts.
 - Ensure that core services are funded at a proportionate level, and that additional “special projects” are subject to increased accountability, transparency and scrutiny.
 - Identify top-performing CBOs within communities in need—or, if there is a dearth of top-performing CBOs in a particular community—encourage the establishment of CBOs with the skills and resources to succeed.
 - Establish contracts that afford CBOs sufficient latitude to provide unique services to diverse communities and to implement innovative initiatives.
- Incorporate needs- and performance-based outcome measures in CBO contracts by incorporating performance-based contracting and/or fee-for-service contracting methods. In order to do so, we recommend that the City give consideration to agencies serving clientele with more challenging barriers, while encouraging agencies to serve most “at-risk” clients by providing contractual incentives.
- Revise the consortium-based contracting approach by:
 - Executing multi-party contracts with the consortium, not with just one agency and, in so doing, establishing the authority to monitor and audit the consortium as a whole, or individual partner agencies as it deems necessary.
 - Building in incentives for multiple locations and increased accessibility; enhanced collaboration, leveraging of resources, and referring clients within and outside the consortium; and successes of individual agencies as well as the success of the consortium in achieving community-level goals and outcomes.
 - Ensuring that lead agencies are empowered to oversee the practices of its partner agencies, to identify areas of concern, to ensure collaboration is achieved and administrative requirements are met, and to act as the primary liaison with the City.
- Establish a risk-based compliance and program monitoring effort on (1) ensuring compliance with the provisions of the City’s grant funding sources and adequate fiscal oversight, (2) ensuring data is collected that permits substantive

performance evaluations, (3) evaluating programmatic and organizational processes; and (4) working with agencies to provide them the programmatic support they need to serve the City's residents. All other monitoring efforts should be focused on facilitating the efforts of the new Research and Evaluation Unit.

- Remove obstacles to program grant funding by ensuring the City's timely approval process.

Section V—Reinvent Youth and Family Services

Scrutiny of the City’s key anti-gang programs has increased since their implementation over 10 years ago. This scrutiny ranges from experts who participated in the development of the Bridges I and II programs to a former City Controller’s critical assessment of the programs in 2000. More recently, concerns have been raised that the programs simply are not sufficiently reducing gang crime in City neighborhoods. Many of these critiques question the fundamental premise that the Bridges programs can even achieve their intended purposes.

In response, the Mayor has proposed the implementation of a new Gang Reduction Strategy that relies on the creation of eight Gang Reduction Zones (GRZs), wherein law enforcement and social service resources would combat the City’s worst gang problems. However, while the City is only in the needs assessment stage of the GRZs, this initiative represents a significant step in the right direction, and sets forth challenges that the City must address head-on. The experience with comprehensive gang intervention models across the country should offer some cautions for the City of Los Angeles as it embraces the GRZ model. Whether known as the Spergel Model, Comprehensive Strategy, Safe Futures, or Gang Reduction Program (GRP), the experience with implementing this model has not been entirely successful elsewhere in the country. The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Policy (OJJDP) has funded and piloted the model in more than a dozen jurisdictions, and reports little success in the implementation of the model. In particular, most jurisdictions struggle to integrate suppression activities with the provision social services, interventions, and opportunities provision. Social service and government agencies have not been effective at sharing clients across different agencies, and the participation of public schools in the model has often been problematic.

In the end, we found that while many of the services offered to those in need reflected some of the attributes of best or promising practices, several steps should be taken to improve its delivery of services to youth and families throughout the City, in general, and to “at-risk” youth and communities, in particular. This section details several steps that the new Anti-gang Office must take to reengineer current youth development and gang reduction efforts.

To accomplish this goal, the City should:

- ***Streamline general youth and family development programs***
- ***Overhaul targeted prevention programs to effectively address both “at-risk” communities and the youth that are at high risk of joining gangs***
- ***Expand and refine intervention, mediation, and peacekeeping efforts***
- ***Increase and enhance the reentry service efforts***
- ***Increase oversight when implementing the proposed gang reduction zones***
- ***Invest in long-term training of program administrators and monitors, and contracted service providers***

In the following section, we outline both the need for and the benefits of implementing these recommendations. Ultimately, it is important for City officials and practitioners to recognize that there is no proven method, no “silver bullet” that will relieve the City of its gang problem. According to gang experts Malcolm Klein and Cheryl Maxson:

The world of gang control can provide few guidelines for success, only continuing approaches that “feel right,” those that conform to conventional wisdoms. ... ‘The saddest message of all is simply this; little that has been done can be demonstrated to be useful. Thus, the clues for the future have less to do with what might work, than with avoiding in the future what has not worked’ ... And so, the suggestion is that we stop, step back, and consider where we want to go and why—in light of what we have learned about gangs to date.¹⁷

Despite this, gang crime and membership, as reported by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), has declined since the early 1990’s. Nevertheless, combating gangs has remained one of the most daunting struggles faced by the region’s law enforcement agencies. Figures 13 and 14 below illustrate the general decline in gang crime and membership, as reported by LAPD:

Figure 13. “Total & Gang-Related Homicides”

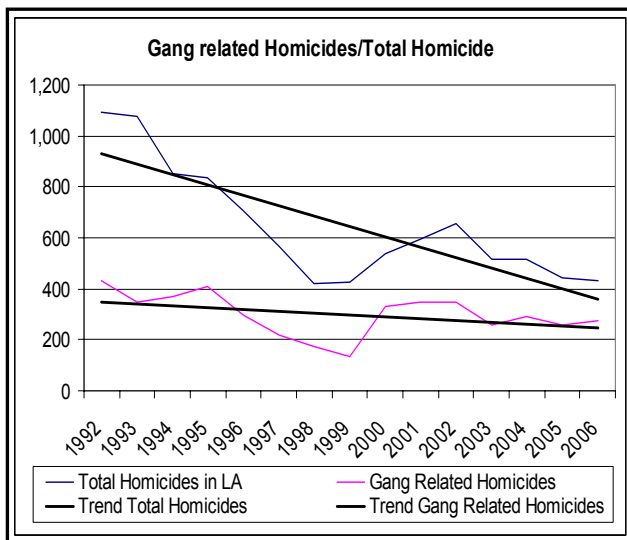
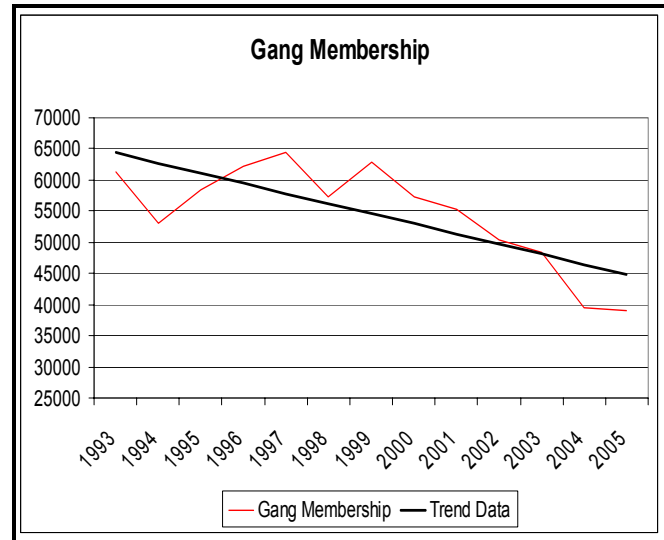


Figure 14. “Trend in Gang Membership”

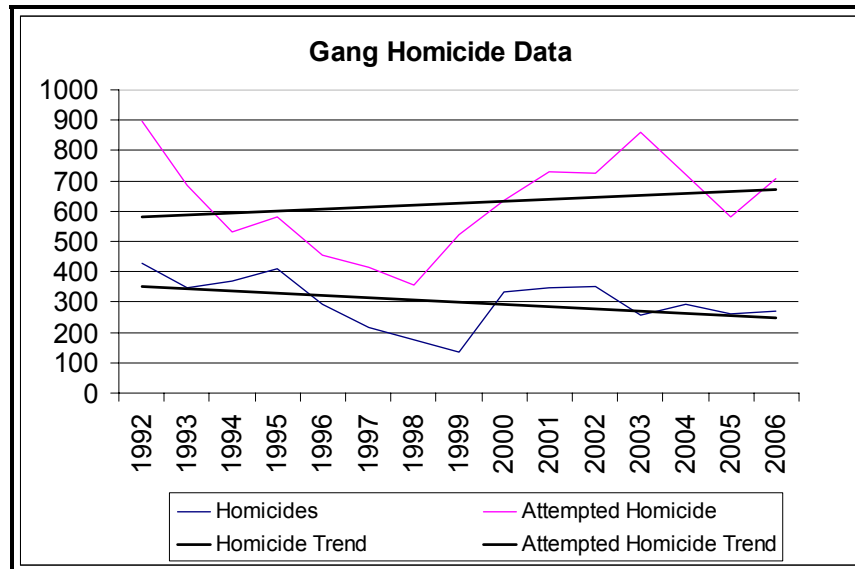


However, Figure 15 on the following page paints a more complex story. In fact, one of the most challenging issues facing City policy-makers is the perception that the City is “solving” the gang problem. Los Angeles remains ground zero for gangs and these trends in crime reflect the nationwide decline in crime, particularly in violent crime in large American cities. As illustrated in Figure 13 above, gang crime has actually remained relatively steady when compared to overall declines in crime throughout the City. More significantly, however, while gang-related murder in Los Angeles has been on a steady

¹⁷ Malcolm W. Klein and Cheryl L. Maxson, *Street Gang Patterns and Polices* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 246.

decline over the last 15 years, LAPD reports that attempted gang-related homicides have been on the rise:

Figure 15. “Gang-Related Homicides & Attempted Homicides”



The implementation of more coordinated law enforcement and social service efforts have likely had some impact in the general decline in crime experienced in Los Angeles since the early 1990’s, in conjunction with other socio-economic changes that occurred over the same period. However, it is also likely that new, more coordinated, more focused, more refined, law enforcement and social service programs will have a greater impact on the City’s battle against gangs. Despite this, the inability of the City’s gang reduction programs to demonstrate that youth who *would have* joined gangs did not, or that gang murders were averted as a result of the programs, have led the City to a crossroads at which it must devise a new strategy for combating gangs in a holistic way.¹⁸ What the City can hope for is that leadership and accountability, flexible programming that assures services will reach those in need, and continual critical feedback will position the City to tackle its gang problem head-on, despite ever-present political constraints.

Streamline General Youth and Family Development Programs

In addition to structural barriers, such as the lack of a single voice to lead the gang reduction strategy, that impede coordination and collaboration in the overall efforts to serve gang and “at-risk” youth, we found that many of the City’s key programs currently administered in the Community Development Department (CDD) are disjointed and fail to leverage resources that are immediately available. While we recognize that there are many programs that contribute to the City’s gang reduction efforts in several City departments, a critical first step of the new organization needs to be to streamline the

¹⁸ While these questions get at the heart of what the programs were intended to accomplish, many researchers do not regard murder as the best measure of crime or violent crime. In fact, gun assaults or aggravated assaults may be better measures that the City could incorporate.

general youth and family development programs that currently exist within CDD, as this represents the bulk of all youth development and anti-gang programs in the City. We found that each of these programs offer services that could generally be considered “core” or necessary in any *general prevention* program. Such services include intensive case management, counseling, referral networks, workforce and educational services, recreation, and other services. CDD’s existing youth and family programs, and the core services provided in each, are outlined in the table below:

Table 2. “Core Services Provided through Existing CDD Programs”

Core Services	FDN	NAP ¹	YAP	YFC	YOS	LAB I	LAB II
Case Management	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Counseling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial Literacy	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Parenting Workshops	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Anger Management	✓	✓				✓	✓
Community Events	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Information & Referral	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Workforce Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Crisis Response/Intervention							✓
Mediation/Peacekeeping							✓
After School Youth Programs							
Recreation Activities	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Homework/Tutoring	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Monitoring FTEs	11			N/A	5	5	

¹ Since the services offered by the NAP agencies differ significantly, some agencies may offer these services, while other may not.

This current system of programs results in overlaps and inefficiencies that could be reduced, and gaps in services that could be closed. Below is a discussion of each.

Each service provides the typical core activities that *targeted prevention* services would provide: case management, referral networks, mentoring, recreational activities, parenting services, etc. While each program provides these services to a specific subset of the population, it appears that a melding of some of these programs would enable the City to reduce service gaps—as discussed below—by providing a broad range of core services to a broader range of residents. This suggests that a streamlined approach (i.e. merging some of these core program components into a more comprehensive program that offers a spectrum of services) will result in a more efficient and effective service delivery system—more efficient because streamlining will result in fewer bureaucratic restraints on both City administrators and service providers, and more effectiveness because fewer service gaps will result.

- **Inefficiencies:** Each of these programs requires significant administrative resources, including hundreds of contracts and more than 20 monitoring personnel. Further, because several community-based organizations (CBOs)

throughout the City provide services under many of the programs listed above, they must comply with as many as half a dozen different contracts, and CDD may employ just as many monitors to review the activities of one agency. One service provider told us that they provide the same parenting class to Family Development Network (FDN) clients and to Bridges I clients, but received very different and contradictory assessments regarding service delivery and quality from CDD’s program monitors.

Several of the CBOs we visited indicated that they held multiple contracts with the City as a way to offer comprehensive, wrap-around services to their clients. In fact, we noted no less than 32 agencies that maintain two or more agreements and one with five separate contracts with CDD. This is inefficient for both the City and service providers. CDD monitors the compliance and performance of each agency to ensure contract requirements are being met, and service providers must react to the demands of multiple program monitors. This reality has created situations where agencies holding multiple contracts with the City are being monitored by several different monitors from CDD. Not only is this a poor use of City staff time, it also creates extra layers of bureaucratic obstacles for agencies to endure instead of offering more services to their clients in need.

In short, there is too much redundancy and not enough service delivery. To address this, the new Anti-gang Office must devise an administrative process that is flexible enough to allow program delivery to fit the unique needs of individual communities and to provide a broad range of services that each community could utilize, depending on the specific need of that community, to streamline and reduce administrative resources.

- **Gaps in Services:** Significant service gaps exist leaving many segments of the at-risk youth population underserved. Surprisingly, despite the multitude of services and programs offered by CDD, youth in critical age groups are almost entirely neglected (such as “at-risk” elementary and early high-school aged youth). These gaps likely result from community needs not being sufficiently identified when planning programs.

Figure 16. “Service Delivery Gaps in CDD’s Existing Youth & Family Programs”¹⁹

	Age 1	Age 2	Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7	Age 8	Age 9	Age 10	Age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17	Age 18	Age 19	Age 20	Age 21	Age 22	Age 23	Age 24	Age 25
Re-Entry																									
Diversion																									
Suppression																									
Intervention																									
Targeted Prevention																									
General Prevention																									
Community Infrastructure																									

¹⁹ While the YOS/OneSource program noted below shows an age range of 16-21, the WIA grant actually permits serving youth as young as 14 years of age. However, several CBOs and CDD personnel informed us that the age range was raised to 16 years to focus on meeting work- and graduation-related performance goals established by the statute and federal government.

CDD's existing youth and family service delivery approach also creates gaps in service, wherein youth become ineligible for certain services once they reach a certain age and no additional programs exist for them to "age into." In particular, when considering all the different programs offered to youth and their families through CDD's Human Services and Family Development Division, it becomes apparent that certain age groups "fall between the cracks" at pivotal junctions in their development. For example, the LA Bridges I program exclusively serves middle-school aged youth with the intent of preventing gang membership. However, once these students enter high school, there are no other targeted prevention programs offered by the City, while youth employment programs may target a small portion of these youth, the only other options are services from a FDN provider. In this instance, however, actual service locations sites decrease from 27 Bridges sites to 12 FDN sites, and do not specifically target youth at risk of joining gangs—thereby creating a new barrier to the City's services. Bridges II is available to youth and young adults up to age 25, but targets youth who are already entrenched in gangs.

Likewise, our review of Clean and Safe Spaces (CLASS) Parks in the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) also revealed similar results. A 2006 independent evaluation²⁰ of the program recommended broadening the current target age of participants from 11-16 years to 9-18 years, thus positioning it to have a greater impact on gang prevention, strengthening ties with families and schools, establishing long-term goals and perspective, strengthening the socializing system, and empower youth to contribute. This indicates a consensus that youth services, if they are to have the greatest impact, should broaden the range of ages that it targets—both younger and older youth are in need of services.

In addition to these, gaps exist in the following areas:

- Undocumented residents: Although CDD offers a broad spectrum of services to its clients through various different agencies, restrictions on funding sources can cause gaps in service to residents who are often in the greatest need, but who have undocumented residency status. For instance, several of the CBO staff we interviewed indicated that making appropriate referrals to other service providers will depend on whether the other agency has funding eligibility restrictions that only extend to legal U.S. residents. One CBO we visited claimed that as many as 50 percent of their overall clientele are undocumented residents. While they indicated that they will never turn away clients in need, they admitted that funding restrictions may limit the services available, and would often prohibit the agency from counting the progress of undocumented residents for performance measurement purposes. As such, these clients may not be receiving the best services available because funding restrictions prohibit agencies from making referrals. Further, serving

²⁰ "The progress of CLASS Parks and analysis of 6 years of evaluation" (a follow-up to City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation and Parks, *CLASS Parks External Program Evaluation*, 28 February, 2006)

undocumented clients will require a great deal of sensitivity relating to their fears and reluctance associated with their residency status to seek out the services they need.

- Elementary and High School Children and Youth: Bridges I program provides specific prevention services to “at risk” middle school youth, but because other programs offer similar services to other youth populations (e.g. low-to-moderate income general “at risk” youth), elementary or high school youth at risk of gang involvement may not receive the targeted services they need. And, as mentioned by the Advancement Project, the City funds only one gang prevention program serving elementary school age children, the Gang Alternative Program in the Harbor.²¹
- “At-Risk” Females: Males and females may engage in similar delinquent and non-delinquent activities as gang members; gangs often attract youth from families that do not function effectively and that come from poverty-stricken, blighted neighborhoods, from broken families, or from otherwise oppressive environments. Nevertheless, the circumstances surrounding decisions to join gangs, and the consequences of gang involvement may differ between males and females. Female gang members are more likely to come from abusive homes, have family disruptions, tend to join gangs at a younger age than males, and spend a shorter period of time in the gang. While in gangs, females face some unique challenges that their male counterparts do not, including a greater likelihood of sexual exploitation or unexpected pregnancy. Being sensitive to the different needs of females in gangs is important and must be addressed.²²

However, the City funds only one program that is specifically designed to be responsive to the service needs of “at-risk” females. The Young Women from Adversity to Resiliency (YWAR) program, administered and operated by the City’s Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), offers school-based programming aimed at helping young women avoid delinquency by focusing on academic retention, decision-making, self-awareness, healthy relationships, and life skills. The curriculum of this program focuses on resolving, reducing, or eliminating behavioral and environmental factors that contribute to delinquency. YWAR is currently implemented in 12 high schools within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) considered to be in “at-risk” communities. However, we believe that the City must add to its repertoire of targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry programs services that are designed to address the needs of females. Further, programs for female youth at high risk for gang membership must reach outside the schools as should programming for male youth.

²¹ The Advancement Project. *Citywide Gang Activity Reduction Strategy: Phase III Report*, 2007.

²² Meda Chesney-Lind and Randall G. Shelden, *Girls, Delinquency, and Juvenile Justice* (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2004).

See also, James Messerschmidt. *Crime as Structured Action: Gender, Race, Class, and Crime in the Making*. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997).

- Program Accessibility: Generally, we found that CBOs wanted to work beyond traditional hours to increase accessibility to at-risk youth during the evening hours. While CBOs recognized that youth needed and participated in recreational opportunities well into the evening, operating hours were often dictated by limited resources, at times causing them to close their doors by 5:00 PM multiple times a week. Further, many CBOs are closed on the weekends—another time when youth need services. Many CBOs have trouble accommodating expanded operating hours during those times of the year when many school youth are out of school. These practices create gaps in service delivery at times when services may be needed most. The City should, at a community level, reassess the operating hours of all service providers to ensure that youth have places to engage in constructive and productive activities when other opportunities do not exist.
- Mental Health: LAUSD believes a significant service gap exists in mental health support services provided to the region's youth—an issue also raised by the Advancement Project and confirmed by several CBOs. LAUSD has several programs (Crisis Counseling, Youth Relations, Human Relations, etc.) that provide immediate help to students when crisis events occur at a school. However, this assistance is short term, with insufficient options for on-going support for these youth. While LAUSD has school counselors, these employees are not always trained clinicians, further exacerbating the gap. With the only formal program link between LAUSD and the City being Bridges I, there is little the City can do currently to offer support to the region's youth in this regard. A broader range of program services, and a more functional referral network (as discussed in section I of this report), would help to close this gap.²³

Reducing inefficiencies and service gaps, and creating a continuum of coordinated youth and family development and gang reduction services, is particularly crucial for those communities that are not included in the proposed GRZs. Within the GRZs, comprehensive needs assessment efforts and concentrated resources should focus on existing service gaps—particularly for core prevention and intervention services. However, without concerted plans, other communities throughout the City will not be the beneficiaries of comprehensive needs assessments (at least immediately), and will not receive a higher concentration of resources to reduce gaps. Instead, gaps in service must be minimized through providing a spectrum of services comprehensive enough to meet the different needs of unique communities and flexible enough to meet community needs in different ways.

In addressing these issues, intake and assessment must focus on the comprehensive needs of a client and not just those targeted through a specific program. Currently, the Youth Opportunity System (YOS) intake process is focused on job placement and the intake process for the Youth Advocacy Program (YAP) is focused on delinquency services. The

²³ See also “Case Study: Collaboration and Network Building with Other Systems of Care”, a study of The California Endowment’s Mental Health Initiative, and prepared by the Lewin Group. July 2006.

Bridges intake process is focused on gang prevention and intervention. The FDN intake process is focused on helping families achieve self sufficiency. Even within the same program, CBOs have incorporated their own individual needs assessment forms—some comprehensive and others more superficial—when assessing individual needs. While each needs assessment methodology is generally sufficient to gather the information required by CDD, service providers utilizing more comprehensive assessment forms may be more likely to identify individual needs and refer them to the “wrap-around” services they would otherwise not receive. Client intake and assessment must cease to be program or funding specific and must be used across a spectrum of programs.

The City’s disjointed approach to providing general youth and family services should be streamlined to provide a continuum of coordinated services. In light of the duplication of core services provided under several different programs, and gaps created by the many narrowly focused programming efforts, the City should reengineer its programs to provide a spectrum of services that better reflects the diversity of residents in need. Generally speaking, the bulk of the City’s efforts should focus on “core” services. Specific services and their target populations may vary from community to community. But the overarching City goal should be to create a spectrum of services that is flexible enough to meet the unique needs of specific communities.

The City should begin the process of eliminating those not considered to be “core” while streamlining the core services into as few programs as necessary. As such, some of the primary services incorporated in Bridges I (e.g. after school tutoring, onsite activities) could be incorporated into a broader youth and family service program that provides a seamless spectrum of services to the general population in need, and to facilitate prevention, intervention and reentry efforts at the same time. Implementing a new program for finite populations instead of a broad spectrum of youth and families in need, produces a bureaucratic mess and needless spending. Inherently, such an approach produces gaps in service delivery.

Overhaul Targeted Prevention Programs to Effectively Address both “At-Risk” Communities and the Youth that are at High Risk of Joining Gangs

Adequately targeted prevention programs must (1) target communities most at risk for gang activity, (2) target individual youth that are most at risk in participating in gang activity, and (3) divert youth who are associating with gangs and minimally involved with gangs before they become “hard core” gang members. Any gang prevention program must provide sufficiently comprehensive services to a broad array of “at-risk” youth to be effective. The Bridges I program, while providing several “core” services, does not sufficiently address each of these program components.

The Bridges I program was established in 1997 by the Ad Hoc Committee on Gangs and Juvenile Justice as a community-based gang prevention and early intervention program aimed at 10-14 year old middle school students. The Bridges I program was set up with three specific goals:

- ***Actualizing Student Achievement:*** Provide activities that allow youth to strengthen basic educational, cognitive, and self-improvement skills.
- ***Strengthening Family Foundations:*** Strengthen the family unit through services provided at and through Family Resource Centers.
- ***Promoting Community Action:*** Implement community improvement and mobilization activities, which result in greater neighborhood safety, cohesiveness, unity, and an enhanced environment for youth and their families.

Our analysis of Bridges I, the City's primary prevention program, revealed both strengths and weaknesses. These include:

➤ Prevention Dollars Are Not Sufficiently Focused On Communities Most At Risk:

Generally speaking, the original 18 Bridges I sites were initially selected to be placed in the middle schools located in LAPD reporting districts exhibiting the highest juvenile violent crime arrest rates (not rates of gang-related crime). As Malcolm Klein succinctly noted in his 1997 critique of the Bridges I implementation, "when [City Council members] saw the list of 18, several council members objected quite vigorously because schools in their areas were not included. The result of this objection ... was the expansion of the targets to a final total of 29 middle schools. A number of the added schools had relatively low juvenile arrest figures and/or negligible gang activity."²⁴ So, while it appears that the City used the data available (though not necessarily the most valid source of data) to locate Bridges I programs in the communities with the greatest need, it is also evident that decisions were made to place this specialized program in areas that did not exhibit the same potential risk factors. Here again, the "Rule of 15", as noted by the Advancement Project, resulted in the diluting of limited resources amongst too many communities, rather than focusing those resources to have optimal impact upon the communities most in need.²⁵ As such, the City must reassess the current location of all Bridges I sites, and determine if targeted prevention services should remain stable, be increased or decreased, or should instead be implemented at other, higher-risk schools.

➤ The Bridges I Program Does Not Sufficiently Target Youth Most at Risk of Joining Gangs:

Instead, the program focuses on youth living in "at-risk" neighborhoods instead of on those that are most "at risk" of joining gangs in those neighborhoods. As part of his 1997 retrospective on the implementation of the LA Bridges I program, Malcolm Klein provides a listing of risk factors that should be considered when

²⁴ Malcolm W. Klein, "Guiding Los Angeles's Response to Street Gangs: An SC2 Project Failure," USC Social Science Research Institute, October 1997, p. 4.

See also Malcolm W. Klein and Cheryl L. Maxson, *Street Gang Patterns and Policies*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 108.

²⁵ City of Los Angeles, Office of the Controller. *Results of a Performance Audit of the LA Bridges Programs*, 31 March 2000.

identifying potential clients for the LA Bridges I Program. Specifically, Klein classifies these variables into five specific categories: individual, family, peer, neighborhood, and school/academic variables.

However, rather than use what Klein suggested, CDD developed its own set of risk factors that are used to determine eligibility for enrollment into the LA Bridges program. Specifically, LA Bridges service providers are instructed to classify students into either “core” or “non-core” services categories, which are used to determine the level and type of services that will be administered. This classification is dependent on the risk factors identified by Bridges’ staff during a client’s initial enrollment, which do not appear to correspond to those risk factors most associated with gang involvement. In fact, statistics from CDD’s Integrated Services Information System (ISIS) database reveal that 21 percent of Bridges participants over the last three years were associated with criminal/gang peers, and 7 percent were identified as gang members. Ultimately, the majority of youth enrolled in the LA Bridges gang prevention program did not appear to exhibit the risk factors associated with youth at highest risk of gang involvement. As a “gang prevention” program, the limited resources dedicated to serving those most at risk must be targeted accordingly.

Research suggests, however, that many of the risk factors included in the Bridges risk assessment are not specific enough to adequately target youth who are more gang-prone than others. As a result, even the ‘core’ participants may be more likely to engage in delinquent behavior than gang activity. According to the OJJDP’s Comprehensive Gang Model, the following risk factors should be considered when assessing the likelihood of a particular youth engaging in future gang activity:

Table 3. “Risk Factors for Gang Membership”

Risk Factors for Gang Membership	
Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social disorganization, including poverty and residential mobility - Organized lower-class communities - Underclass communities - Presence of gangs in the neighborhood - Availability of drugs in the neighborhood - Availability of firearms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Barriers to and lack of social and economic opportunities - Lack of social capital - Cultural norms supporting gang behavior - Feeling unsafe in the neighborhood; high crime - Conflict with social control institutions
Family	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family disorganization, including broken homes, and parental drug/alcohol abuse - Troubled families, including incest, family violence, and drug addiction - Family members in a gang - Lack of adult male role models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of parental role models - Low socioeconomic status - Extreme economic deprivation, family management problems, parents with violent attitudes - Sibling antisocial behavior
School	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic failure - Low educational aspirations, especially among females - Negative labeling by teachers - Trouble at school - Few teachers role models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational frustration - Low commitment to school, low school attachment, high levels of antisocial behavior in school - Low achievement test scores, and identification as being learning disabled
Peer Group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High commitment to delinquent peers - Low commitment to positive peers - Street socialization - Gang members in class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friends who use drugs or who are members - Friends who are drug distributors - Interaction with delinquent peers
Individual	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prior delinquency - Deviant attitudes - Street smartness; toughness - Defiant and individualistic character - Fatalistic view of the world - Aggression - Proclivity of excitement and trouble - <i>Locura</i> (acting in a daring, courageous, and especially crazy fashion in the face of adversity) - Higher levels of normlessness in the context of family, peer group and school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social disabilities - Illegal gun ownership - Early or precocious sexual activity, especially among females - Alcohol and drug use - Drug trafficking - Desire for group rewards such as status, identity, self-esteem, companionship and protection - Problem behaviors, hyperactivity, externalizing behaviors, drinking, lack of refusal skills - Victimization

Source: OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community’s Youth Gang Problem, p. 74

It is important to note, that while all these risk factors are pertinent in determining the likelihood of youth engaging in gang activity in the future, they are not all equal. Some risk factors hold greater influence in guiding the actions of youth than others. For instance, a youth exhibiting several individual-based risk factors without peer group, school, family, or community factors, may be at a higher risk of delinquency than gang involvement. Even when risk factors exist in multiple categories—e.g. a youth may exhibit alcohol or drug use, may have low commitment to positive peers, may exhibit educational frustration, may lack parental role models, and may exhibit barriers to or lack of social and economic opportunities—youth may not be at high risk of future gang involvement. Instead, it is critical to assess the interaction between risk factors in determining if a youth is at a high risk of future gang involvement—e.g. a youth that exhibits cultural norms supporting gang behavior, with family members that are in a gang, exhibits trouble in school, has friends who use drugs or who are gang members, and has a proclivity for excitement and trouble.

Furthermore, given the evidence that gang membership becomes more likely as the number of risk factors increase, Bridges' requirement that youth exhibit two risk factors may be insufficient to assure the program serves those at highest risk of gang involvement. As reported by the Justice Policy Institute, the Rochester Youth Survey found that the majority of youth who exhibited as many as *seven* risk factors were gang members.²⁶ At the same time, gang membership is not limited to those with extreme "risk" levels. As such, it may be beneficial to expand participant categories from "core" and "non-core" to something along the lines of current workforce programs—"universal access," "core," and "intensive" categories—thereby allowing for different levels of services and expectations for each.

The mere presence of risk factors for gang membership is not enough to merit intervention. At the same time, however, by only mandating that participants exhibit a minimum number of risk factors, the City is providing an implied incentive to serve those "at-risk" youth that are easiest to serve—even though they may not be at highest risk of gang involvement. Instead, the City must devise contractual incentives for agencies to provide services to those most in need and most at risk—including accounting for risk factors (and other barriers to service delivery) in performance measurement and allowing for longer-term success. Agencies contracted to perform targeted prevention work must be encouraged to serve those youth most at-risk of gang involvement.

➤ The Focus of Bridges I on Middle School Youth Precludes Younger and Older Youth from Receiving Targeted Prevention Services:

Targeting youth at the ages in which peer gang influences may be the strongest may be a good practice, particularly when targeted prevention dollars are limited. But, Bridges I does not merely target these youth, it effectively creates limits that

²⁶ Judith Greene and Kevin Pranis, "Gang Wars: The Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies," Justice Policy Institute, 2007.

deny needed prevention services to any other demographic. Evidence suggests that the process of joining gangs is generally a gradual one in which youth begin to hang out with gang members when they are around 12-13 years of age joining six months to two years later when they are between 13 and 15 years of age. At the same time, evidence suggests that girls tend to become involved in gangs earlier than boys.²⁷ As such, we believe the City should reconsider limiting gang prevention programs to those ages 10-14 years. Furthermore, evidence suggests, as pointed out by the Advancement Project, that elementary school youth are now being targeted for recruitment by today's street gangs. At the same time, peer influence does not cease when middle school youth graduate to high school. In re-assessing the location of future schools for targeted prevention services, the City *must* address the needs of elementary and high-school aged youth.

➤ Despite these Weaknesses, Many Program Components are Designed to Increase those “Protective Factors” that are Understood to Counter Existing Risk Factors:

Protective factors are designed to combat the risk factors most likely to influence future gang involvement. Gang researcher Irving Spergel writes that gang problems are “a result of a combination of interactive factors: poverty, rapid population movement, racism, segregation and social isolation of minority groups, weak family structure, adolescent youth in crisis, the development of youth-gang subcultures, and, in particular, community disorganization.”²⁸ All of these factors are seen to an extreme degree in Los Angeles, and must be addressed at both the community and individual levels. To be successful, targeted programs must reduce the factors that contribute to gang involvement.

First, to reduce risk factors, the City must enhance the manner in which it addresses critical protective factors. For instance, to mitigate against school-level risk factors (e.g. poor academic achievement), targeted prevention programs must provide services that reduce or eliminate the impact of the risk factor on the youth's life (e.g. provide opportunities and support for improved academic involvement and achievement). For some risk factors, this is more easily achieved than for others—e.g. family conflict (including domestic violence) and poor or inconsistent family discipline require the desire and cooperation of parents to change, not just the participation of the youth. Table 4 below illustrates the relationship of protective factors to risk factors, and corresponds to the OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model:

²⁷ James C. Howell, “Menacing or Mimicking? Realities of Youth Gangs.” *Juvenile and Family Court Journal* 58, no. 2 (2007): 39.

Meda Chesney-Lind and Randall G. Shelden, *Girls, Delinquency, and Juvenile Justice* (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2004).

Judith Greene and Kevin Pranis. “Gang Wars: The Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies,” Justice Policy Institute, 2007.

²⁸ <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/209189.pdf>

Table 4. “Risk and Protective Factors”²⁹

Risk and Protective Factors	
Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low neighborhood attachment - Community disorganization - Transitions and mobility - Law and norms favorable to drug use - Perceived availability of drugs and firearms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rewards for community involvement - Opportunities for community involvement
School	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor academic achievement - Low degree of commitment to school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities for school involvement - Rewards for school involvement
Family	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor family supervision - Poor family discipline - Family conflict - Family history of antisocial behavior - Parent attitudes favorable to antisocial behavior - Parent attitudes favorable to drug use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family attachment - Opportunities for family involvement - Rewards for family involvement
Individual/Peer	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rebelliousness - Early initiation of antisocial behavior - Attitudes favorable to antisocial behavior - Peer antisocial behavior - Sensation seeking - Peer rejection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Religiosity - Belief in the moral order - Social skills - Peer attachment

Source: OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community’s Youth Gang Problem, p. 75

In conjunction with focusing on youth at highest risk for gang involvement, gang reduction programs are only sufficiently “targeted” if they concentrate on increasing protective factors *and* mitigating risk factors. While we found that many of the core services provided in the Bridges I program are targeted at increasing these protective factors, other evidence suggests that services should be more evenly administered. For instance, the bulk of the services provided by Bridges I service providers include tutor/homework assistance, recreational activities, and individual counseling, which accounts for roughly 40 percent of all services rendered. At the same time, activities that address community protective factors make up less than 3 percent of the total services offered by Bridges I

²⁹ More information regarding all risk factors and protective factors discussed in this report can be found at the Community Guide to Helping America’s Youth (<http://guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/>).

service providers. Specifically, promoting community action, as defined by the Bridges I program, consists of increasing community interest and involvement. However, our interviews with CDD staff and Bridges contractors revealed that Bridges service providers receive little guidance from the City as to how this objective can be achieved. According to CDD management, agencies are encouraged to host one or two regional events (e.g. talent show) per year in order to be considered in compliance with contract provisions. These are often one-day events that lack any lasting development of community involvement. Because of this, City should encourage agencies to develop activities for at-risk youth that sustain their commitment to community involvement. For example, encouraging youth to volunteer on a regular basis or implementing a youth mentorship (i.e. big brother/big sister) component would enhance the likelihood that program participants would develop positive, pro-social bonds to their respective communities.

➤ Targeted Prevention Efforts Do Not Adequately Incorporate Diversion Services for Youth Most At Risk of Hard Core Gang Activity:

Diversion services depend significantly on the ability of schools and law enforcement agencies (LAPD, Probation, City Attorney, District Attorney, etc.) to successfully refer youth that are in trouble to service providers, which would provide intensive case management, mentoring, counseling, and other services to divert them from future, more serious gang involvement. To some degree, diversion programs are most likely to identify youth who are most at risk of joining gangs, or have begun associating with gang members. To serve these youth—whether in schools, on the streets, or in County probation camps—the City’s targeted prevention programs must be expanded, and a functioning referral network must be implemented (as discussed in Section I of this report).

While the Bridges program has received significant criticism since its inception, it should be recognized that, at the time, Bridges I was an innovative and risky undertaking. The lesson to be learned is not that the City should never have implemented it, but that the City should have used accountability-based procedures from the start, and taken action to modify it when shortcomings became clearly evident.

In all, it appears that the Bridges I program and the current methods used to measure program performance do not compel service agencies to prioritize among clients who could be deemed more “at-risk” than others. Moreover, the program’s strict compliance techniques could actually provide an incentive to an agency to enroll clients who are not the most “at-risk,” but rather will be most likely to show results in a short amount of time. Although the Bridges I program uses several risk factors to determine how services will be administered to a prospective client, the risk factors used should be better focused so as to more accurately identify youth at the highest risk for gang involvement. The Bridges program, by design, is not equipped to distinguish between youth generally at risk of delinquency and those actually at risk of joining gangs. As such, if Bridges I continues to operate with the stated objective of gang *prevention*, we recommend that youth be evaluated according to a pre-determined hierarchy of gang-specific risk factors.

Expand and Refine Intervention, Mediation, and Peacekeeping Efforts

Intervention efforts represent relatively uncharted territory as there is less objective research on the subject. However, there are some “promising practices” we identified that can facilitate the development of a constructive model for gang intervention. In general, street outreach involves the use of individuals who are not employed in the criminal justice system to “work the streets” making contact with youth in neighborhoods experiencing high levels of gang crime and gang membership. These contacts are meant to provide pro-social contacts with youth, engage youth in pro-social activities, link youth services and social systems, and provide a link between youth who are often estranged from the institutions of legitimate society and social institutions.

The form and composition of gang intervention has been the subject of significant debate among academics and policy-makers seeking to find a balance between successful programming and useful tactics for interrupting gang proliferation and violence. The Comprehensive Gang Model—integrating gang prevention, intervention, and suppression—was developed in the mid-1990s by Irving Spergel of the University of Chicago, and supported by OJJDP.³⁰ Among Spergel’s five core strategies, “Social Intervention” is based on the premise that gang-involved youth must be targeted by outreach services. In general, this refers to the use of street-level gang intervention workers who are charged with going out into the community to establish connections with the gang being targeted. To be successful, these workers must be able identify and “connect” with the population they are trying to reach. In many cases, intervention workers will likely be former gang members.

But despite the prescriptive elements of the Comprehensive Gang Model, there is very little guidance related to how intervention will work once it has been established in an area with high gang activity. Indeed, there is no magic formula for gang intervention with regard to successful techniques that can be employed in the field.

Nevertheless, gang intervention has become an integral component of successful anti-gang strategies in recent years and continues to evolve in terms of its methodology. For example, the City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission recently compiled a “Community-Based Intervention Model” at the request of the Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development. This model seeks to define gang intervention in terms of the work being performed by different types of intervention agencies. Specifically, there are five different levels of intervention agencies performing various activities; each involved in different ways. “Level 1” agencies, for instance, provide no direct contact with active gang members in the streets, but rather provide other community services, such as crisis counseling and substance abuse treatment. By contrast, “Level 5” agencies are directly embedded with gang members and will have proven success records in lowering crime rates and incidences of gang-related violence and homicides. It also establishes a critical distinction between intervention and mediation services (Prong 1) and reentry services (Prong 2) that provide a strong basis for

³⁰ Irving A. Spergel. *The Youth Gang Problem: A Community Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

“wrap-around” services to those most in need. City officials have indicated that they hope to use this model as a blueprint for creating funding categories in the future.

While the method of intervention will likely vary across Los Angeles communities, there is a need for standardized expertise, training and accountability. Whereas Bridges I is more clearly defined in terms of its goals and services provided, Bridges II has always been more loosely defined. Bridges II is designed to provide gang-related crisis intervention services, build and maintain peace initiatives within the community, preserve harmony among gang members formerly engaged in gang conflict, and disseminate accurate information regarding gang activities for the purpose of preventing gang violence stemming from misinformation. In many ways, this is in line with the ‘intervention’ component of the GRZ model. While there is no significant difference between the intervention activities allowed under the GRZ or Bridges II, the fact remains that Intervention activities are innovative, unproven, and are primarily comprised of practices specific to individual practitioners—even interventionists themselves differ about what services they are going to provide. However, the City should not limit its efforts to what is proven or to specific characteristics or skills of particular individuals. There should be room for innovation, while ensuring some level of required expertise, knowledge, and agreed-upon methodology. The question is not whether such services should be provided, but “how” they should be provided, “who” should provide them, and how to hold them accountable.

Further, much of this debate has focused on whether ex-gang members should provide intervention services. The conflict over the “license to operate” and issues of street credibility also detract from what is critical to gang intervention. More important than past gang affiliation is the issue of what training and expertise the City will require of intervention workers who are funded by the City. For instance, the Model suggests that gang intervention agencies should use flexible hiring criteria for those that provide outreach services. However, this practice could leave the City open to unnecessary liability unless sufficient oversight is established. The issue of past history can be likened to alcohol or drug intervention workers—some may have had past experience with alcohol or drugs, some may be family members of victims, some may only have education/experience through school or professional training. They can all succeed in intervention efforts. This issue is no different than the requirements that the City has for the case managers it funds. The only clear difference between previous drug abusers as counselors and previous gang member as case managers is the degree of risk. It is our opinion that the City should focus its efforts first on developing standards for intervention workers, and second on implementing contractual controls that allow the City to better hold its contractors accountable.

There are many ways that the City can build accountability into these contracts. Bridges II contractors, for example, are required to develop a Code of Ethics that gang intervention workers must comply with as part of their duties. Gang intervention workers must also submit to fingerprinting and background checks in order to be employed with a Bridges II contractor. Since this is a relatively new and controversial anti-gang approach (in Los Angeles), there needs to be a funded, comprehensive evaluation over a three year period. Additionally, street intervention workers should be required to complete formal

training, be subject to on-the-job-training, incorporate best practices of other outreach workers, and sign ethics pledges. Agencies with street peace and street intervention programs should also be required to comply with certain operational requirements, including professional supervision and oversight. These techniques are not meant to limit the pool of gang intervention workers, but rather are designed to enhance the level of assurance that street outreach workers meet a minimum level of qualification.

CBOs, LAUSD, and law enforcement personnel whom we spoke with emphasize the importance of intervention workers, but recognize the need for increased training, expertise, and accountability. Currently, there is only one standardized source of training available to LA's intervention workers—the Pat Brown Institute at California State University, Los Angeles. This is a 15-week class that certifies gang intervention workers. It was previously offered three times a year; however, CDD has decreased funding so the class is now offered twice per year. The gang intervention workers that we met indicated that additional training is needed—that this class is a good introduction, but more training is needed to develop a set of norms for the occupation itself. In response to this need, the Advancement Project has taken the initiative of sponsoring the Council of Community Violence Intervention Professionals (CCVIP), a consortium of gang intervention agencies, in an effort to assist in the development of professional standards and greater consistency in the methods employed by intervention agencies. The success of this effort will be crucial as the City takes the next step in enhancing intervention services in Los Angeles.

Furthermore, we believe that the focus of Bridges II on only high school or young adult-aged youth limits its ability to intervene in the lives of younger active gang members. Similar to the Bridges I program, age limitations may adversely impact the ability of the City to serve those in need. While the age range applicable to the Bridges II program is far more age inclusive than Bridges I and may serve youth as young as 14 years of age, research consistently shows that active gang members may be as young as 12 years of age and may not be inclined to participate in the school-based Bridges I program. These youth may also be in need of the intervention/reentry “wrap-around” services needed by so many current and former gang members.

Intervention efforts may look different in different areas, but they should focus on several key components. At a minimum, these components must include crisis intervention, opportunities provision, organizational change, suppression, community mobilization, and social intervention as found in the Comprehensive Gang Model.

Increase and Enhance the Reentry Service Efforts

Reentry services represent one of the most significant—and problematic—service gaps identified during our analysis. While reentry programs are traditionally understood to be comprised of services provided to incarcerated individuals to prepare them for life after release, we take a broader view of reentry services that the City should consider. Reentry services must be expanded in two key ways: services must be expanded to youth in the criminal justice system, beginning with County probation camps, and enhanced services must be provided to youth currently in gangs who wish to leave the gangs. Both,

however, are similarly situated in that they are designed to guide—through intensive case management, mentoring, and other core services—those wishing to leave gangs through the transition period toward a productive lifestyle.

➤ Increase services to incarcerated youth:

The resources dedicated to serving incarcerated youth are significantly lacking. CDD operates two programs to address the needs of youth transitioning back into society. The first, YO-IT, receives approximately 10 referrals per month from Probation to place youth into the Bridges Program. The second program is operated at only one Youth Opportunity site (YO! Watts) and maintains a presence at Camp Gonzales, a juvenile justice facility, to work with youth nearing release in order to ease their transition into educational or employment opportunities—a promising practice that must be expanded in providing reentry services. In this program, case managers work with these youth for one year, sometimes longer, to provide assistance when it is most needed. This program is designed to identify employment or educational opportunities that will give youth the tools to succeed in the future. While this is a notable effort, YO! Watts provides such services at only one of the County’s 19 youth probation camps—leaving hundreds of youth without the services and opportunities they need to leave the gang lifestyle once released from camp.

Contributing to the relative scarcity of programs and services for transitioning youth is that federal funding sources—particularly Workforce Investment Act (WIA)—require very specific outcome measures (graduation from high school, attainment of a certificate, etc) within relatively short time frames. However, these goals may take longer to achieve for gang-involved, previously incarcerated youth than for other segments of the youth population. In the end, these prescribed performance metrics may actually discourage agencies from focusing their efforts on those at highest risk of future gang involvement.

➤ Increase reentry services as part of existing intervention efforts:

As noted in the previous discussion, intervention workers provide a conduit between those whose lives are or are about to be engulfed in gangs—whether on the streets, in correctional facilities, or on probation—and the hope of achieving a healthy, productive life. While success may be hard to define and even more difficult to achieve, success depends on the ability of intervention workers to access those most in need, whether on the streets or in correctional facilities, and on ensuring that intervention workers have the expertise and resources necessary to guide gang youth through the reentry process.

Furthermore, evidence suggests that while gang members typically join gangs between 13 and 15 years of age, they often “age out” of their gang affiliations without the prodding of law enforcement or intervention workers. When they do, even non-hard core gang members may have lost out on the educational and developmental opportunities experienced by their peers. Because of this, they also will likely require intensive services to facilitate their transition back into society. Moreover, the difficulties associated with reentering society from the

gang life has been shown to be a significant factor contributing to the reluctance of many gang members to leave the gang. Intervention workers may be the best positioned to ease the “aging out,” maturation process by being there to guide the exiting gang member through the reentry process.

In both cases, similar core services are required. The Advancement Project’s *Reentry Reinvestment Project* identified several service categories believed to be critical to the success of any reentry program: counseling, employment, substance abuse, education, transportation assistance, medical care and mental health, gang services, transitional housing, financial and legal assistance, parenting training, post-release mentoring, and other transitional support services. Together, these services must successfully generate increased opportunities and resources available to those in need, thus providing alternatives to continued gang involvement. They must also be rapidly employed to ensure that youth receive them when prior to release (to prepare for the transition) and immediately following release (to better assure that youth in the reentry programs see results).

Furthermore, core reentry services must be strategically targeted in the most disadvantaged communities with the highest proportion of returning gang members. These communities generally exhibit high poverty and unemployment rates, and have a larger percentage of the population without high school educations; these communities lack sufficient infrastructural opportunities and resources to provide legitimate alternatives to continued gang involvement. Moreover, because different communities will inherently possess different resources and challenges, the City must ensure that the reentry programs created are flexible enough to provide the services needed in each respective community. For instance *The Reentry Reinvestment Project* found that while the greatest reentry need in the San Fernando Valley was substance abuse services, South Los Angeles was more in need of housing services, Downtown and Central City East was more in need of mental health services, and East Los Angeles was more in need of gang-related reentry services.³¹ These communities may overlap with the communities currently targeted as GRZs, but it is nevertheless clear that to focus reentry services where they are needed most, the City must expand on the services currently provided in the City and those prescribed in the Comprehensive Gang Model.

Whether reentry services are provided through large scale service organizations like HOMEBOY Industries in Los Angeles or through much smaller service organizations serving subsets of the population in transition, it has been recognized that employment, vocational, and an array of long-term “wrap-around” services from counseling to life skills training to anger-management to tattoo removal are essential components to a successful reentry program. More than this, however, these services must be made available to those that have “hit bottom,” and to those that will take the initiative to make a change. Therefore, it is crucial to link these services to other intervention activities and to correctional facilities, to offer a way out to those in crisis as well as to those who have finally realized that they want a way out. To ensure opportunities exist for those

³¹ The Advancement Project. *The Reentry Reinvestment Project*, 2007.

transitioning back into society, the City must expand the funding it has dedicated to reentry services in the past.

To address this deficiency, the City must enhance service delivery to those in gangs who want to leave the gang lifestyle, and must significantly increase services to youth in transition from criminal justice institutions to mainstream society. The City has recently recognized the need to formalize reentry services as part of its newly developed Intervention Model. Many of these services pertain to the unique services that are generally not provided through other programming such as tattoo removal. At the same time, the City has also recently enhanced existing program resources to serve those in correctional institutions who wish to transition into a more productive lifestyle: i.e. through workforce and youth employment services through YO! Watts and the Reentry Employment Option Demonstration Program. However, much more is needed.

Increase Oversight When Implementing the Proposed Gang Reduction Zones

A preliminary review of the Mayor's Gang Reduction Strategy and the proposed GRZs shows that these initiatives incorporate some programmatic aspects that have been noticeably lacking in the City's previous programs. Specifically, these approaches provide for a far more substantive, community-level needs assessment than any that has been conducted in the City's anti-gang efforts. Further, they incorporate "steering committees" that formally institutionalize collaboration among key City and regional partners, and they incorporate a model of performance evaluation that exceeds what is currently available. According to the OJJDP, the "Comprehensive Gang Model," used in the creation of the GRZs, espouses a multi-faceted, multilayered approach that includes eight critical elements:³²

1. Initial and continuous problem assessment using qualitative and quantitative data
2. Targeting of the area and those populations of individuals most closely associated with the problem, as described in the assessment
3. Mix of the five key strategies: community mobilization, social intervention, opportunities provision, suppression, and organizational change/development
4. A Steering Committee to oversee and guide the project
5. Direct contact intervention team that includes police, probation, outreach staff, and others
6. A plan for coordinating efforts of and sharing appropriate information among those who work with the youth on a daily basis, the steering committee, and persons within partner organizations
7. Community capacity building to sustain the project and address issues that are long-term in nature

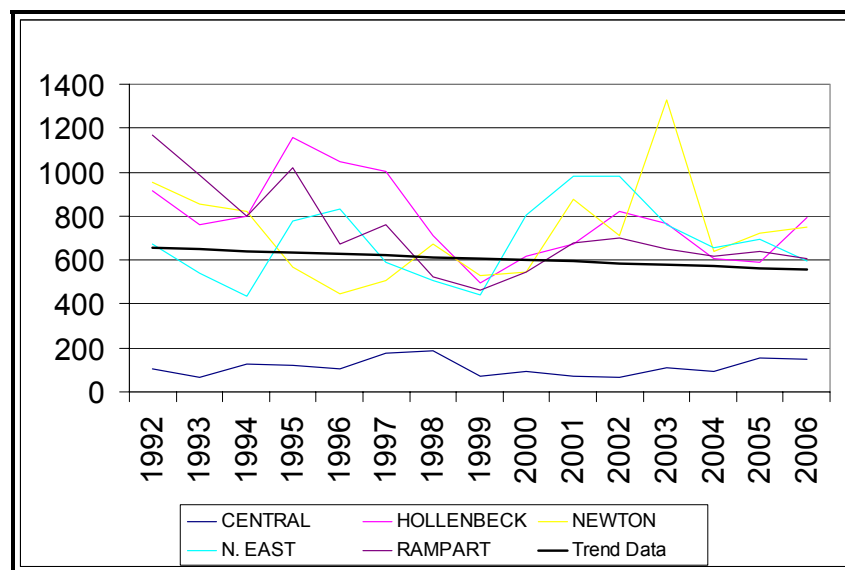
³² Institute for Intergovernmental Research. *The OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem*, 2002.

8. Ongoing data collection and analysis to inform the process and evaluate its impact

The Comprehensive Gang Model itself is not a program, per se. Rather it is a framework or strategy that organizes and leverages multiple resources to develop diverse community-specific and comprehensive programming. However, challenges exist, as follows:

- The sole reliance on crime statistics in determining location of GRZs—while recommended by OJJDP—may result in reaching early conclusions when increases or decreases in crime data are reported from year to year. The GRZ is modeled after the GRP in Boyle Heights, which was said to have achieved 44 percent decline in gang crime over the course of one year, while many other communities faced increases during the same period. However, as Figure 17 below illustrates, dramatic increases and decreases in gang crime from year to year are not uncommon, and alone are relatively insignificant indicators of a program’s overall, long-term success:

Figure 17. “Gang Crime Reported by LAPD’s Central Bureau”



At a minimum, a longer perspective is needed to identify trends; but, beyond this, additional socio-economic factors should also be incorporated to ensure resources are focused in those communities that could benefit the most from additional resources.

- The community-level needs assessments that began in December 2007 are perhaps the most comprehensive series of needs assessments ever conducted by the City. Additionally, the independent manner in which they are being conducted will lend them the credibility necessary to inform policy decisions. However, in some respects, the City’s approach may be problematic. First, because several contractors are being used to assess each community, the risk of fragmentation and inconsistency in both the methodologies used and information

presented is heightened. Additionally, and perhaps more significantly, the time frame for the completion of the needs assessment (4-6 weeks) appears to be an unrealistic timeframe to complete a comprehensive analysis. Such a short timeline, while being driven by budget-cycle timeframes, makes it more difficult for researchers to be certain that all community information has been accurately collected and analyzed. As such, this approach has been a common weakness in many of the prior implementations of this model. Ultimately, these factors may negatively affect the information City officials will be relying on to make critical policy decisions.

- As noted previously, the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model (and, consequently, the GRZs) are not intended to be implemented citywide. Rather, the model was originally designed to concentrate law enforcement and social service resources in small sections of a city that are considered to be “hot spots” for gang activity. This inherently neglects communities not yet considered to be “hot spots,” though they may still exhibit significant indicators of gang problems and may become the “hot spots” of the future. As such, the City’s overall gang reduction strategy must incorporate the key components of this model, but must not be constrained by its limitations.
- Information on prior implementations of “Comprehensive Strategy” has been mixed, at best. This model is the only “grand” strategy available to municipalities looking to take comprehensive approach to gang reduction. However, it has proven to be very difficult to implement, with the key variable to success not being money, but leadership. In fact, implementation problems primarily result from the lack of collaboration among agencies—including between suppression agencies and their community and social service partners, and the sharing of clients across services. This model seems to have the elements essential for success, but someone has to take charge in ways that law enforcement and social service agencies may not like.³³
- Other researchers, such as Klein and Maxson,³⁴ have raised concerns about implementing the OJJDP’s Comprehensive Gang Strategy due, in large part, to the complexity of the approach and the number of actors involved with its implementation. Specifically, garnering the involvement of various essential partners, such as law enforcement and the schools, has been a difficult trial in other cities where the Comprehensive Gang Model has been implemented (e.g. St. Louis, MO; Bloomington-Normal, IL). In each case, attempts at implementing the Comprehensive Gang Strategy failed because officials facilitating its implementation over-emphasized suppression tactics over the other elements within the Model.

³³ See Judith Greene and Kevin Pranis, “Gang Wars: The Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies,” Justice Policy Institute, 2007.

³⁴ See Note 17.

- When implementing the Comprehensive Gang Model as the guiding model behind the GRZs, the City must take great care not to become married to the model. Too often, models seem promising because they provide an easily definable set of solutions to difficult problems. These models may fail because they are too general in nature and not built with the unique qualities of any individual municipality or region in mind. This model, in particular, has never been successfully implemented on a long-term basis. To make the model work, the City must continually critique it, apply concrete assessment measures to identify weaknesses, and make appropriate adjustments. The need for ongoing assessments of the problem and responses is critical to this approach. Without a doubt, such weaknesses will arise, and it will be up to the leadership of the City's anti-gang efforts to make them known to City policy-makers and to devise solutions.

Given the nascent stage of GRZ implementation, our fieldwork was not designed to identify particular strengths or weaknesses in this program approach. Rather, what we represent here are shortcomings identified in the implementation of the Comprehensive Gang Model in multiple jurisdictions throughout the nation.

We noted in the beginning of this section that there was little empirical evidence that gang reduction efforts reduced gang activity. However, our research did reveal some principles that the City should consider when implementing its new gang reduction strategy. The following represent the type of services or program enhancements that could improve the City's overall gang reduction efforts—both for implementation within GRZs, and throughout the City's other communities in need. For examples of programs that have incorporated these into service delivery models, see Appendix D.

- Partner with local hospitals and emergency rooms—and other previously unconventional venues—to address the consequences of violence. Crisis situations may provide an optimum opportunity for successful intervention. We identified several programs that leverage the resources available through emergency rooms to facilitate intervention efforts, as noted in Appendix D.
- Expand participation in all local schools to teach youth about the consequences of gang violence, as well as to facilitate dispute resolution. In addition to the targeted efforts of Bridges I and Bridges II, we found positive results from several school-based prevention/intervention efforts, as noted in Appendix D.
- The saturation of suppression efforts in gang “hot zones” should not only be balanced by the saturation of social service targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry services, but must also include *joint* law enforcement and social service efforts. Such joint efforts have been particularly problematic in Los Angeles, given the relatively limited law enforcement personnel available to LAPD to partner with social service agencies. Specifically, Los Angeles has historically placed fewer resources into policing or suppression efforts when compared to other large cities throughout the nation. Illustratively, there are approximately 9,300 police officers in Los Angeles City to police approximately 468 square

miles.³⁵ In comparison, New York encompasses 321 square miles and has a police force of 42,000.³⁶ Los Angeles' comparatively small police force stunts its potential for thorough community policing, and greatly limits the ability of LAPD to partner with service agencies in a manner that will be required for a comprehensive gang reduction strategy. As our analysis of funding shortages for service programming reflects, difficult decisions will need to be made and, given these limitations, all parties must substantially commit limited resources for such a strategy to succeed.

This does not mean that law enforcement and social service efforts are merely co-located in the same area, each doing their own thing, but rather requires the presence of each in the same area to participate in targeted services together. In part, this depends on encouraging the perception among those wanting to leave the gang life that the police, along with social service agencies, will be on their side. While there have been challenges to creating such joint efforts in the past (e.g. LAPD Drop-In centers at CLASS Parks and a breakdown in YAP referrals prior to 2007), improvements could be made as noted in Appendix D.

- The City should employ reentry programs that assist in the transition from incarceration back into society, and that provide wrap-around services to those with a desire to exit the gang lifestyle, as noted in Appendix D.
- Given the gender-specific factors associated with gang involvement, the City must expand female-responsive services in its prevention, intervention and reentry programs. While there is a shortage of research revealing “proven” practices in serving the female gang population, some promising components—including life skills services—should be considered, as discussed further in Appendix D.
- Partnering with philanthropic, volunteer communities, and faith-based groups could substantially increase the resources—both monetary and human—available to the City's gang reduction strategy. While the relative success of these programs themselves have generally not been measured, several municipalities have tapped into these unconventional resources and have developed innovative ways to harness the resources around them, as noted in Appendix D.

We list these here with the hopes that the City chooses to face these challenges during the first year of implementation—rather than waiting and allowing the same shortcomings that led to the demise of many promising programs to impact the City's new approach. In light of this, the city should also look to a number of promising practices that are emerging elsewhere in the gang response field, some of which were noted in the discussion above.

³⁵ See http://www.lapdonline.org/search_results/content_basic_view/1120.

³⁶ See <http://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/crimerep.html>.

Invest in Long-Term Training of Program Administrators and Monitors, and Contracted Service Providers

Throughout the course of our review, several City employees and CBO personnel mentioned that future program development must incorporate additional training and enhanced expertise. It is important to note that most CBOs indicated significant improvements in the way CDD has been managing the contracts, monitoring their services, and in generally working collaboratively with them. At the same time, however, both CBOs and CDD personnel pointed out areas that could be improved, including:

- Case management training and certification for CBOs augmented by “in-service” training
- Shifting the focus of case management away from “record keeping” and toward better service delivery
- Expertise in monitoring non-profit organizations from a performance perspective
- Providing CBOs with guidance in identifying and partnering with other agencies to provide “wrap-around” services
- Developing intervention and other youth programming
- Performance monitoring and process evaluation to be completed and used to inform program planning and funding

As the City develops a more robust youth development and gang reduction strategy, focuses additional resources to provide more targeted services, and builds collaborative relationships with its service providers, it will engage in activities in which it has little experience. Such activities include intensive needs assessments, program evaluation, performance-based monitoring and process evaluations, among other strategies. Further, program enhancements will require that additional demands be placed on service providers—demands to demonstrate success, demands to deliver new or enhanced services, demands to target additional subsets of “at-risk” populations, demands to enhance case management and referral services, and in some cases demands to standardize service delivery models. These will require continued training, education, and staff development, which will in turn require that the City invest resources to reap long-term benefits.

In collaboration with academic and research institutions and other expert practitioners, the City will need to build this capacity within its ranks. In the short term, this may require some reliance on various external resources with expertise in the subject matters noted above. However, to avoid any long-term reliance on external contractors, the City must utilize these resources to develop the expertise internally.

Recommendations

To ensure that the gang reduction strategy is designed to provide core services to those most at risk of future gang involvement, the City should:

- Streamline the general youth and family development programs that currently exist by merging core program components into a more comprehensive continuum of services. In doing so, the City should:
- Devise an administrative process that is flexible enough to allow program delivery to fit the unique needs of individual communities and to provide a broad range of services that each community could utilize. This is particularly crucial to reduce gaps in those communities that are not included in the proposed GRZs.
- Reduce or eliminate gaps in service associated with:
 - Undocumented residents
 - Elementary and high school children and youth
 - “At-risk” females
 - Program accessibility
 - Mental health
- Overhaul targeted prevention programs to effectively address both “at-risk” communities and the youth that are most at risk of joining gangs. To achieve this, the City should:
 - Focus on community-level and individual-level prevention programs, as well as creating more robust diversion services.
 - Streamline activities to better ensure consistency during programmatic reviews.
 - Address full needs of clients by halting program-specific client intake and assessments.
 - Assess the interaction between risk factors in determining if a youth is at a high risk of future gang involvement—e.g. a youth who conforms to cultural norms supporting gang behavior, with family members that are in a gang, exhibits trouble in school, has friends who use drugs or who are gang members, and has a proclivity for excitement and trouble. The risk factors used should be better focused so as to more accurately identify youth at the highest risk for gang involvement. We recommend that youth be evaluated according to a pre-determined hierarchy of gang-specific risk factors.
 - Devise contractual incentives for agencies to provide services to those most in need and most at risk—including accounting for risk factors (and other barriers to service delivery) in performance measurement and allowing for longer-term success. As such, agencies contracted to perform targeted prevention work must be encouraged.
 - Develop a functional referral network to reach youth that are most at risk of engaging in future gang activity.
- Expand and refine intervention, mediation and peacekeeping efforts.

- Ensure some level of required expertise, knowledge, and agreed-upon methodology for intervention efforts, while maintaining room for innovation.
- Focus efforts first on developing standards for intervention workers, and second on implementing contractual controls that allow the City to better hold its contractors accountable.
- Required intervention workers to pass formal training, be subject to on-the-job-training, incorporate best practices of other outreach workers, and sign ethics pledges.
- Require intervention agencies with street peace and street intervention programs to comply with certain operational requirements, including professional supervision and oversight.
- Implement a process that will ensure a background investigation of all individuals that work for CBOs and interact with children has been conducted and has passed minimum requirements.
- Determine the minimum requirements that allow individuals to work with children as well as the best method to deliver the services.
- Increase reentry services as part of existing intervention efforts to generate increased opportunities and resources available to those in need, and to provide alternatives to continued gang involvement.
 - Ensure that incarcerated youth receive reentry services prior to release (to prepare for the transition) and immediately following release (to better assure that youth in the reentry programs see results).
 - Strategically target core reentry services in the most disadvantaged communities with the highest proportion of returning gang members.
 - Ensure that the reentry programs created are pliable enough to provide the services needed in each respective community.
 - Expand on the services currently provided in the City and those prescribed in the Comprehensive Gang Model to ensure reentry services are incorporated.
 - Foster relationships between intervention and reentry workers and the WorkSource, OneSource, and Youth Opportunity centers throughout the City.
- Increase oversight when implementing the proposed gang reduction zones.
 - Ensure adequate leadership, with the full backing of City officials.
 - Ensure that communities not yet considered to be “hot spots” are adequately considered in deploying prevention, intervention, reentry and suppression programs, as the needs assessments and concentrated resources in GRZs will likely overshadow the needs of other communities.

- Employ a long-term perspective to identify crime trends, and incorporate other socio-economic factors (including reentry needs) in assessing the future of existing GRZs and the potential expansion of others.
- Ensure sufficient timelines are employed with all future needs assessments, as this has been a factor leading to implementation difficulties in other cities.
- Ensure the consistency in both the methodologies used and information presented when engaging experts (city personnel or contracted experts) to conduct needs assessments.
- Continually critique the GRZ model, apply concrete assessment measures to identify weaknesses, and make appropriate adjustments on an ongoing basis. If weaknesses become apparent, leadership must make them known to City policy-makers and devise solutions.
- Invest in long-term training of program administrators and monitors, and contracted service providers.

Section VI—Establish Rigorous Performance Measures and Conduct Evaluations of Both City and Contracted Programs

Despite the proliferation of gang prevention, intervention, and suppression programs throughout Los Angeles and the United States, there have been very few thorough outcome evaluations of these programs. A detailed literature review reveals that the vast majority of gang reduction programs throughout the United States have not engaged in any formal evaluations. Of the few that have, evaluations have largely measured short-term, community level outcomes, and have not addressed the long-term, individual level results for decreasing gang membership and gang-related violence.³⁷

In Los Angeles, the challenge of effective program evaluation is especially meaningful. Without a clear and consistent strategy for evaluating both current and proposed targeted gang prevention and intervention efforts, the City faces a situation in which there is no mechanism for determining what is and what is not working and making funding decisions on that basis. It is imperative that a city-wide policy regarding data reporting and evaluation methods for targeted gang prevention, intervention, and reentry programs be established and funded by the City. Only through systematic evaluation and measures that are directly linked to the goals of funded programs will the City be able to develop effective and efficient, evidence-based models on which to focus its efforts.

To meet the challenge of the Los Angeles gang problem, any new approach undertaken must incorporate a robust research and evaluation unit that will evaluate and provide objective analysis of citywide anti-gang efforts. To accomplish this goal, a research and evaluation unit should be established within the new Anti-gang Office and overseen by an expert housed in the new organizational structure. This unit would be responsible to:

- ***Create and implement a comprehensive performance measure and evaluation process that extends beyond contract monitoring***
- ***Develop a performance evaluation model for anti-gang and youth development programs***
- ***Create an independent research and evaluation unit within the new Anti-gang Office***
- ***Incorporate performance measures of the City's targeted prevention, intervention, reentry, and suppression efforts as part of a gang reduction strategy***
- ***Improve information sharing and data collection***
- ***Foster partnerships with the independent research community to leverage expertise***
- ***Evaluate City departments efforts at delivering programs in addition to contracted agencies***

³⁷ "Responding to Gangs: Evaluation and Research", edited by Winifred L. Reed and Scott H. Decker. National Institute of Justice. www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/190351.pdf.

Historically, the City has held contract providers accountable strictly for contract administrative requirements. Paying attention to only technical requirements of a contract leaves the City unable to critically assess and proactively measure results and optimize service delivery—and it relieves responsible City officials and administrators of accountability for serving the changing needs of city residents. While a new organizational structure will not magically produce change, it will provide the infrastructure necessary to present one voice to the City’s regional partners, identify community needs, focus funding, develop programming, and—most importantly here—to objectively evaluate the City’s efforts and report to elected officials on the progress and impact of the City’s overall gang reduction efforts.

Moreover, by developing the level of internal expertise able to perform this function, the City will at the same time be developing a research and evaluation unit that could offer the City a resource that has been significantly lacking for decades by assisting and training departments in identifying their desired program objectives and outcomes as well as developing performance evaluation procedures. Such capacity would enable City departments to determine whether their programs successfully meet established goals and objectives.

Create and Implement a Comprehensive Performance Evaluation Process that Extends Beyond Contract Monitoring

Currently, the City does not have the data, tools, or programs to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of gangs or other related social services. Rather, some small scale evaluations have addressed discrete issues such as delinquency performance measures, changes in truancy rates, or evaluators looking at an entity’s adherence with administrative contract provisions and basic contract compliance. Further, some studies conducted have produced inconsistent results making it difficult to determine which results should be considered in redesigning or funding programs. Without a well-designed process to adequately evaluate performance, the City has little basis from which to determine whether its anti-gang and youth development programs are achieving desired results, whether enhancements or modifications should be made, or on what basis to make future funding decisions.

During the past decade, the City has undertaken a number of evaluations to assess its gang reduction programs. For example, the Community Development Department (CDD) anti-gang programs, LA Bridges I and II, have undergone evaluations aimed at measuring the overall program performance and effectiveness of their programs. Two reviews related to the Bridges I program were completed within one year of each other and offered differing perspectives of the program. The first evaluation, issued by the prior City Controller in March 2000, concluded that LA Bridges I was not implemented in accordance with its objectives, had no significant or measurable impact on neighborhood crime, and recommended that the program be discontinued. In contrast, a second evaluation study, commissioned by CDD and performed by Vital Research, LLC released in March 2001, concluded that the LA Bridges I program had been implemented as designed and the goals and objectives of the program were being achieved.

Similarly, the LA Bridges II program, one of the only citywide intervention programs funded by the City, was also reviewed by the City Controller and Vital Research, LLC and again received conflicting recommendations for improvement. Specifically, reviewers (or agencies) criticized Bridges II for not clearly defining its goals and objectives, not establishing key linkages with another key stakeholder (e.g. Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)), and not being able to demonstrate the results of its efforts (e.g. reduction in gang-related crime). However, the Controller and Vital Research differed significantly in how to rectify these challenges. At that time, the City Controller recommended that the Bridges II program be discontinued. In contrast, the Vital Research suggested that the Program should not be evaluated on such broad terms, but be modified to better define goals, objectives, and achievable outcomes.

In addition to the inconsistencies and methodological challenges faced by evaluations of both programs, none of the evaluations considered the long-term impacts of either program. No longitudinal studies of Bridges participants have ever been conducted to determine whether early targeted prevention or the intervention efforts aligned with the programs fulfilled the ultimate goals of keeping children out of gangs and reducing gang violence.

Furthermore, alongside limited data collection and minimal performance goals established for Bridges program providers under their contract with CDD, contract monitoring has replaced performance evaluation. The focus has been on administrative contract compliance components and basic input data such as documenting the number of referrals serviced by the program, tracking the number of clients enrolled, and tracking the number of clients who reach initial “stabilization” within six months. Unfortunately, while this information may be useful in determining the volume of activity within the programs, such data cannot be used to assess the impact and true outcome of services being offered or determining whether youth stayed out of gangs on a long-term basis.

The City is aware of the obvious need for improvements. In order to clearly demonstrate whether programs, such as the LA Bridges I or II, are serving the public interest by “keeping kids out of gangs,” the City’s new approach must implement a comprehensive strategy that includes tying funding to program outcomes. In order to maximize resources, assess results, and determine the most effective strategies, the City must require that all programs include performance measures, substantive data collection, and program evaluation efforts. Not only will performance measures tied to program objectives allow for consistent data reporting and long-term evaluation of programs, they will also provide the essential data and tools for the City to assess performance of City department program providers as well as individual community-based organizations (CBOs). It is only through a deliberate process supported by reliable evaluation information that the City can fully determine the success of its programs, and the relative success of individual CBOs, and thereby will have the information it needs to make decisions regarding the termination of unresponsive or unsuccessful CBOs and programs.

Develop a Performance Evaluation Model for Anti-Gang and Youth Development Programs

The City must incorporate a comprehensive program evaluation strategy within the framework of its anti-gang programs that would determine the specific goals and objectives of each program, delineate the specific related performance measures for each goal and objective, and require the collecting and reporting of the supporting needed data. Using information reported by departmental and CBO program provider, assessments of outcomes and results can be completed.

It is crucial that the City commit to a full scale evaluation of all of its efforts to respond to gangs. However, the City can not fully build the evaluation model before it develops its programs. Such a backwards strategy would allow the evaluation model to dictate the development of the program components. At the same time, the City cannot develop programs with the hopes of developing an evaluation model down the road. As has been aptly demonstrated, this results in perpetual delays in creating any evaluation model at all. Instead, the City must devise the two in conjunction with one another. Undoubtedly, some external expertise will need to be consulted during this process, but the City must ensure that the City personnel involved in the new programs are fully engaged in both aspects. One approach would be to build into every new contract the requirement that specific data elements be collected and made available to the City for use with an evaluation, whether that evaluation was ultimately conducted by a City or external entity. This is being done in a limited capacity with many of CDD's contracted agencies. This approach would provide timely data to program evaluators for assessment, who in turn must be assured that the data collected is accurate and reliable—part of the role of program monitors, as discussed in Section IV.

Providers should be held accountable to meet expected results or targeted goals and funding and program-continuation should be premised on meeting or surpassing such goals. While the new Anti-gang Office's Interdisciplinary Community Assessment Teams (ICATs) will be primarily responsible for performing in depth community-wide needs assessments at each of the proposed Gang Reduction Zones (GRZs) and other selected areas transitioning or challenged by gang activity, the new Anti-gang Office will also be responsible for creating performance evaluation models for all of the City's Anti-gang and youth development programs. The proposed GRZs are in the process of implementing a performance evaluation system that is based on the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP) model that guides many gang reduction efforts across the nation and appears to capture many key components that would be represented in a good evaluation model. The OJJDP model incorporates identifying the following:

- Problems—these are defined in relation to the program's mission and is specific to issues the program will address. Generally, this component should accurately or concisely spell out:
 - “who” the program is
 - “what” it is intended to do

- “why” its existence is important
- “who” it benefits
- Goals and Objectives—By definition, goals are targets and objectives are tangible measures of those goals. Typically, objectives are set through a strategic planning process and should directly address the mission and goals. Performance is measured against the programs goals and objectives. The Federal Office of Management and Budget identifies the following as characteristics of good performance goals:
 - Relevant to the core mission of the program and to the result the program is intended to achieve—“quality over quantity.”
 - Provide information that helps make budget decisions.
 - Understandable to the users of what is being measured.
 - Feasible, but not the path of least resistance. Choose performance goals based on the relevancy of the outcomes and not for other reasons, such as having good data on a less relevant measure.
 - Administrators and providers must in concert work toward the goals—the outcome of the effort is what is important.
- Activities—Listings of the program efforts (services, activities, actions) designed to achieve its goals and objectives.
- Performance Measures—Indicators that are used to measure the outcome of program performance. Performance measures should tie directly to the programs’ goals and objectives and relate to each of the key activities:
 - Measures need to be quantifiable and attainable.
 - Should provide useful managerial information relative to the outcomes and results of programs.

Measures must be outcome-based information on program inputs, such as how many people were served, provides no useful data. Part of developing measures is determining the data to be collected and ensuring such data can accurately and appropriately be aggregated to make the measurement.

Create an Independent Research and Evaluation Unit within the New Anti-gang Office

The City must utilize valid and reliable research methods (both qualitative and quantitative) in developing and assessing the performance measures for each of the City’s anti-gang programs. Contracts awarded by the new Anti-gang Office should include the performance measures established for the program as well as conveying the data to be collected and the format and period of reporting data. Staff hired by CBOs and the City may not have the necessary skill sets to accurately collect or calculate performance metrics and may need training to do so. It is not uncommon for governmental agencies to

employ professional researchers with various fields of expertise, but it does not appear that the City currently utilizes Civil Service classifications for such employees. It is also unlikely, given the urgency to reinvent youth development and gang reduction programming and the necessity to devise evaluation methodologies in conjunction with implementing the new programs, that the City will have sufficient time to hire in-house expertise or to build the internal expertise through training current employees. As such, we recommend that the City build an independent research and evaluation unit within the new Anti-gang Office with City employees, consult with the Personnel Department regarding implications of this on employee classifications, and engage the external research community to (1) devise the research and evaluation models to be used during the program development phase and (2) to begin building the in-house expertise the City will need in the long-term.

Moreover, CBOs and other program providers may need training to collect and report the essential data elements essential for evaluation. As such, the City must also assess the expertise it needs to employ in designing and implementing critical programs. Such expertise includes knowledge of current subject-specific research, program evaluation, program management, performance measurement and various administrative and practical experiences necessary for implementation such as expertise in case management.

One recommendation is for the new Anti-gang Office to create an independent Research and Evaluation Unit to work in conjunction with program developers to ensure that measures and evaluation align. This unit would be dedicated to creating performance evaluation models for the City's anti-gang and youth development programs, interpreting the data and developing the findings, offering recommendations for improvement, and tracking follow-up. Additionally, the new unit would develop the necessary expertise on sharing knowledge and information as well as developing strategies for needs assessments and program development. This unit would produce studies and reports sufficient not only to evaluate the performance of the City's anti-gang service providers and programs, but also to assist City departments and general managers in identifying their desired program outcomes as well as developing performance evaluation procedures. With information derived from the research and performance evaluation unit, City officials and program managers would have sufficient information that would reveal:

- Success or lack thereof in programs and vendors among the target population,
- Failure to adequately reach the target population,
- Organizational or operational inefficiencies that reduce the impact of limited resources, and
- New research that identifies other promising practices in addition to any successes in current practices.

This unit could act as the “clearinghouse” of critical information regarding “best” and “promising” practices throughout the nation, as well as information relating to City efforts that could also inform other jurisdictions. Through research conducted for this

study, as well as those cited in the Advancement Project, hundreds of studies focusing on the gang problem have been identified, many of which examined the unique challenges facing Los Angeles. It is imperative that those managing programs to serve gang and “at-risk” youth populations be familiar with the most recent research available—even if it was not commissioned by the City. The primary reasons why a unit within the new Anti-gang Office is recommended include:

- Remaining familiar with best practices research is a full time job, and
- Literature is often written in such a manner that the lay practitioner may not be able to understand.

There are existing examples of research and evaluation units that the City can use as models from which to build. Cities, States, the Federal Government and numerous municipalities have adopted performance measures and evaluations to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of public services.

The failure to capture data regarding the nature, characteristics, and impact of the local gang problem and responses to that problem will diminish the City’s ability to identify community needs and lead to errors in the development of targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry programs. Such failure will also reduce the ability to evaluate the relative success of a gang reduction. If the City does not understand its local gang problem and the impact its programming has on the gang problem, it is likely to replicate errors in future policy, practice and programming.

Further, this proposed Unit should play a critical role in assessing the progress of the office within the initial six months of implementation. This type process-oriented evaluation of the implementation of the new organizational structure and the new strategies is critical to ensure a successful implementation. It is recommended for many large projects that the project team initiate audits or assessments by the time that 25 percent of services have been delivered. By doing this, evaluators can identify potential pitfalls that could derail the implementation down the road. In establishing a new gang reduction strategy, we recommend incorporating process-oriented evaluations during the initial stages of implementation, perhaps through the use of an “embedded” research partner—which is considered an outstanding way to address the need for regular evaluation feedback.

Overall, such a unit would give the City a resource that has been significantly lacking for decades and would enable departments to determine if they have successfully realized the City’s desired outcomes. The proposed unit could also work in conjunction with more independent, external groups responsible for conducting large scale outcome evaluations and compliment their work.

Incorporate Performance Measures of the City’s Targeted Prevention, Intervention, Reentry, and Suppression Efforts as Part of a Gang Reduction Strategy

An effective evaluation strategy will seek to conceptualize and assess youth in their behavioral environment and their community. In developing an evaluation strategy, it is essential to understand the approaches that have been utilized in the past. Due to the variety of program types and outcomes in gang-related programs, evaluations take on many different forms. Over 50 gang targeted prevention, intervention, and combination programs were reviewed for this report. These studies varied primarily in the following three areas: methodology; length of time spent on the evaluation; and choice of outcome measures. Refer to Appendix E for a detailed listing of the studies that were examined for their designation of risk factors and the associated measures used to assess change.

Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches Must Focus on Targeted Prevention, Intervention, Reentry, and Suppression Activities

To effectively evaluate the performance of the City’s new gang reduction strategy, evaluations must involve rigorous qualitative and quantitative measures and be designed to address targeted prevention, intervention, reentry, and suppression efforts, respectively (refer to Appendix A for definitions). However, it should be kept in mind that while evaluation methodologies must remain consistent from year to year to identify any reliable trends, the City should make continual adjustments and improvements to its evaluation model. In this manner, the Research and Evaluation Unit will be able to produce the kind of substantive performance evaluation model that will provide the information needed by the City’s policy-makers to aid in thoughtful decision-making. The following discussion outlines the performance measures we believe will provide a sufficient basis to determine success in targeted prevention, intervention, reentry, and suppression efforts.

One of the primary tasks of the proposed Research and Evaluation Unit will be to not only select appropriate performance measures, but to “operationalize” these measures. Once a performance measure is selected, the Unit will then determine which method and instrument can be used to measure change. For example, school performance may be assessed by a combination of quantitative measures of grades, truancy, and attendance. Conversely, parent satisfaction may be assayed through focus groups and in-depth interviews. There are a variety of scales designed to assess intangibles such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and life-outcome expectancy, quality of life in adolescents, conduct problems, and clinical anger.

In outlining the following guidelines for performance measures of the City’s gang reduction strategy, it is important to recognize that, to date, the City has focused exclusively on proving negatives—that an individual *did not* join a gang or that an individual *was not* a victim of gang-related homicide. We do not believe that the goal of “anti-gang” programs should be solely focused on proving negatives; rather, the goal of gang reduction strategies must be much broader. Gang prevention or intervention *must*

only be considered a success when those whose lives could be lost to gang violence (as perpetrators or as victims) are turned around and move closer to achieving self-sufficiency.

- Targeted Prevention: The City's targeted prevention efforts have at best assessed success through short-term measures. In the Bridges I Program, successes are measured by increased academic performance and attendance while in the program. But, targeted prevention programs are ultimately designed to do one thing: to provide program participants with the resources and opportunities needed in order to prevent gang membership, involvement, or activities throughout the life of that participant. Improved academic performance in middle school is a performance measure that reflects success if it contributes to the youth's successful navigation through adolescence and into adulthood without engaging in gang activity.

Additionally, evaluative efforts must emphasize the risk factors that make it more likely that a youth will engage in gang activity. Specifically, the City should utilize the same risk factors used to identify the youth "most at risk" of joining gangs when they enter targeted prevention programs by determining if the prevention program has been successful in reducing the youth's risk of engaging in gang activity. Such factors include individual, peer group, school, family, and neighborhood risk factors.

We recognize the potential difficulties in conducting long-term assessments in highly transient communities, a characteristic typical of high-crime, socially disorganized communities where gangs proliferate. Nevertheless, it is not possible to assess the success of targeted prevention efforts without determining if participants became gang involved after leaving the program. To truly determine success, longitudinal data gathering should occur through age 20 to 25 for as many participants as can be tracked. For those that cannot be tracked, program evaluators should compare LAPD's and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's (LASD) list of gang members to determine if any participants were added to the list after leaving the targeted prevention programs (even while recognizing the potential shortcomings of this approach). It is also suggested that the new Anti-gang Office engage in data sharing with the state-wide CalGangs database.

Finally, such assessments will only be useful inasmuch as the program administrators and practitioners ensure they are serving *those youth most at risk* of future gang involvement. If targeted prevention program participants are less likely to become involved in gangs, longitudinal assessments revealing that they did not engage in gang activities is less an indicator of program success as it is an indicator that they were never truly at risk of joining a gang.

- Intervention: Intervention programs, more than anything else, are about helping people that want to change—but often feel they cannot—and leading them through the reentry process. Intervention consists of both short-term efforts to

interrupt violence and more long-term efforts to assist individuals in leaving gangs and re-entering society. As noted previously, this pertains to both youth involved in street gangs, or those incarcerated as a result of their involvement in gangs. Just as it is for targeted prevention efforts, evaluating the success of intervention services must be a long-term endeavor.

In the end, such a system of measurement could also serve a positive ancillary effect: it would allow the City to evaluate the differential success of each of the intervention agencies contracted by the City. More than allowing the City to identify better performing agencies, it would enable the City to more effectively determine which intervention practices are more successful than others.

- Reentry: Assessment of reentry programs must begin with the collection of longitudinal profiles of reentry program participants. Their job and family histories (e.g. reduced domestic violence, reduced child abuse), gang-related offences as tracked by arrests, ability to “stay out of jail” and not appear in probation or incarceration data must be measured. Reentry is where much longitudinal work would need to be designed and completed. Such work would also involve other city and county departments, such as County Departments of Children and Family Services, Mental Health, and Probation.
- Suppression: Ultimately, the success of suppression activities must be measured by the occurrence of crime. Law enforcement agencies rely almost exclusively on data gathered from incidents reported to them, or to which they have responded. But, there are other methods to assess criminal activity, including victimization surveys (similar to the National Crime Victimization Survey conducted annually by the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Statistics) and self report surveys, as well as less conventional methods such as “shots fired” reports called in to 911 dispatch centers and gunshot wounds treated by emergency room trauma centers. While not all methods can or will be employed, it is critical that the City rely on more than one method to measure the occurrence of crime.

Furthermore, effectively measuring the occurrence of crime requires a level of standardization in how data is collected that is currently not available. In fact, the City and the County generally resist standardizing protocols for data collection, and data sharing with end-users. Inconsistencies in crime reporting exist among law enforcement agencies throughout the nation. The problem, of course, is that to develop a regional gang reduction strategy, the region’s partners must speak the same language—gang membership and gang crime must be consistently understood by each party. Without clear definitions, program development and any evaluation of success will be inherently flawed. The following factors must be addressed:

- Consistency must be enhanced as LAPD gathers gang crime information. Specifically, an agreement must be reached regarding whether “gang crime” includes member-based or motive-based incidents, or both. According to the OJJDP, “a motive-based incident is generally thought to

be one that furthers the ends of the gang; [and] a member-based incident is simply one that involves a gang member, regardless of what prompted the commission of the crime.”³⁸ Based on our interviews, incidents may be categorized inconsistently between LAPD divisions, and among other law enforcement agencies.

- In devising consistent definitions to be used within LAPD, the City must consider how these definitions differ from those produced by LASD. We are not suggesting that the City or the County defer to the other in devising these definitions—as there may be legitimate reasons why one prefers one definition while the other prefers another. We are suggesting, however, that these differences be recognized and minimized. This could be as simple as classifying a “gang” in multiple ways, so as to facilitate internal and regional analyses.
- The Los Angeles School Police Department (LASPD) must be brought into the process of identifying which incidents are related to gangs. Currently, LASPD does not classify any crime or incidents occurring on school campuses as “gang related.” There may be many reasons for this, but the region cannot tackle the gang problem head-on unless all regional partners recognize the problem and are willing to measure the significance of the problem.

Finally, equal in importance to the measurement of crime as it occurs is the measurement of the public perception of crime and safety. Public perception of safety is an important measure of success that should not be ignored.

- Qualitative Approaches: Program evaluation has long been linked to “hard numbers” and statistical outcomes provided by quantitative methodology to demonstrate how effectively a program is working. However, these quantitative methods may be complimented by qualitative methods that can capture the implementation of the program. For example, school performance measures may measure quantitative changes in attendance, grades, suspensions, student reports of feeling safe, victimization reports, while they can also be enhanced through qualitative methodologies. A mixed methods approach used creatively and rigorously—one cannot be used in lieu of another—fulfills this role and responsibility.

Table 5 on the following page originally developed for an evaluation of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) YouthLEAD program, portrays major qualitative evaluation strategies that can be used, in varying degrees, by the City of Los Angeles. It is critical to remember that these qualitative methods are also recommended for use during needs assessment, process evaluation, and outcome evaluation. It is important to stress that these cannot replace quantitative methods and are intended to compliment such research and evaluation strategies.

³⁸ Institute for Intergovernmental Research. *OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem*, 2002, p. 39.

Table 5. “Qualitative Evaluation Strategies³⁹”

Methodological Approach	Data	Process
Content Analysis	Documents	Content analysis: documents summarized (will be independently coded for recurrent themes at specified time intervals (e.g. on a yearly basis))
Depth Interviews, Focus Groups	Program leaders, participants, case managers, school and community professionals, community leaders, community members, and other key informants.	Interviews summarized and analyzed (will be independently coded for recurrent themes on a yearly basis); Focus group material transcribed, analyzed and coded.
Direct Ethnographic Observation	Observations <i>without</i> participation by assessment and/or evaluation team.	Ethnographic notes transcribed, summarized (will be independently coded for recurrent themes on a yearly basis)
Participant Observation	Observations <i>with</i> participation by assessment and/or evaluation team.	Field notes transcribed, summarized (will be independently coded for recurrent themes on a yearly basis)

While qualitative methodologies can add significant value and insight to more traditional quantitative analyses, the fact remains that each methodology is designed to answer different sets of questions. Qualitative approaches allow researchers to “dig deeper” into nuances pertaining to individual participants, and (hopefully) to come to more general conclusions as a result. Process evaluations enable both researchers and programs to understand strengths and challenges in the implementation process, allowing programs to make necessary changes to enhance program outcomes. These approaches are, however, generally more costly than quantitative approaches.

Finally, to be effective, performance evaluation must be a long-term endeavor and include measures of crime, family, individual, school, and community. This is of particular importance as the Mayor’s Office has begun to develop the GRZs. While performance measures are being incorporated into the design of the GRZs, the current performance measures under discussion appear to assess only short-term outcomes. It is unclear how much funding will be available for performance measures and whether quantitative measures beyond crime statistics can be assayed along with ethnographic and qualitative data. Refer to Appendix E for a list of performance measures and risk factors that could be considered recognizing that such lists are not without their own shortcomings.

³⁹ The following chart is a modified version of a chart that appeared in the "Year One Evaluation of the Los Angeles Unified School District YouthLEAD Program" authored by Jorja M. Leap and Todd M. Franke, 2007. A second version of the chart appeared in the "Program Evaluation for Communities in Schools Anti-Gang Program," authored by Jorja M. Leap, 2007.

Improve Information Sharing and Data Collection

An effective performance evaluation system requires that the City employ a comprehensive data collection system. One of the first challenges faced by the new Anti-gang Office is to ensure that the kind of data necessary for performance evaluation is gathered in an on-going, efficient manner. However, the myriad of challenges already described throughout this report are compounded by an absence of reliable data to ascertain program successes and results as well as inadequate systems from which to share. While CDD has been in the process for the last several years to develop a system to serve this purpose, it has not been implemented across all youth development and anti-gang programs. As a consequence it is unclear whether the most vulnerable youths are receiving needed services.

Currently, the City employs one system with the general capability of providing a central repository of information related to youth and family programs. Drawing upon the expertise of the City's Information Technology Agency, CDD created the Integrated Services Information System (ISIS), which allows case managers and agency administrators to track client case information through an internet-based interface. ISIS provides enrollment, demographic, service, and performance information, including key performance measures of the client's progress, such as school performance for core students, services provided to core clients and their families, services provided to non-core clients and their families, a summary of activity and services provided to clients, and a comprehensive listing of services provided to clients by all agencies. It tracks this information for each client and any member of the client's family who receives services.

While ISIS is used to maintain and track client data for all of CDD programs,⁴⁰ as well as the Mayor's Gang Reduction Program (GRP) in Boyle Heights, it is not utilized by any of the City's other key programs serving the City's at-risk youth, including youth participating in the Department of Recreation and Parks' (RAP) Clean and Safe Spaces (CLASS) Park program, girls participating in the Young Women From Adversity to Resiliency (YWAR) program, youth participating in any of LAPD or City Attorney-administered diversion programs, or youth participating in any of the programs offered by the City's proprietary programs. Our fieldwork did not entail a full scale systems analysis; consequently we are not able to recommend that the City expand its use of ISIS as its information tracking system at this time. Prior reports issued by the City Controller did, however, note deficiencies related to the accuracy, consistency and completeness of ISIS data, which diminished the City's ability to ensure it received the services it paid for, and limited the quality of data available upon which to base future program evaluations. While it is not clear whether the City should expand its use of ISIS, or look into the implementation of alternatives, it is imperative that the City employ a comprehensive data collection system that enables the accurate, timely, and reliable

⁴⁰ As of the end of our fieldwork, CDD indicated that ISIS was implementing a module to capture Bridges II data, which has been manually tracked to date.

reporting of information across programs and even across departments that can be used to develop critical performance statistics.

Further, unnecessary barriers in information sharing exist between these programs. CDD operates workforce development, youth and family development, and gang prevention programs. Information regarding the program participants is entered into CDDs ISIS, but participant information is not shared between programs. As such, an adult enrolled at a WorkSource Center may also have their family enrolled at a Family Development Network site and their child enrolled at a Bridges I after school program. In such a scenario, three different case managers would have to serve the same client without the benefit of the insights of or coordination with the other case managers assisting them. Additionally, families have reported that three case managers, one representing each program, can all show up at their home in one day! Adequate information sharing through ISIS could substantially reduce duplicate efforts—such as multiple individual needs assessments—and would provide service workers the information they need to better assist their clients.

Whether through ISIS or another data gathering system, the information system used must capture data necessary to meet state and federal reporting requirements, but must also be designed to capture the additional data that could facilitate useful analysis and program evaluation. Most of the ISIS program modules, with the exception of the Bridges module, are primarily designed to capture data required for grant reporting, but has the capability for much more.

While employing a comprehensive and functional data gathering system is necessary, not all information needed will be collected by service providers. In some cases, information will need to be obtained through some of the City's regional partners, such as LAUSD, Probation and LASD, and other agencies. For instance, without student data related to grades, attendance, and behavior, RAP is unable to determine the effectiveness of their programs—specifically, the CLASS Parks program that is targeted at “at-risk” youth. As observed by the Advancement Project, obtaining this information requires, as is discussed in the first section, effective coordination between the County, LAUSD, City, and other regional partners.

Foster Partnerships with the Independent Research Community to Leverage Expertise

In the past, a myriad of independent and academic research and assessments have been conducted dealing with children, youth, and their families in Los Angeles. However, many of the findings and recommendations made have been ignored, perhaps because they were not coordinated. In the short term the City needs to build its expertise in performance measurement and developing criteria and methods for longitudinal studies. Its goal should be to develop the internal expertise needed to operate a high-quality research and evaluation unit, however, additional external expertise can be leveraged by partnering with universities and research institutions throughout the Los Angeles region.

The new Anti-gang Office should be responsible for fostering the ongoing development of a relationship with a “research and training consortium” made up of Los Angeles-based research universities and graduate schools, think tanks, and independent research institutions that can offer varying levels of expertise to the City on topics and research related to at-risk youth, community strengthening and gang reduction. Additionally, several community based organizations accepted opportunities from those types of research institutions to be evaluated (UCLA and CSU Northridge) and the result was that the CBOs received independent and scholarly feedback regarding their programs. Such efforts have results beyond immediate program improvement as they can be used to enhance grant proposals.

Additionally, a “research and training consortium” can also provide in-service training and support to case managers and gang outreach workers. This consortium can build upon the gang worker certification program offered by California State University, Los Angeles, Pat Brown Institute.

The research community throughout Los Angeles provides an immensely valuable, and mostly untapped, resource for the City. At a minimum, we believe that the City should develop and open its doors to a consortium of local universities to facilitate the independent research of faculty and students. The City should make a proactive effort to invite research—not necessarily the policy oriented research that it wants—but any proposed research that relates to city programs and processes.

Evaluate City Departments Efforts at Delivering Programs in Addition to Contracted Agencies

A successfully implemented gang reduction strategy requires a great deal of effort on the part of program administrators and monitors. The results of this effort must also be evaluated. This will also send the powerful organizational message that can ultimately strengthen collaboration: everyone is accountable.

Through hundreds of interviews, we found only one program—CDD’s Workforce Development Division (WDD)—that had incorporated a performance evaluation system that made a significant effort to evaluate the performance of program administrators and monitors in the same manner that program practitioners were evaluated. In doing so, the WDD created two scorecards, one focusing on the impact of the program in creating jobs and placing residents in those jobs, and the other focusing on the efficiency and effectiveness of the system as a whole (e.g. cost per job placement, audit findings and fiscal impact, client complaints, employee morale, etc.). While there are many methods and tools that can be employed to develop comprehensive scorecards, the objective is the same: to devise a reporting mechanism that reveals successes *and* failures, strengths *and* weaknesses. The development, reporting and use of such a broad array of performance information relating to both outcomes and department performance is crucial to assuring that sufficient information is available to program management and City officials to make decisions regarding the future of existing programs.

At the same time, the WDD has for some time engaged the services of experts at California State University, Northridge, to assist in evaluating the Department's workforce development activities, thereby forging a partnership that harnesses City personnel resources, develops internal expertise, and leverages external expertise found in the region's academic institutions. Despite the general success in establishing a performance evaluation system in the WDD, CDD has not been as successful in expanding this to its youth and family development programs, and the City has not been successful in expanding it to cover all workforce development activities throughout the City.

Just as gang-targeted prevention programs must be evaluated, the performance of city departments, including the new Anti-gang Office, must also be evaluated. These "organizational evaluations" must be subject to the same requirement of scientific design and rigorous program evaluation. As part of this organizational evaluation process, it will also be useful for contracted agencies to participate. This will empower agencies to understand and utilize evaluation from a different perspective: they can participate in the evaluation process while not feeling the anxiety of being evaluated themselves.

Therefore, we recommend that the leader of the new Anti-gang Office submit to the Mayor and Council, on an annual basis, an extensive "scorecard" that details not only the results of the evaluations outlined above, but should also include an annual report detailing the results of its individual program but also critically assess its own performance. Such a report would utilize the results of the performance evaluations and corrective plans and make recommendations for expanding, terminating, or amending existing programs or initiatives.

Overall, the new Anti-gang Office must be responsible for coordinating, maintaining, and performing ongoing evaluation on all gang reduction and youth anti-violence programs. This Anti-gang Office would elevate gang targeted prevention and intervention efforts to a level that is equal to other city departments. The new Anti-gang Office should oversee a research and evaluation unit and all city funded agencies would be required to participate in process and outcome evaluations. The new Anti-gang Office would also build relationships with academics and researchers from private and public research universities as well as private research "think tanks" in the Los Angeles area who can assist the evaluation efforts that will be needed to advance the City's efforts to reduce gang violence.

Recommendations

To help the City establish performance measures that provide objective analysis of city-wide programs that target youth and families most in need, we recommend the following:

- Create a Research and Evaluation Unit within the new Anti-gang Office
- Coordinate, maintain, and perform ongoing evaluation on all gang reduction and youth anti-violence programs. Evaluate City departments programs as well as those conducted by contracted agencies.

- Assist and train City departments on performance evaluation techniques.
- Submit to the Mayor and Council, on an annual basis, a report card that details the results of the citywide evaluations performed by the Research and Evaluation Unit.
- Incorporate a comprehensive program evaluation strategy that extends beyond contract monitoring and within the framework of its anti-gang programs that would determine the specific goals and objectives of each program, determines the specific related performance measures for each goal and objective, and requires the collecting and reporting of the supporting needed data.
- Require that all programs include performance measures, data collection, and program evaluation efforts in order to maximize resources, assess results, determine the most effective strategies, offer recommendations for improvement, and track follow-up.
- Develop performance measures that address targeted prevention, intervention, reentry, and suppression efforts. Then, determine which method and instrument can be used to measure change; devise an evaluation model in conjunction with the development of program components.
- Tie performance measures to program goals and objectives to allow for consistent data reporting and long-term evaluation of programs.
- Determine the data to be collected and ensure such data can accurately and appropriately be aggregated to make the measurement.
- Develop the necessary expertise on sharing knowledge and explore information as well as develop strategies for needs assessments and program development.
- Explore the system capabilities of ISIS that is used in CDD to build a reliable system to capture the necessary data elements to monitor program performance.
- Act as the “clearinghouse” of critical information regarding “best” and “promising” practices throughout the nation.
- Ensure that contracts awarded by the new Anti-gang Office include the performance measures established for the program as well as convey the data to be collected and the format and period of reporting data.
- Terminate unresponsive or unsuccessful vendors and programs as well as identifying those programs and CBOs that successfully, efficiently, and effectively administer the resources available for gang related programs.
- Incorporate evaluation indicators that measure the effect and impact of the City’s targeted prevention, intervention, reentry, and suppression efforts as part of a gang reduction strategy.
- Develop a consortium of local universities to facilitate the independent research of faculty and students.
- Employ a comprehensive data collection system.

Appendix A—Gang Study Program Definitions

The term “Gang” and the strategies to respond to gangs are subject to interpretation with no clear-cut or widely accepted definitions and varying perceptions amongst law enforcement, social scientists, etc. The lack of consistent definitions limits the opportunity for discussion and collaboration as communication is hindered by nonsensical comparisons and general confusion. However, generic definitions are needed to serve as a basis for discussion within our study.

Gang

Gangs are most commonly described as groups of adolescents and young adults who interact frequently with each other and are frequently and deliberately involved in illegal activity—mostly gang fights, turf battles, and criminal enterprises—as part of their life style, and who exhibit “symbols” of gang membership, such as colors, clothing, tattoos, hand signs, or graffiti.

General Prevention

General prevention programs are designed to address all members of a community and are intended to build healthy communities in which gangs are unable to flourish. Programs include workforce development, recreation, after school, housing, economic development, family services—all of which are designed to increase the opportunities for the community at-large. One impact of prevention is to stop youth from joining gangs and refrain from engaging in delinquency.

Targeted Prevention

Targeted prevention efforts offer selective prevention strategies and are designed to impact high-risk *communities* and/or *individual* high-risk children and youth based on risk factors.

- Targeted community prevention responses aimed at the high-risk community identify a large, general group—for example, children between a specified age range who are growing up in a “gang-saturated” neighborhood.
- Targeted individual prevention responses aimed at the high-risk individual identify high risk children and youth who have *not yet* joined a gang. For example, youth who are gang “potentials” or gang “associates” that display many of the early signs of gang membership or other problem behaviors that indicate that they are at high risk for involvement in gangs or gang crime. The risk factors for these programs should differentiate from programs targeting youth at high risk of engaging in general delinquent behavior.
- Targeted diversion prevention responses are designed to reach individuals who are at extremely high risk of joining gangs, are in the early stages of gang membership, and have had brushes with the law. The goal of diversion activities is to influence behavior change by diverting youth from a gang entrenched lifestyle

The goal of targeted prevention is to preclude children and youth in at-risk communities from joining a gang or participating in gang activity.

Intervention

Intervention responses are designed to intervene during gang related conflicts (*community*) as well as impact *individual* gang involved youth typically through the use of community and faith based street outreach workers and school based intervention teams. The goals of community based and individual based intervention efforts are to:

- Community Intervention: Intervene during gang related conflicts and crisis, develop peace initiatives, and curb retaliation attempts.
- Individual Intervention: Convince gang members to leave the gang lifestyle and lead gang members through the reentry process.

Suppression

Suppression responses target serious and chronic offenders to reduce gang activity and involve the use of the criminal justice system to officially sanction behavior through arrest, prosecution, and incarceration. Key players include law enforcement, prosecutors, probation, and courts.

Reentry

Reentry responses focus on individuals that have decided to leave the gang lifestyle as a result of diversion, intervention, and/or suppression efforts and are preparing to reintegrate into the community. Reentry activities are designed to make a successful transition to becoming a productive member of the community. Activities include counseling, tattoo removal, education, training, and employment services necessary to help them become productive members of society before becoming involved in the judicial system.

Appendix B—List of Acronyms

CAD—Computer Aided Dispatch system

CBO—Community Based Organization

CCIS—Crisis Counseling and Intervention Services

CCVIP—Council of Community Violence Intervention Professional

CCYF—Commission for Children, Youth and their Families

CDBG—Community Development Block Grant

CDD—Community Development Department

CIPA—Community Improvement Planning Area

CIT—Community Impact Team

CLASS Park—Clean and Safe Spaces

CLEAR—Community Law Enforcement and Recover

CRA—California Restaurant Association

CSW—Commission on the Status of Women

CUP—Citizen Unit for Participation

DCA—Department of Cultural Affairs

DCSS—Department of Community and Senior Services

DOJ—U.S. Department of Justice

DOL—U.S. Department of Labor

DPW—Department of Public Works

DWP—Department of Water and Power

ESL—English as a Second Language

FBI—Federal Bureau of Investigation

FDN—Family Development Network

GIS—Geographic Information Systems

GREAT—Gang Resistance Education and Training

GRP—Gang Reduction Program

GRZ—Gang Reduction Zone

HACLA—Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles

HACOLA—Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles

HUD—Housing and Urban Development Department

ICAT—Interdisciplinary Community Assessment Team

IGTF—Interagency Gang Task Force

ISIS—Integrated Service Information System

JIP—Juvenile Impact Program

JJCC—Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council

JJCPA—Juvenile Justice Criminal Prevention Act

JJCPP—Juvenile Justice Criminal Prevention Program

LAB—LA Bridges Program

LACES—Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies

LAFD—Los Angeles Fire Department

LAHD—Los Angeles Housing Department

LAPD—Los Angeles Police Department

LASD—Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department

LASPD—Los Angeles School Police Department

LAUSD—Los Angeles Unified School District

LAWA—Los Angeles World Airport

MART—Multi-Agency Response Team

MOU—Memorandum of Understanding

NAP—Neighborhood Action Program

NDD—Neighborhood Development Department

NDP—Neighborhood Development Program

OJJDP—Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

PSN—Project Safe Neighborhoods

RAP—Department of Recreation and Parks

RBO—religious-based organization

RFP—Request for Proposal

RFQ—Request for Quote

RMS—Record Management System

STEP—Secondary Transition Education Program

WDD—Workforce Development Division (of CDD)

WGTF—Watts Gang Task Force

WIA—Workforce Investment Act

YAP—Youth Advocacy Program

YFC—Youth and Family Center

YFVI—Youth Firearms Violence Initiative

YO-IT—Youth opportunity Intensive Transition program

YOS—Youth Opportunity System

YSA—Youth Services Academy

YWAR—Young Women from Adversity to Resiliency (formerly known as “Young Women at Risk”)

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Appendix D—Examples of “Promising Practices” in other Municipalities

The discussion below provides additional detail regarding the “promising practices” listed in Section V of this report. It is intended to highlight some contemporary promising practices—in addition to other recommended improvements as outlined in the report—that have been implemented in municipalities throughout the nation. It is not a comprehensive inventory of leading or best practices, and it is not meant to provide a listing of programs that should be replicated in Los Angeles. Rather, these examples highlight program components which, if implemented in a more holistic LA-specific gang reduction strategy, could enhance the likelihood of success.

- Partner with local hospitals and emergency rooms—and other previously unconventional venues—to address the consequences of violence. Crisis situations may provide an optimum opportunity for successful intervention. We identified four programs that leverage the resources available through emergency rooms to facilitate intervention efforts:
 - Teens on Target (Oakland, California) employs a multi-faceted intervention approach that includes sessions held in local Emergency rooms to more graphically communicate the consequences of violence.
 - The Child Development-Community Policing Model (New Haven, Connecticut) includes the use of Emergency Room and Hospitals as sites to recruit participants into a violence reduction strategy.
 - The Trauma Intervention (pilot) Program (St. Louis) formed a medical team-police partnership, cross-trained police and emergency personnel, and provided crisis intervention services to victims of violence.¹
 - The Gang Victim Services Program (Orange County, California) provides support for gang members who have become victims of violence. These services include targeting victims of crime for social services and interventions so that they can recover from the social and psychological impact of victimization.
- Expand participation in all local schools to teach youth about the consequences of gang violence, as well as to facilitate dispute resolution. For instance, in addition to the targeted efforts of Bridges I and Bridges II, we found positive results from the following school-based prevention/intervention efforts:
 - There has been an excellent effort in the Southeast corner of Los Angeles county—the ABC Unified School District which encompasses several gang impacted cities—including Hawaiian Gardens and Bell—has implemented a federally funded “Safe Schools Healthy Students Program” that teaches gang awareness and anti-violence strategies as well as dispute resolution and cross cultural tolerance to students in its elementary, middle and high schools. Initial evaluation results show that students’ perceptions

¹ See <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/210361.pdf>.

of school safety have increased as truancy and on-campus violent incidents have decreased.

- School Resource Officers (SROs) have provided dispute resolution services in schools nationwide for over a decade, and have been shown to produce safer learning climates, improve relationships between law enforcement and students, and reduce school disorder.
- The Evening Reporting Center (Cook County, Illinois, Phoenix, Arizona, and Orange County, California) provides educational, vocational, recreational, supervision, and life skills services to juveniles on probation between the hours of 4 pm to 9 pm daily, a peak time for delinquency and youth victimization.² This program demonstrates the value of using local data to assess gang problems and formulate programs that address those problems.
- While there have been mixed assessments of GREAT, which LAPD has already implemented, some evaluation results show that teaching gang awareness and resistance strategies to middle school students has had positive impacts on student refusal skills, attitudes toward the police and involvement in delinquency.
- The saturation of suppression efforts in gang “hot zones” should not only be balanced by the saturation of social service targeted prevention, intervention, and reentry services, but must also include *joint* law enforcement and social service efforts. This does not mean that law enforcement and social service efforts are merely co-located in the same area, each doing their own thing, but rather requires the presence of each in the same area to participate in targeted services together. While there have been challenges to creating such joint efforts in the past (e.g. LAPD Drop-In centers at CLASS Parks, and a breakdown in YAP referrals prior to 2007, the following are several examples of the positive impact joint efforts can bring:
 - The experience with Weed and Seed suggests that approaches that combine prevention and suppression can be piloted and have an impact on crime. These approaches were successful across a variety of locations.³ Evaluations of Weed and Seed have demonstrated that when enforcement and social services are married together, they work.
 - Los Angeles County’s Multi-Agency Response Team (MART) joins County law enforcement with the Department of Children and Family Services, in an effort that truly represents a creative “gateway” that will build inter-agency collaboration, crisis service delivery and a referral network. Partnering with law enforcement, MART works with several CBOs to assist with placing children in adequate foster families and providing referral services.

² See www.cookcountycourt.org/services.

³ Terence Dunworth and Gregory Mills, “National Evaluation of Weed and Seed,” *National Institute of Justice*, June 1999. <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/175685.pdf>

- Consider implementing a Consent to Search program (St. Louis and, more recently, in Boston), which employs law enforcement officers to gain the permission of a parent or guardian to search the rooms of juveniles believed to be at high risk for involvement in violence—either as victims or perpetrators—and confiscate all firearms, weapons or contraband. In St. Louis, police received exceptionally high levels of permission from residents to conduct searches and found guns in more than one quarter of houses that they searched.⁴
- The City should employ reentry programs that assist in the transition from incarceration back into society, and that provide wrap-around services to those with a desire to exit the gang lifestyle.
 - Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), which has spawned two promising practices, Offender Notification Meetings (ONM) and Most Violent Persons lists. The basic premise of this intervention is to provide a targeted deterrence message to offenders at high risk for involvement in violence, recent releases from prison, *and* to provide them with a realistic assessment of their chances for going back to prison. By utilizing employment, drug and alcohol treatment and education services, critical transitional services are made accessible to those reentering society.⁵
 - “Intensive Surveillance Officer” (ISO) are employed in Atlanta, Georgia to provide services to youth that are on probation, including home and school visits and court accompaniments. This position could be staffed by paraprofessionals at little cost, and offers a stable bridge between at-risk youth and diversion and reentry programs.⁶
 - Back on Track in San Francisco, California, is an education and employment reentry initiative focusing on young adult drug offenders who are first time, non-violent offenders. Young offenders can embrace a range of life changing opportunities through, for example, concrete job training and placement, union-based pre-apprenticeships in the building trades, G.E.D. preparation, college enrollment and help navigating financial aid, tutoring, money management and banking instruction, child care, anger management and parenting support.
- Given the gender-specific factors associated with gang involvement, the City must expand female-responsive services in its prevention, intervention and reentry programs. While there is a shortage of research revealing “proven” practices in

⁴ See <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/191332.pdf>.

⁵ See http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/Offender_Notification_Meetings.pdf

⁶ See http://www.atlantaga.gov/mayor/weed_seed.aspx, & <http://apps.atlantaga.gov/deptmayor/weedandseed/default.asp>

serving the female gang population, several promising components of such programs may be considered:⁷

- Counseling services are essential, but generic individual or group counseling alone has not been proven to work. Skill building components, including general life skills and—most importantly—employment skills are crucial. Job placement and employment development should also not be short-term in nature; follow-up counseling must be employed to walk through the challenges faced by female youth in entering the workforce. In providing these services, however, case management and program services must be provided by individuals who are sensitive to and knowledgeable of the specific challenges faced by girls in gangs.
- A gender specific program should meet the needs of females, and all youth, that cannot return to their homes due to abuse and/or violence.
- Partnering with philanthropic, volunteer communities, and faith-based groups could substantially increase the resources—both monetary and human—available to the City’s gang reduction strategy. While the relative success of these programs themselves have generally not been measured, several municipalities have tapped into these unconventional resources and have developed innovative ways to harness the resources around them:
 - By incorporating the resource of criminal justice and human service professionals AmeriCorps volunteers, Tucson, Arizona, is able to hold youth accountable for delinquency, but also to provide the kind of wrap-around services needed to divert future delinquency.
 - By drawing on corporate sponsors, the City of Anaheim, California, is able to enhance its repertoire of services provided to “at-risk” youth. Not only can partnerships with businesses enhance funding for needed services, but it can create linkages to the broader community in ways that may be more difficult for non-profit or governmental service providers, including recreational activities, community involvement, and employment options.

When developing a program using best practice methods it is crucial to identify programs that incorporate components that have demonstrated success, or (in the absence of reliable empirical research) show promise in ways that are consistent with contemporary criminological research. Current research on the gang problem and gang reduction programs does not reveal much good news about programs that “work”, at least in the long term. The recommendations outlined in this report, and the promising practices listed in this attachment, provide general guidelines for a new comprehensive gang reduction strategy. We recommend, when considering the programs outlined in this

⁷ Meda Chesney-Lind and Randall G. Shelden, *Girls, Delinquency, and Juvenile Justice* (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2004), 294.

attachment, that program development team continue research identify specific program components to be incorporated.

Two resources in particular may be of assistance. The first, Helping America's Youth provides programmatic information regarding agencies receiving federal funds to serve the U.S. youth population.⁸ This resource allows one to quickly access information about federally funded programs in a zip code, city or county. Programs are organized by the nature of service (e.g. intervention), the risk factors or protective factors targeted by the program, the target population served, and the extent to which the service offered fits a best practice model. Second, the National Youth Gang Center offers resources that can be harnessed by local administration to identify research and publications that can be used to match community needs with promising programmatic components.⁹

⁸ See <http://guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/>.

⁹ See <http://www.iir.com/nygc/default.htm>.

Appendix E—Suggested Performance Measures

Performance Measures related to “setting”

1. SCHOOL INDICATORS OR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

➤ *Quantitative Measures:*

- Changes/Increases in Attendance
- Changes/Increases in Grades
- Changes/Increases in assignments completed
- Changes/Decreases in fighting
- Changes/Decreases in suspensions

➤ *Qualitative/Ethnographic Measures:*

- Students Reports of feelings of safety on-campus
- Teacher/Staff Reports of feelings of safety on campus
- Classroom Observation
- Classroom Participant-Observation

2. CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE INDICATORS OR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

➤ *Quantitative Measures:*

- Decreasing number of arrests
- Decreasing value of arrests, such as
 - Homicide
 - Armed Robbery
 - Firearm Possession
 - Narcotics Distribution
 - Narcotics Possession
 - Marijuana Distribution
 - Marijuana Possession
 - Drunk and disorderly
 - Petty Theft
 - Loitering
 - Curfew Violation
 - Misdemeanor Disturbance of the Peace
 - Moving Violations
 - Parking Violations

3. COMMUNITY INDICATORS OR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- *Quantitative Measures:* Using intervention programs it is important to use Pre and Post-Intervention Violent Events. Note: critical to note both number and severity of events:
 - Retaliatory Homicides
 - Retaliatory Shootings with victims
 - Retaliatory Shootings without victims
 - Retaliatory non-shooting Violence
 - Retaliatory gang-banging/fighting
- *Qualitative Measures: Ethnographic Observation/Interviews/Focus Groups where applicable:*
 - Funerals following violent events
 - Funerals following non-violent events
 - Non-violent vigils, memorials
 - Community members subject reports on safety
 - Community activities: increase or decrease post intervention

4. INDIVIDUAL INDICATORS OR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Involvement in violence as a victim offender or witness
- General delinquency involvement
- Aggression or fighting
- Conduct disorders
- Externalizing behaviors (disruptive, antisocial, or other conduct disorders)
- Depression
- Poor refusal skills
- Life stressors
- Antisocial or delinquent beliefs
- Hyperactive
- Alcohol or drug use
- Early marijuana use and early drinking
- Early dating
- Early sexual activity

5. FAMILY RISK FACTORS OR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Family management: low parent supervision, control, or monitoring
- Low attachment to parents or family
- Child maltreatment
- Parent pro-violent attitudes
- Single parent homes
- Family poverty
- Family financial stress

- Family transitions
- Low parent education level
- Teenage fatherhood
- Sibling antisocial behavior
- Family members involved in gang membership

6. NEIGHBORHOOD RISK FACTORS OR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Availability of or perceived access to
- Neighborhood drug use
- Availability of firearms
- Neighborhood youth in trouble
- High community arrest rate
- Feeling unsafe in the neighborhood
- Low neighborhood attachment
- Neighborhood disorganization
- Neighborhood residents in poverty or family poverty
- High levels of neighborhood gang membership

7. PEER GROUP INDICATORS OR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Association with peers who engage in delinquency or other problem behaviors
- Association with aggressive peers
- Association with gang members
- Low commitment to positive peers

8. SCHOOL INDICATORS OR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Low expectations of completing school
- Low achievement in elementary school
- Low parent college expectations for participant
- Low school attachment
- Low attachment to teachers
- Negative labeling by teachers (as either bad or disturbed)
- Low degree of commitment to school
- Low math achievement test score
- Identified as learning disabled

Performance Measures related to “program”

1. TARGETED PREVENTION*

- Participants feelings towards the effectiveness of the program^{1, 2, 3}

* Superscript numbering refers to relevant studies related to each measure. See Endnotes for Appendix E.

- Attitudes toward gang membership⁴
- Delinquency^{4, 5, 6, 7}
- Gang membership^{5, 8, 9}
- Risk-seeking behavior⁵
- Impulsivity⁵
- Attitudes toward authority⁵
- Calls for service to the police³
- School performance⁷
- Self-esteem⁷

2. INTERVENTION

- Gang-related offenses as tracked by arrests and/or police or probation records^{10, 11, 12}
- Gang-related homicide rates^{11, 12, 13}
- Gang members' attitudes¹²
- Participant legal involvement^{14, 15}
- Interpersonal skills¹⁶
- Frequency and extent of delinquent behavior^{15, 16, 17}
- Anger control¹⁶
- Community functioning, using the community adjustment rating scale¹⁶
- Recidivism, as tracked by re-arrests¹⁶
- Group cohesiveness¹⁸
- Gang-related offenses, as measured by arrests and/or probation or police records^{6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20}
- Gang-related homicide rates^{12, 20}
- Gang membership⁹
- Participants' feelings towards the effectiveness of the program³
- Calls for service to the police³
- Gang member's attitudes¹²
- Violence between gangs²⁰
- Number of arrests for new offenders²¹
- School attendance²¹
- School performance⁷
- Self-esteem⁷

3. SUPPRESSION

- Offenses reported to police²²
- Gang-related offenses^{22, 23}
- Probation violations^{24, 25}
- Parole violations
- Number of arrests²⁵
- Court cases filed²⁵

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Appendix F—Past Performance Evaluation Strategies¹

In developing an evaluation strategy, it is essential to understand the approaches that have been utilized in the past. Due to the variety of program types and outcomes in gang-related programs, evaluations take on many different forms. Over 50 gang targeted prevention, intervention, and combination programs were reviewed for this report. These studies varied primarily in the following three areas: methodology; length of time spent on the evaluation; and choice of outcome measures. In each case, the choices in each of these areas resulted in significant differences in the overall evaluation findings. In this review, studies were examined for their designation of risk factors and the associated measures used to assess change. There was no substantive review of program design or implementation.

- ✓ Comparison Groups: Based on the Spergel model that still guides many gang reduction efforts, the Little Village Gang Violence Reduction Project in Chicago (Spergel & Grossman, 1997) effectively used comparison groups in performance evaluation. This four year multi-faceted program targeted approximately 200 gang youth in the Chicago area. In order to gain a better sense of the program's true impact on these youth, two control groups who did not receive services, were established to measure differences in program outcomes. A three-year pre-program study was also conducted to allow for another area of comparison. This combination of methods allows for greater distinction between factors contributing to success.
- ✓ Methodology used in the Literature Review: Due to the differing design and implementation of gang targeted prevention and intervention, a one-size-fits-all evaluation methodology cannot be used. Typically, the method of performance evaluation selected depends on specific factors related to program design. By focusing on such specific factors, evaluators can determine whether measured changes are a result of a given program or the result of other programs or independent factors. A recent study of formal gang targeted prevention and intervention evaluation methodologies found that the following thirteen methodologies have been used in previous evaluations efforts:²
 - Quasi-experimental study
 - Between subjects (only) design
 - Within subjects design
 - Comparison Group/Geographic area
 - Cross-sectional study
 - Longitudinal study
 - Self-report questionnaire
 - Field observation

¹The following suggested measures and discussion is a revised version of what initially appeared in "Challenges in Measuring and Evaluating Success in the City of Los Angeles' Youth Development and Gang Reduction Programs," authored by Todd M. Franke, 2007.

² Robin Westmacott, Yvonne Stys, and Shelley L. Brown, "Selected Annotated Bibliography: Evaluations of Gang Intervention Programs," Correctional Service of Canada, February 2005.

- Process evaluation
- Qualitative study
- Interview study
- Focus group study
- Case study

One factor shared by many of the evaluations was the ability to compare the program youth to either a control group or to a pre-program baseline. Such an approach is used primarily to isolate factors that should not be attributed to the program. The evaluations that were unable to employ this methodology had more difficulty determining whether the changes in program participants were a result of the program itself or a result of other outside factors. We recommend that on a go-forward basis, all evaluations of gang problems in Los Angeles follow the model used by Sherman and colleagues in their report for the Justice Department, using only research designs that improve on studies and allow for the attribution of time order and the elimination of rival hypotheses.³

- ✓ Baseline or Pre/Post Test Methodologies: In one of the earliest examples of gang research in Los Angeles, the Ladino Hills Project⁴ represents an excellent example of a pre/post test methodology. This Southern California-based intervention program was designed to “dissolve” gangs by decreasing gang cohesiveness. During the “pre-test” period that occurred 18 months before the beginning of the program, information regarding gang cohesiveness was collected. This data was then compared with data collected during the program period (another 18 months), allowing the evaluators to note significant changes resulting from the program.
- ✓ Length of Evaluation: A key element missing from most gang program evaluations is the assessment of long-term changes that occur in youth—even after their participation in a program: the longitudinal evaluation. The G.R.E.A.T. school based gang targeted prevention program was one example. Initial evaluation findings were extremely positive. Child, parent, and teacher responses all indicated that youth who had participated in the program had experienced a “significant change” in attitude. However, one year later, youth were surveyed and the results were markedly different. Findings revealed that the program did change youth attitude enough to change long-term behavior or to prevent gang membership. An unexpected but important lesson was learned from the G.R.E.A.T. program—that it is critical to conduct evaluations to understand long as well as short-term program impact.
- ✓ Outcome Measures: During the review of evaluation studies, outcome measures received explicit attention. The outcome measures utilized varied according to the specific program goals that were being evaluated. From this review it became apparent that evaluation measures to be used by the City should include both primary outcome measures and the secondary program measures. For example, the Neutral

³ See <http://www.ncjrs.gov/works/wholedoc.htm>.

⁴ Malcolm W. Klein, “The Ladino Hills Project,” in *Street Gangs and Street Workers*, ed. M.W Klein (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1971), 223-329.

Zone program was designed to develop “safe” locations for youth to gather during high-risk periods, such as after school or evening, to keep them from engaging in gang-related activities.⁵ The evaluation of this program measured both the ability of the program to provide a place where youth would choose to gather (a secondary goal, measured by direct observation) as well as the overall impact of the program on gang-related activity (the primary goal, measured by calls for service to the local police department).

⁵ Giazomazzi Q. Thurman, M. Reisig, and D. Mueller, “Community-based Gang Prevention and Intervention: An Evaluation of the Neutral Zone,” *Crime and Delinquency* 42 (1996): 279-295.

Appendix G—Key Stakeholders and Organizations Interviewed During this Study

We identified and contacted several key stakeholders, service providers, community-based organizations, government agencies, and academic and research institutions with knowledge or expertise of anti-gang programs, social services and related activities—including the following:

Los Angeles City Elected Officials

- Councilmember Tony Cardenas—6th District
- Councilmember Richard Alarcon’s Chief of Staff—7th District
- Councilmember Bernard Parks—8th District
- Councilmember Herb Wesson—10th District
- Councilmember Janice Hahn—15th District
- Mayor’s Office, Gang Reduction and Youth Development
- Mayor’s Office, including Deputy Mayor Jeff Carr and other key mayoral staff
- City Attorney, including key personnel such as J. Isaacs, Chief Criminal and Special Litigation Branch
- City Attorney’s Office, Gangs Prosecution and Prevention Unit

Los Angeles City Departments

Community Development Department

- Executive Management
- LA Bridges I & II
- Family Development Network Program
- Youth Advocacy Program
- Youth and Family Centers
- Youth Opportunity System
 - Youth Opportunity Movement Sites
 - Youth Opportunity OneSource Centers
- Youth Opportunity-Intensive Transition
- Workforce Development Division
- Economic Development Division
- Neighborhood Development Program
- Neighborhood Action Program
- Specially Targeted Programs

- Administrative Services
 - CDBG Grant Administration
 - Consolidated/Action Plan Development
- Financial Management Division
- Systems Division
- Commission for Children, Youth, and their Families (CCYF)
- Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
- Department of Building and Safety (DBS)
- Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
- Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP)
 - Child-Care Centers
 - CLASS Parks
 - Observatory, Museums, and Exposition Park
 - Recreation, Aquatics, and Camps
 - Workforce Investment Board (WIB)
- Department of Water & Power (DWP)
- Human Relations Commission (HRC)
- Los Angeles Harbor Department
- Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD)
- Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)
 - Chief William Bratton
 - Community Law Enforcement and Recovery Program (CLEAR)
 - Community Policing Unit
 - Criminal Gang Homicide Group
 - Gang Information Division
 - Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T)
 - Juvenile Division
 - Los Angeles Police Academy, Magnet School Program
 - Youth Programs (Jeopardy, Juvenile Intervention Program, etc)
- Information Technology Agency
- Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA)
- Los Angeles City Library

Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA)

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)

San Fernando Valley Coalition on Gangs

Watts Gang Task Force

Los Angeles County

Chief Executive Officer

Service Integration Branch

Children & Family Council

Community Redevelopment Agency

Department of Children and Family Services (Multi-Agency Response Team)

Department of Parks & Recreation

Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC)

Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA)

Interagency Gang Task Force (IGTF)

Probation Department

Sheriff's Department (LASD)

Special Integration Initiatives

Supervisor's Office 3rd District, Deputy Children and Family Services

Supervisor's Office 3rd District, County Deputy Justice

San Francisco District Attorney's Office

Superior Court of California, Court of Los Angeles

Honorable Judge M. Nash, Presiding Judge, Juvenile Courts

Los Angeles Unified School District

Administration and School Operations

Beyond the Bell

Crisis Counseling

Environmental Health and Safety—School Safety

Human Relations, Diversity & Equity operations

Los Angeles School Police (LASP)

Strategic Planning and Accountability

Youth Relations

Research Institutions

The Advancement Project
Arizona State University, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice
California State University, Northridge
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Southern California

Community Based Organizations

(sought input from CBO's either through on-site interviewing and tours or through telephone interviews)

98th Street Community Youth Organization
A Place Called Home
African American Unity Center
After School All-Stars
Archdiocesan Youth Employment Org
Aztecs Rising
Baldwin Village Community in Action
Ballona Renaissance
Barrio Action Youth & Family Center
Beacon House Association of San Pedro
Canoga Park Neighborhood Council
Community Outreach, University of Southern California (USC)
Didi Hirsch Community Mental health
Girls Club of Los Angeles, Inc
Harmony Project
Jacobs Deliverance Foundation
Red Shield Youth and Community Center
The Dream Center

We conducted interviews with representatives from the organizations listed above to obtain their insights, opinions, and suggestions regarding challenges and opportunities relating to what is working successfully and what is not from within the current continuum of programs, including input regarding critical core services, and non-core or ancillary services, and potentially unmet needs or underserved populations. From the above groups, we obtained a wide array of data, documents, reports, and other materials or evidence that provide information about program successes, services rendered,

identified needs, individuals served, results or outcomes achieved, changes in paradigms, continuum of services, and dollars spent regarding the City's various program service providers.