
CITY OF BALTIMORE

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Establishing the Ecosystem: A Vision for Community Violence Intervention (CVI) in Baltimore

Mayor Brandon M. Scott
City of Baltimore

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Letter from Mayor Scott

Neighbors,

For over half a decade, we have lost more than 300 Baltimoreans every year to violence, much of it fueled by guns. The sheer loss of life is painful and disappointing. It forces us to think about the immediate and residual traumas left behind for families and communities to cope with. As your Mayor, I am far from satisfied. I continue to work tirelessly to address the unrelenting violence on our streets for what it is: a public health epidemic.

We will not simply police or prosecute our way to a safer future. My administration is actively working to build a Community Violence Intervention (CVI) ecosystem for Baltimore, connecting disparate, one-off efforts and covering more ground in the city. This sustainable, community-centered approach puts people with lived experience of the trauma inflicted by violence at the center of our strategies. This report outlines the vision and highlights the progress we are making to build relationships and provide needed support and alternatives to residents at the highest risk for becoming the victim and/or perpetrator of violence.

Growing our CVI ecosystem also includes strengthening Baltimore's flagship Safe Streets program and bringing other organizations into the fold. My administration will provide stronger oversight and accountability of Safe Streets and focus on our commitments to our frontline violence interrupters — including greater support, safety, training, and career pathway development for the workforce. The findings and recommendations of the internal evaluation of cultural and operational norms of the Safe Streets program, which I requested at the start of my term, are outlined in this report.

I look forward to working closely with the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE) to implement this vision, as part of my Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan.

Curing Baltimore's violence is my top responsibility as Mayor, and the dollars we invest in CVI — in public safety practices rooted in equity, healing, public health, and trauma-informed practices — will help us build safer neighborhoods today and achieve sustainable reductions in violence over time.

In Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brandon M. Scott".

Brandon M. Scott
Mayor
Baltimore City



Executive Summary

In 2021, Baltimore City lost 337 people to homicide, with each loss leaving behind a web of pain and trauma. Many of these incidents stem from beefs, petty arguments, or interpersonal conflicts that, unfortunately, escalate into gun violence.

Under the leadership of Mayor Scott, Baltimore is focused on treating violence as the urgent public health epidemic it is. Police alone will not make our neighborhoods safer. While police have a role to play, the City must do more than it ever has before to coordinate an all-hands-on-deck approach to a safer Baltimore.

Baltimore is home to several programs that fall into the category of community violence intervention. However, current strategies are disconnected and do not cover sufficient ground. For example, across 10 community-based sites, Safe Streets only covers 2.6 square miles of a 90 square mile city.

This report outlines the ways the Scott Administration will invest in trauma-informed, community-based, and evidence-based public health interventions to stem the tide of violence — through the establishment of a comprehensive and multi-faceted Community Violence Intervention (CVI) ecosystem. Baltimore's CVI ecosystem will include familiar programs, like Safe Streets and Roca, and grow to include additional partnerships with hospitals, public schools, victim services providers, life coaches and case managers - each working together, covering more ground across the city, and playing a uniquely important role in the overall strategy to prevent and reduce violence. This approach is supported by the White House as a best practice to reduce violent crime in partnership with local communities.

The work to foster this CVI ecosystem will be led by the Mayor, in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE) and in alignment with Baltimore's Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan, released in July 2021.

Between FY22 - FY25, Baltimore will invest \$10,025,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to issue a minimum of 30 contracts with partner organizations at the institutional and grassroots levels in outreach and conflict mediation, violence intervention, hospital-based violence intervention, school-based violence intervention, intensive case management and life coaching, and victim services. This approach will support organizations operating on the frontlines to build a safer city, growing Baltimore's on-the-ground capacity to directly intervene in conflicts and disputes before they have an opportunity to escalate to violence.

This report also includes the findings and recommendations of an internal operational and cultural evaluation of Safe Streets Baltimore, conducted by MONSE at Mayor Scott's direction, in the second half of 2021. An outline of next steps, immediate and longer-term — that prioritize oversight and accountability, workforce safety, training and development, and overall program efficacy of Safe Streets — can be found in the latter portion of this report.



Background: Community Violence Intervention in Baltimore

Mayor's Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan

Mayor Scott's Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan (CVPP) was released in July 2021. It fulfills the Mayor's call to treat gun violence as a public health crisis. The Mayor established the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE), led by Director Shantay Jackson, which will be the Administration's key partner in the coordination of this plan.

The CVPP is Baltimore's first holistic violence prevention strategy and first multi-year plan to reduce violence in a sustainable way over time, not just for a year or two. It embraces the notion that every agency and organization that interfaces with Baltimoreans plays a critical role in tackling violent crime.

The work of implementing the CVPP is accelerated by a \$50 million investment in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars. Between Fiscal Years '22 and '25, MONSE will issue more than 30 grants and contracts to community-based organizations to administer evidence-based community violence intervention (CVI) programming — including outreach, conflict mediation, violence intervention, hospital-based and school-based violence intervention programs, intensive life coaching, and victim services — as part of this plan. Through this work, Baltimore will grow its on-the-ground capacity to directly intervene in conflicts and disputes before they escalate to violence.

Relationship to BPD's Crime Plan

While preventing and reducing violence are the central goals of the Mayor's Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan, the CVPP should not be confused for a "crime plan."¹ This plan addresses the role City Hall and Baltimore City government agencies will play to reduce violence.

Although the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) is a key partner in this comprehensive strategy, this plan is distinct from that of BPD's crime plan, which is a subplan of the Mayor's comprehensive, coordinated public safety strategy.

¹ BPD is also a key partner in the successful implementation of many elements of the Mayor's plan. The group violence reduction strategy (GVRS) and neighborhood policing plans are two initiatives that require significant partnership and coordination with the police department. BPD's crime plan was released in July 2019 and focuses on patrol, deployment decisions, police officer training, warrant apprehension, and evaluation practices.



Community Violence Intervention and the Need for an Ecosystem

Community violence intervention (CVI) refers to evidence-based programs and strategies to reduce homicides and shootings by building relationships with the people at the center of gun violence. According to the Vera Center for Justice, these programs “support people at the highest risk of being victims or perpetrators—or both—of violence” and “acknowledge the capacity of people to make different choices and pursue other avenues for addressing and resolving conflict.”

Before the Scott Administration, Baltimore’s CVI landscape included ten Safe Streets sites, some loose partnerships with hospitals for hospital-based violence intervention programs, and one contract with Roca, which provides life coaching and other support to teens and young adults.

<p>Historic Perspective: Baltimore's Past CVI Landscape</p>	<p>Mayor Scott's Vision: Fostering Baltimore's CVI Ecosystem</p>
<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 10px;"> <div>  <p>Community Outreach Relationship Building, Education Campaigns</p> </div> <div>  <p>Mediation and Violence Intervention Safe Streets (10 Sites)</p> </div> <div>  <p>Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs Medstar Harbor Hospital, St. Agnes, LifeBridge Health</p> </div> <div>  <p>Life Coaching Roca</p> </div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 10px;"> <div>  <p>Community Outreach Relationship Building, Education Campaigns, Neighborhood Stabilization Response</p> </div> <div>  <p>Mediation and Violence Intervention Safe Streets, We Our Us, School-Based Interventions</p> </div> <div>  <p>Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs All Baltimore-Area Hospital Systems</p> </div> <div>  <p>Life Coaching Roca, Youth Advocate Programs (YAP)</p> </div> <div>  <p>Victim Services Protection, Housing, Relocation Support, Mental Health, Employment</p> </div> </div>

Mayor Scott’s vision for an expanded CVI ecosystem includes:

- Refining and building on Baltimore’s existing conflict mediation and violence intervention programming.** MONSE has conducted an in-depth review of Baltimore’s ten current Safe Streets sites and will make adjustments that prioritize outreach worker safety, training and development, and program efficacy. Additionally, the City will establish contracts with trusted grassroots organizations engaged in violence intervention, like We Our Us, and stand-up school-based violence intervention programs where needed.



- **Stronger partnerships and coordination with Baltimore-area hospital partners.** Making a connection and providing immediate support to gunshot victims in the hospital is essential to preventing retaliation and re-victimization. In February, Mayor Scott and MONSE convened Chief Medical Officers from area hospitals to discuss the vision for hospital-based responder programs as part of Baltimore's CVI landscape. MONSE will establish an official partnership with area hospitals that treat gunshot victims to ensure a coordinated hospital-based violence intervention and victim services network.
- **Expanded intensive life coaching services.** While Baltimore has a preexisting contract with Roca, serving young people between the ages of 16-24, there were no organizations providing these services to men age 25 and above — the age group that is disproportionately at the center of violence. As a result, MONSE has established a partnership with Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP) to provide intensive life coaching services to this demographic as part of the Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS). The City will also explore additional intensive life coaching and case management partners to develop the CVI ecosystem.
- **For the first time, a focus on victim services.** Baltimore will cultivate a CVI ecosystem that includes a focus on victim services, with specific attention paid to survivors of gun violence and trauma that can lead to re-victimization. This includes (but is not limited to) protection, emergency relocation assistance, housing, mental health, and employment services.

White House Community Violence Intervention Collaborative (CVIC)

Baltimore's Community Violence Intervention approach is supported by the White House. In June 2021, the Biden-Harris administration released a Comprehensive Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gun Crime and Ensure Public Safety. A cornerstone of the plan is investing in evidence-based community violence interventions, or CVIs — the first time in history a U.S. president is working to operationalize the co-production of public safety with local communities.

Baltimore was asked to join the White House Community Violence Intervention Collaborative (CVIC), along with 15 other cities, to expand this work. As part of this cohort, the City engages in peer-to-peer learning with other cities and receives training and technical assistance from national experts and federal agencies.

Safe Streets Baltimore

Safe Streets Baltimore is an evidence-based, public health program to reduce gun violence. The program is modeled after the Chicago-based Cure Violence program, which employs outreach professionals to mediate brewing conflicts that could result in gun violence. Safe Streets workers focus on community outreach, public education, conflict mediation, and violence interruption within a specific geographic area.



Safe Streets outreach workers and violence interrupters work on the frontlines to put themselves in front of a firearm to de-escalate situations and mediate conflict. Safe Streets staff members are screened, interviewed, and selected to work in specific target areas within the city in which they are identified as credible messengers. Safe Streets team members can connect and build rapport with individuals who are classified as high-risk, and connect them to life-sustaining resources.

Reporting at the site level tells us that, when mediating conflicts, anywhere from 70-90 percent of incidents have a high likelihood of gun violence because one or both parties have displayed a gun or are known to carry a gun. How and when a dispute is considered mediated is defined by the global organization, [CURE Violence](#). CURE Violence is a partner that provides training in this model of violence interruption.

In 2021, Safe Streets conducted 2,137 mediations across ten sites. In the first 90 days of 2022, Safe Streets has already conducted 455 mediations.

History

Safe Streets Baltimore was established in 2007 in McElderry Park in East Baltimore as a program of the Baltimore City Health Department.

Between 2007 and 2009, Safe Streets launched sites in five of Baltimore's most violent neighborhoods. One of the original sites experienced implementation problems and the contract was terminated in July 2008.

In 2019, ahead of the Scott administration's tenure, contracts were awarded to six additional sites and administrators, bringing the total number of Safe Streets sites from 4 to 10.

Current Landscape

The Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE), established by Mayor Scott in 2020, is the agency responsible for the Safe Streets program. MONSE currently contracts with community-based organizations (CBOs), who serve as site administrators.

Baltimore City is home to 10 Safe Streets sites, each with their own staff and physical location based in the community, across eight administrators. Each Safe Streets site is intentionally located in a BPD post in the top percentile of gun violence across the city.



Currently, these 10 sites cover approximately 2.6 square miles of a 90 square mile city.

	Safe Streets Site	Site Operator	Opened
1	McElderry Park	Living Classrooms Foundation	2007
2	Cherry Hill	Family Health Centers of Baltimore	2008
3	Park Heights	Park Heights Renaissance	2013
4	Sandtown-Winchester	Associated Catholic Charities	2016
5	Belair-Edison	Living Classrooms Foundation	2019
6	Belvedere	LifeBridge Health	2019
7	Brooklyn	Associated Catholic Charities	2019
8	Franklin Square	Bon Secours Community Works	2019
9	Penn North	Youth Advocate Programs	2019
10	Woodbourne-McCabe	LifeBridge Health ²	2019

Each CBO is responsible for the overall oversight, human resources, and employee services for Safe Streets staff, along with data reporting, data collection, management, and review. The site administrators implement the Safe Streets program in the assigned catchment area and hire staff, subject to MONSE and community oversight. In addition, site administrators are responsible for participating in community activities and public education efforts, assisting with coalition building, leading and participating in other community engagement activities, and working with the program evaluators.

Past site administration has been awarded via an RFP process. Mayor's Office staff, community members and institutional partners have evaluated RFP submissions and those evaluations have driven site/administrator selections. The last round of site and administrator awards were made in 2017/2018 FY.

There is a Safe Streets Advisory Board made up of community members, institutions, and other partners who serve to advise on the work product, programming, and funding of the program.

² The Woodbourne-McCabe site was operated by the Baltimore Community Mediation Center until February 2021.



Daily Operations and Community Engagement

MONSE is the City agency that oversees the overall implementation of the Safe Streets Baltimore program, in partnership with CBOs, and the administration of the associated funding. MONSE is responsible for the monitoring and oversight of CBOs and their partners to ensure professional management of all aspects of Safe Streets Baltimore.

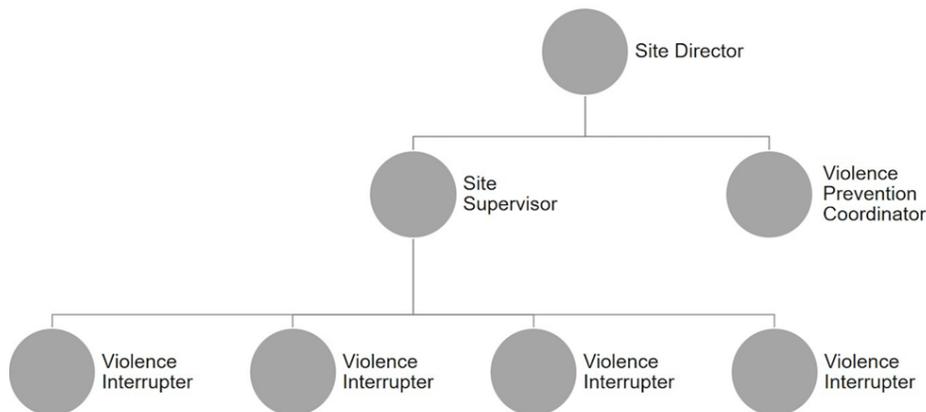
MONSE's CVI team has regularly-scheduled technical assistance (TA) meetings with every site. New sites have TA meetings every two weeks, while older, more established sites meet once per month. The primary focus of these meetings is performance management based on the programmatic data entered by the site staff.

The CBOs work with MONSE staff to complete short-term and intermediate objectives, as well as longer-term goals. These goals include reductions in shootings and killings in Safe Streets posts. CBOs and site staff participate in regularly scheduled meetings and reporting for the purpose of administrative oversight and technical support.

MONSE provides technical assistance to CBOs and site directors, including: invoicing and budgeting, guidance working with and hiring Safe Streets staff, assistance implementing the model, and identifying training and providers for staff. Every Safe Streets Baltimore staff member is expected to complete a 40-hour training in violence interruption within 30 days, facilitated by MONSE.

CBOs hire staff who have credibility within and familiarity of the site post, possess strong relationships with high-risk individuals in the community, and have a deep understanding of the social determinants that contribute to violence. Staff is hired after passing a hiring panel that consists of the CBO, MONSE, BPD, and members of the community.

A typical site structure is exhibited below:





Currently, site operation hours are based on when shootings are most likely to occur within the given post that a Safe Streets site operates in and vary by site. Site Directors and Violence Prevention Coordinators are typically at the site during normal business hours.

On a daily basis, Safe Streets staff conduct a debriefing to discuss conflicts that are brewing in a post geography. This identification of activity that could result in gun violence and the development of a daily community engagement strategy is crucial to the ongoing operation of sites. Violence interrupters consistently engage the community within a site's geography.

Site staff are required to complete daily logs to track the progress of their work. Program data, including the number of conflict mediations conducted, community events, and new community partnerships established, is collected electronically through the Cure Violence national database.

Contrary to popular belief, it is not the job of Safe Streets to clear corners or stop people from drug dealing. Safe Streets is rooted in a public health approach to shifting cultural norms and intervening in conflicts before they escalate to violence.

Funding

Safe Streets Baltimore is funded by a combination of City General Funds and State grant dollars. In Fiscal Year 2022, \$1,520,924 of City General Funds were allocated for Safe Streets. At the State level, funds appropriated by the Tyrone Ray Safe Streets Act³ and Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (VIPP)⁴ provide grant funding to Safe Streets.

The growth from one site in 2007 to 10 sites in 2019 speaks to the level of incremental investment in this public health approach to addressing violence and mediating conflicts before they escalate.

To date, no American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars have been invested in Safe Streets.⁵

³ The Tyrone Ray Safe Streets Act, sponsored by Delegate Talmadge Branch and co-sponsored by the Baltimore City House delegation, became law in 2018. It requires the Governor to appropriate \$3,600,000 in the annual State budget for Baltimore City grants to community-based organizations to implement Safe Streets Initiatives in Baltimore City. It requires that funds be used to supplement, and not supplant, funds otherwise available.

⁴ VIPP is a jointly administered fund by the Maryland Violence Intervention and Prevention Advisory Council and the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP). The fund supports violence reduction programs through evidence-based initiatives.

⁵ MONSE's ARPA investment includes dollars for additional City staff focused on the CVI ecosystem, including a CVI Deputy Director, CVI Operations Manager, and two CVI Outreach Liaisons. This new structure will allow the City to provide more oversight of and support to Safe Streets Baltimore sites — as well as organizations and institutions new to the CVI ecosystem — than ever before. MONSE will play a stepped-up role as a government partner, including providing centralized training opportunities, serving



Dollars are used for staff payroll, rent, community events, participant activities, office supplies, equipment and internet, building security, vehicle insurance, CBO indirect costs, uniforms, utilities, etc.

Past Evaluations and Impact

In January 2012, four researchers at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health released the first evaluation examining the efficacy of the Safe Streets program at the four sites that existed at that time. Using a combination of community surveys, programmatic data such as number of conflicts mediated, and homicide and nonfatal shooting BPD data through December 2010, the researchers found encouraging results.

After examining roughly two years of implementation process and outcomes, clear and sizable reductions in homicides and nonfatal shootings were seen in both Cherry Hill and McElderry Park. Safe Streets in Cherry Hill was associated with a 56% reduction in homicide incidents and a 34% reduction in nonfatal shootings. McElderry Park had a successful start, going 22 months before a homicide in the catchment area.

The evaluation concluded, "Totaling statistically significant program effects across all the program sites and border posts, we estimate that the program was associated with 5.4 fewer homicide incidents and 34.6 fewer nonfatal shooting incidents during 112 cumulative months of intervention post observations." Furthermore, community surveys found beneficial program effects on social norms and attitudes compared to communities that did not get an intervention.

Overall, the early beneficial effects seen in the first evaluation eroded over time. In January 2018, three researchers at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health conducted a second evaluation to estimate Safe Streets Baltimore's impact on homicides and nonfatal shootings between 2007 and 2017. This evaluation of seven sites failed to see a clear impact on homicides and nonfatal shootings.

Despite being one of the oldest Cure Violence programs, Safe Streets Baltimore sites have not always shown consistent impacts on violence on a year-to-year or site-by-site basis. Possible explanations include inconsistent funding, inadequate training, instability following the program moving from the Health Department to the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, hiring and staffing challenges, high-profile arrests of violence interrupters, lack of political will and program investment, frequent changes in political administration and leadership, and likely many more.

as technical advisors, and partnering on the navigation of the City contracting and payment process.



There has been no formal evaluation since the rapid expansion of Safe Streets from 4 to 10 sites in 2019 — one motivation for Mayor Scott's charge to MONSE to conduct an internal evaluation of Safe Streets Baltimore operational and cultural norms and establish a process to regularly evaluate the program's effectiveness.

At the same time, notably, the Cherry Hill and Belair-Edison sites celebrated over one year without a homicide in their target areas in 2021. The Cherry Hill site also celebrated years without a homicide in 2015, 2018, and 2021.

Forthcoming Academic Evaluation

An updated academic evaluation of Safe Streets is currently underway. One part of the study will analyze and evaluate Safe Streets Baltimore's impact on gun violence. Another part of the study will include an investigation of Safe Streets sites in the Western District to generate a deeper qualitative understanding of the ways the sites engage with program participants, staff, local community-based and government organizations, and community members. The findings of these evaluations will be public and are expected to be shared in the first half of 2023.

Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (HVIPs)

Gun violence is driven in large part by retaliation, underscoring the importance of intervening and connecting gunshot survivors to needed support as soon as an incident occurs. Part of this work must take place in hospitals to ensure patients at risk of repeat violent injury are connected with the resources that get at underlying factors, ultimately saving lives and reducing revictimization now and in the future.

The Mayor and MONSE want to ensure all area hospitals that regularly serve gunshot victims and survivors are part of Baltimore's CVI ecosystem, rooted in a public health approach. The City government will play a coordinating role, bringing all current and future efforts under the umbrella of this ecosystem.

MONSE plans to provide funding for these operations at the start of FY23, beginning July 1, 2022. Additionally, MONSE has secured funding to provide training to all Baltimore-area hospital systems that regularly treat gunshot victims. Training will be provided by the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (HAVI) to ensure a common set of standards and spirit of collaboration across all partners.

History

Many Baltimore-area hospital systems have a form of an HVIP, including St. Agnes, LifeBridge Health, MedStar Health, and University of Maryland.

Funding

Traditionally, funding for hospital-based violence intervention programming comes from Federal or State funding. In Fiscal Year '22, the City is contracting with Ascension St. Agnes, Sinai



Hospital, MedStar Union Memorial Hospital and MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital using State VIPP funds.

Intensive Life Coaching

Intensive life coaching is one important part of CVI programming. It refers to the process of checking in and maintaining contact with a person at high-risk, typically multiple times a day. This work has been conducted informally by many community-based organizations across the city.

Members of the White House Community Violence Intervention Collaborative (CVIC) believe life coaching and victim services, outlined in the next section, have been the two missing components associated with a strong CVI program.

History

In 2018, the City of Baltimore entered into a multi-year contract with Roca to provide comprehensive services, including life coaching, to people between the ages of 16-24.

In 2021, MONSE introduced life coaching into the GVRS model. While Roca provides services to the younger at-risk population as a part of the strategy, Youth Advocate Programs (YAP) offers intensive life coaching to program participants who are 25 years of age and older.

Funding

The City's contract with Roca is funded by a combination of local and philanthropic funding. The services provided by YAP through GVRS are funded by a combination of City General Funds and State grant dollars.

Victim Services

Every shooting and violent incident leaves behind a web of trauma – for the victim, as well as bystanders, families, neighbors, and even the perpetrators of violence. Particularly in Baltimore's Black neighborhoods, which have borne the brunt of gun violence over decades, this trauma has been compounded year after year, incident after incident.

Expanding and strengthening victim services is a priority in Baltimore's public safety strategy and one of MONSE's areas of focus. Baltimore has never provided services specifically to survivors of gunshots. This year, MONSE and its brand new Victim Services Lane will start the work of increasing Baltimore's capacity to provide mental health services and victim services to survivors of gun violence.

This is a new area of focus for the agency; Victim Services did not exist as a lane in MONSE's predecessor agency, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ).



Funding

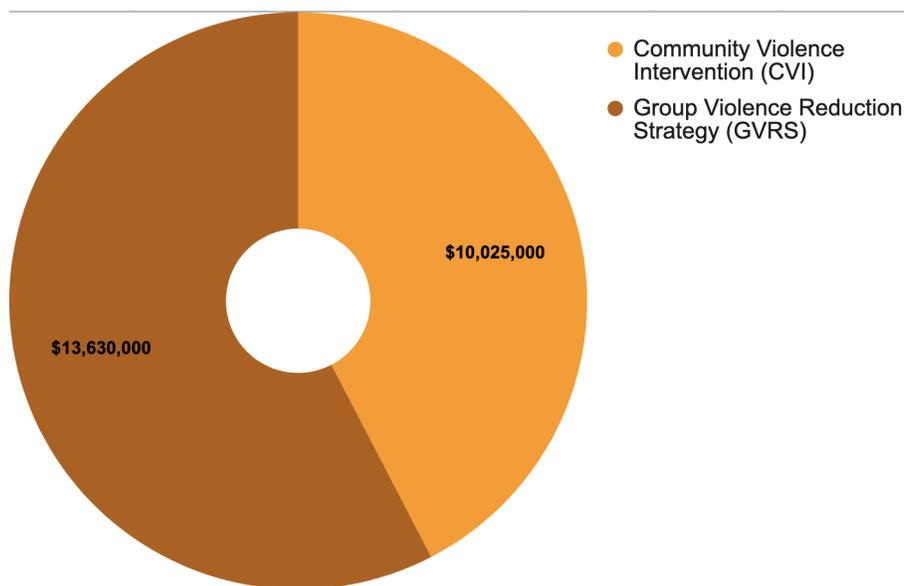
Funding for Victim Services providers in the growing CVI ecosystem will be provided through MONSE's ARPA investment.

Dual Approach: CVI and Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS)

MONSE is tasked with implementing a comprehensive, long-term, and sustainable approach to driving reductions in violence outlined in the Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan. At the same time, the agency is also engaged in the immediate response — most notably through Community Violence Intervention (CVI) and the Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS).

Funding

MONSE will invest a total of \$23,655,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) investment towards gun violence prevention across these two strategies, with \$10,025,000 for CVI and \$13,630,000 for GVRS.



GVRS

The Mayor's Office and MONSE have laid the foundation for GVRS, working in partnership with BPD and the State's Attorney's Office. Implementation of the pilot in the Western District has started with the strong support and collaboration of this tri-party group. Before the end of the year, MONSE and partner agencies will expand GVRS to at least one additional district.



GVRS is a methodical, individualized gun violence intervention that connects people at imminent risk of being the victim or perpetrator of violence with:

1. Intensive case management/life coaching,
2. Emergency housing and relocation assistance,
3. Transitional employment programming, and
4. Other wraparound supports.

The approach facilitates direct, sustained engagement with a small number of group-involved individuals through a partnership of community leaders, social service providers, employers, and law enforcement standing and acting together.

While Baltimore has tried elements of a “focused deterrence” strategy in the past, it has never fully invested in the necessary support services or intensive case management to truly provide a way out for people engaged in violence. Additionally, past GVRS attempts lacked full buy-in from the Mayor, Police Commissioner, and State’s Attorney and scaled too quickly. Now, Baltimore is focused on intentionally and implementing this strategy in a way that will make on-the-ground impacts and be scalable over time.



Internal Evaluation: Safe Streets Operational and Cultural Norms

At Mayor Scott's direction, MONSE conducted an in-depth review of Baltimore's ten current Safe Streets. Completed in the second half of 2021, this evaluation focused on operational and cultural norms across the sites. MONSE will prioritize workforce safety, oversight and accountability of the program, training and development, workforce morale, and overall program efficacy.

Methodology

MONSE conducted a series of group and individual interviews to better understand Safe Streets Baltimore operational and cultural norms. All sites were asked standard interview questions. Site staff also assisted MONSE with scheduling interviews with program participants and neighborhood residents. These supplemental interviews helped gauge public opinions on the successes and opportunities for growth of a given Safe Streets site.

Participant	Interview Type
Site Director	1:1 Interview
Community-Based Organization (CBO)	1:1 Interview
Violence Prevention Coordinator	1:1 Interview
Site Supervisor	1:1 Interview
Outreach Staff	Group Interview
Program Participants	Group Interview
Residents and Community Leaders	1:1 Interview

Findings

To ensure the confidentiality of the site and community members, information provided in this report is aggregated to display general themes emerging from interviews and surveys with CBOs, site staff, residents, participants, and community leaders.

Each CBO operator has met with MONSE to discuss their specific site findings prior to the release of this report.

Workforce Demographic Information

The majority of the Safe Streets Baltimore workforce is between the ages of 35-54.



Age Range	Workforce Percentage
25-34	10%
35-44	37%
45-54	40%
55-64	13%

The vast majority of the workforce is male. 93% percent of the workforce identify as men, while 7% are women.

Gender	Workforce Percentage
Men	93%
Women	7%

Safe Streets Baltimore teams identify as people of color. 97% of the workforce identifies as Black or African American. 3% identify as Native American or Alaska Native.

Race/Ethnicity	Workforce Percentage
Black or African American	97%
Native American or Alaska Native	3%

The Safe Streets workforce bears the brunt of the trauma they face while at work, as well as from their previous life experience: 93% of the workforce has witnessed gun violence, and 60% have been a victim of direct gun violence.

Of Safe Streets workers:

- 83% work hours above and beyond their regular work schedule.
- 67% frequently worry about losing their jobs due to funding concerns.
- 63% say they have been traumatized by their role in mediating conflicts.
- 50% feel adequately trained for their role.



Community Perception of Safe Streets

The following perspectives were shared with MONSE from residents and program participants that engage with one of the 10 Safe Streets sites across Baltimore City:

- "There is more work to do in our community. Safe Streets is helping to lead this effort in Cherry Hill. Their hard work is noticed and appreciated."
- "Safe Streets Sandtown saved my daughter's life. If it had not been for them, I would have lost her due to a petty beef."
- "I feel safer in this community. I allow my kids to go outside because Safe Streets is here."
- "I've witnessed a change in this community because Safe Streets is present. I can walk in this community without fear."
- "This team has become like fathers to me. They showed up to my court date and that's one of the reasons I'm home today."
- "You just missed a conflict that almost was a shooting. These guys have really made a difference in this community."
- "It's always been my desire to work on this team. [The staff] changed my life and I wanted to help change someone else's."
- "I don't respond to situations like I used to. Safe Streets makes me think twice before I react to a situation."
- "Safe Streets is consistently helping me to change my life."

Additionally, MONSE's internal evaluation found that there are some sites where relationships with the surrounding community must be strengthened. This may look like stronger partnerships with community-based organizations in a site's catchment area, as well as in the community as a whole, with an emphasis on ensuring every Safe Streets site has strong buy-in, understanding, and integrity in and around their communities.



Strengths Across Sites

Public Health Approach

The program is modeled after the Chicago-based Cure Violence program, which employs outreach professionals to mediate brewing conflicts that could result in gun violence. Cure Violence trains Baltimore Safe Street staff and works to stop the spread of violence by using the methods and strategies associated with disease control:

- Detecting and interrupting conflicts.
- Identifying and treating the highest risk individuals.
- Changing social norms.

This public health approach is designed to be evidence-based and associated with net reductions in violent incidents, including shootings and homicide, within their geographic boundaries.

Workforce Credibility

The internal evaluation found that the majority of Safe Streets staff members have credibility in the communities in which they serve. They serve as street outreach workers, trained in evidence-based approaches and with relevant life experience to build genuine connections with the people most at risk of gun violence in the Baltimore community.

This workforce possesses a unique skillset, regularly putting themselves on the frontline to mediate conflicts that could escalate to violence.

Community Support

Safe Streets sites host community events that help build a strong rapport between site staff and residents at the highest-risk for becoming the victim of violence or committing a violent act themselves. On a monthly basis, site staff partner on these events with agencies and local organizations to engage the community, share educational materials (like Safe Streets flyers and promotional materials), and connect program participants to needed services and resources.

Additionally, Safe Streets sites citywide mobilize for Shooting Responses within 72 hours of a shooting occurring in a site's post geography. This takes the form of a community mobilization, showcasing a strong, visible community presence. Typically, all sites participate in the Shooting Responses hosted by a given site.

These community-based relationships and partnerships are essential to Safe Streets' power as a program to ultimately shift the behaviors that lead to violent outcomes.



Opportunities for Growth

Geographic Limitations

Baltimore's 10 Safe Streets sites each operate within a fixed physical location based in the community. These geographic boundaries correspond to a BPD post in the top percentile for gun violence. These 10 sites cover 2.6 square miles of Baltimore, a 90 square mile city.

Post Size

While Safe Streets sites are typically named after neighborhoods, the posts they are in correspond to a BPD numbered post with pre-defined boundaries that may or may not cover the entire neighborhood.

Referral Needs

Overall, staff requested stronger partnerships with service providers and resources for the purpose of making participant referrals. Right now, staff express frustration with red tape and the time it takes to connect participants to urgently needed services.

Operations Guidance and City Government Support

Sites and CBOs express a desire for a broad spectrum of support. Outside of the roles and responsibilities outlined in a Safe Streets contract, there has historically been a lack of standardized policy coming out of the City government office responsible for the program. No standard operations manual exists. A lack of guidance has created operational challenges and slowed the contracting and monitoring process.

A lack of stability at the City government level has also presented challenges to staff and CBOs, who are seeking clarity and stability. First, the Safe Streets program experienced the transition of programmatic responsibilities from the Baltimore City Health Department to the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice in 2018. This was one year before a rapid expansion of the model from four to 10 sites, and with it, an increase in administrative and financial responsibilities at City Hall. Proper controls were not in place to ensure program sustainability, effective scalability, and consistent service delivery across operators and political administrations.

Sites and CBOs experienced a high volume of staff turnover, including at the leadership level within the Mayor's Office and MOCJ. These transitions presented some challenges with the swift and effective execution of roles and responsibilities associated with the day-to-day relationship sites have with City Hall. Additionally, the City did not maintain an archive of documentation from meetings and site visits.

Cohesion Across Sites

Staff want regular opportunities to build relationships with and learn from other site staff across the city.



Technology

Some staff reported needing updated technology to complete daily assignments, like logs. Across the 10 sites, CBOs inconsistently provided the appropriate equipment, including phones, laptops, and wi-fi needed to utilize the case management system and maintain contact with program participants.

Budget and Financial Management

Staff and CBOs said that a larger program budget would allow them to provide greater assistance to participants they engage with during community engagement events and canvasses.

Additionally, some CBOs and site staff need greater financial management support. From 2020-2022, sites saw some underspending from the cessation of community engagement events due to COVID-19.

Training

Across Baltimore's 10 Safe Streets sites, staff request additional training to ensure they can properly fulfill their roles and responsibilities, including professional development training.

Some staff request assistance with developing their own leadership potential. Additionally, staff would like training that would facilitate their advancement within and beyond the program.

Conflict Transformation Support

Sites report needing greater guidance and support when there are conflicts that arise between staff, leadership, and/or CBOs.

Total Compensation

The average Safe Streets worker salary ranges between \$40,000 and \$60,000 per year, depending on the role, level of management responsibility, and other factors. Safe Streets staff historically do not receive cost-of-living adjustments. Staff report some challenges making ends meet and are looking for more sustainable salaries to support themselves and their families.

Site Staffing

Some sites report challenges with operations due to not being fully staffed. Sites need support filling vacancies and hiring new employees with credibility in the posts they operate in. Additionally, some sites requested additional personnel to enhance the effectiveness of the program in their immediate target area.



Site Facilities

Some Safe Streets site facilities are not in prime condition to support the work. While some sites are highly visible in the communities in which they serve, other sites are not visible from the street level. Furthermore, some sites operate in offices that are not large enough to facilitate daily operations.

Program Understanding and Awareness

Staff expressed frustration with a lack of understanding and awareness of the work they do and role they perform within Baltimore's CVI ecosystem. Staff suggest a media or promotional campaign to increase public awareness of the program, as well as greater understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the Safe Streets program.



Stack Ranking

As part of MONSE's internal evaluation into Safe Streets operational and cultural norms, each of the 10 Safe Streets Baltimore sites was ranked against one another. Rankings are based on a rubric, which includes site implementation, adherence to contract terms, staff performance, and community support. This stack ranking, along with site-specific feedback derived from MONSE's internal evaluation, was shared with CBOs, site-by-site. Many of these same challenges and opportunities for growth have not only been independently identified by CBOs, but have also been improved and/or corrected since the evaluation period.

MONSE will continue providing support to CBOs through the creation of a comprehensive operations manual for Safe Streets staff and administrators, which will cover everything from site responsibilities to best practices for oversight, accountability, and financial management of annual funding.

Rank	Opened	SSB Site	Operator
1	2019	Belair-Edison	Living Classrooms Foundation
2	2019	Belvedere	LifeBridge Health
3	2008	Cherry Hill	Family Health Centers of Baltimore
4	2016	Sandtown-Winchester	Associated Catholic Charities
5	2019	Brooklyn	Associated Catholic Charities
6	2019	Woodbourne-McCabe	Baltimore Community Mediation Center ⁶
7	2019	Franklin Square	Bon Secours Community Works
8	2019	Penn North	Youth Advocate Programs
9	2007	McElderry Park	Living Classrooms Foundation
10	2013	Park Heights	Park Heights Renaissance

⁶ Side administration responsibilities were transitioned to LifeBridge Health in February 2022.



Stack Ranking Rubric

MOCJ Site Implementation

- Assistance from MOCJ in site staff recruitment
- Level of training provided by MOCJ in Cure Violence model
- Development support provided by MOCJ for site leadership staff
- Technical assistance provided by MOCJ

CBO Adherence to Contract Scope of Work

- Ability and willingness to hire staff with criminal backgrounds
- Ability to adjust HR policies to accommodate staff development and behavioral needs
- Active management and development of site staff, including but not limited to:
 - monthly supervision of Site Director
 - ensuring Site Director is appropriately managing performance of site staff
 - facilitating access to professional development opportunities for site staff
 - ensuring all site staff complete high school diploma or GED
- Availability of in-house resources for Safe Streets participants
- Provision of equipment, supplies, and space necessary for staff to fulfill duties as outlined in scope of work
- Personnel monitoring, including but not limited to: notification to MONSE of vacancies, suspensions, or terminations; yearly drug testing; monthly background checks
- Sufficient administrative and fiscal capacity to effectively administer the overall program and model
- Appropriate and timely submission of budgets, invoices, and supporting documentation of expenditures

SSB Site Staff Performance

Site Director, Violence Prevention Coordinator, Site Supervisor, Violence Interrupters

- Willingness and enthusiasm towards role
- Work ethic and timeliness
- Enters required data in a timely manner
- Goodness of fit with culture of the program
- Ability to manage and develop staff
- Ability to assess and address site needs intuitively

Community Support

- Overall community support and "buy-in" of site
- Community understanding of Safe Streets mission and model
- Community perspective of staff at the site
- Community support of site programming



Recommendations

Covering More Ground: Building the CVI Ecosystem

The Scott Administration is making the shift from Safe Streets as largely a standalone initiative to Safe Streets as a core anchor within the Community Violence Intervention ecosystem needed to save lives and reduce violence.

Currently, Baltimore's 10 Safe Streets sites cover only 2.6 square miles of a 90 square mile city. While many area hospital systems have some form of a hospital-based violence intervention program, the overall system is lacking coordination and collaboration. To have a citywide impact with the power to reduce and prevent violence, Baltimore's Community Violence Interventions must operate on a wider scale and across more sectors to reach people currently not reached.

Baltimore's CVI ecosystem should grow with a focus on strengthening community outreach, mediation services, violence intervention, hospital-based violence intervention, school-based intervention, victim services providers, and intensive life coaching where they are needed. The Safe Streets model will stay rooted in the community, with a focus on deepening relationships and integration with the CVI ecosystem as a whole for maximum impact.

The development of this ecosystem has the added benefit of giving outreach workers a plethora of citywide and neighborhood-specific resources to refer participants to.

MONSE will work with current partner organizations to determine best fit, mutual interest, and optimal alignment in the new comprehensive ecosystem — all with a focus on reducing and preventing violence in Baltimore neighborhoods.

Additionally, the Advisory Board that currently provides guidance to MONSE on Safe Streets Baltimore will be reinstated as a CVI Advisory Board, helping guide the creation of the ecosystem as a whole. As part of this effort, MONSE will open up applications for community representation on this CVI Advisory Board.

Consistent Operations Guidance and Support

Streamlined operations guidance is needed to ensure clear standards around the work the program delivers for Baltimore residents, regardless of operator.

Currently, City Hall does not provide a standard Operating Manual for the organizations that hold contracts to oversee the implementation of individual Safe Streets sites.⁷ A newly created Operations Manual will clearly lay out standards and expectations for program delivery, including the provision of technology, contracting best practices, training requirements, and dispute resolution protocol. This document will also outline roles and responsibilities across all

⁷ It is important to mention that Safe Streets Baltimore implementations are tailored to the communities in which they operate, all while staying grounded in the Cure Violence public health model.



operators to ensure consistent service delivery, particularly as CBOs are added to the ecosystem.

Furthermore, recent evaluations show uneven implementation across the city. Some sites appear to be more effective at preventing and reducing violence than others. There is no one reason, and it is also imperative to institute a regular program evaluation schedule as a part of standard operating protocol. Program evaluations will be conducted and shared publicly every two years.

MONSE will take on a stepped up role as a City government partner. This will include providing stronger oversight and accountability of the program, facilitating ecosystem coordination, and delivering a higher-level of training, professional development, and support to this frontline workforce. MONSE will coordinate monthly strategy meetings across all sites to develop and navigate a programmatic plan of action.

MONSE will also support sites by scheduling hiring panels to reduce staffing deficits where they exist.

Adequate Training and Professional Development

With the assistance of MONSE's Training Coordinator, the City will produce standard CVI training and professional standards for all organizations participating in the ecosystem. This will allow for baseline onboarding and standard training, regardless of position.

The work of violence interrupters is intensive and traumatizing. To prioritize the health and professional development of this workforce, the City will develop a 5-year career development and progression timeline from ground-level work to advanced roles in the CVI ecosystem or elsewhere. MONSE will support the development of multiple career development tracks — including individual contributor, people manager, and leadership — for staff seeking to advance in CVI careers. The City will partner with local academic partners and national partnerships for this training and development.

Improved Total Compensation Package

MONSE will develop a standard total compensation package for Safe Streets sites. CVI workers should be competitively compensated, in alignment with national best practices, and receive cost-of-living increases.

Focus on Workforce Safety

Since 2020, three Safe Streets staff have been killed. At least two of these deaths might have been prevented if the workforce had access to safety equipment, such as bulletproof vests. MONSE will update standard operating procedures to account for the provision of safety equipment and protocol, in alignment with State requirements.

Additionally, the Scott administration is exploring line-of-duty benefits for CVI workers who get injured or lose their lives on the job.



Focus on Workforce Mental and Emotional Wellness

Staff members are continuously navigating the realities of gun violence in Baltimore communities. MONSE will develop standard protocols to strengthen the care of staff members and build a trauma-informed culture.

Need for Adequate Facilities

Safe Streets Baltimore facilities should be accessible, visible, and easily-identifiable to the communities in which they operate. The Scott administration will partner with Safe Streets operators to identify community-based spaces that will allow the program greater visibility and ability to serve in a greater capacity in the community.

Tracking Performance and Outcomes

Site staff currently utilize the Cure Violence database, a national system. MONSE will work to build and deploy a tailored case management system that better serves the needs of the Baltimore community, and allows for greater oversight of key performance indicators (KPIs) and outcomes. This system will help track program impact and collect quantitative and qualitative information about successes and areas for improvement.

Need for Public Awareness Building

Greater public understanding of the Safe Streets program is needed due to the high volume of misinformation in the general discourse. The City and site operators will prioritize educating residents on Safe Streets' role in the community and within the context of Baltimore's CVI ecosystem.

Fostering Baltimore's CVI Ecosystem

Next Steps: Shorter-Term

- Finalize contracts and process payments for organizations in the CVI ecosystem. - *April 2022*
- Prepare FY23 CVI contracts. - *May 2022*
- Roll out Safe Streets Baltimore Operations Manual. - *May 2022*
- Begin HVIP training for area hospital administration and staff. - *June 2022*
- Develop and initiate centralized CVI training opportunities. - *June 2022*
- Start work associated with FY23 contracts. - *July 2022*



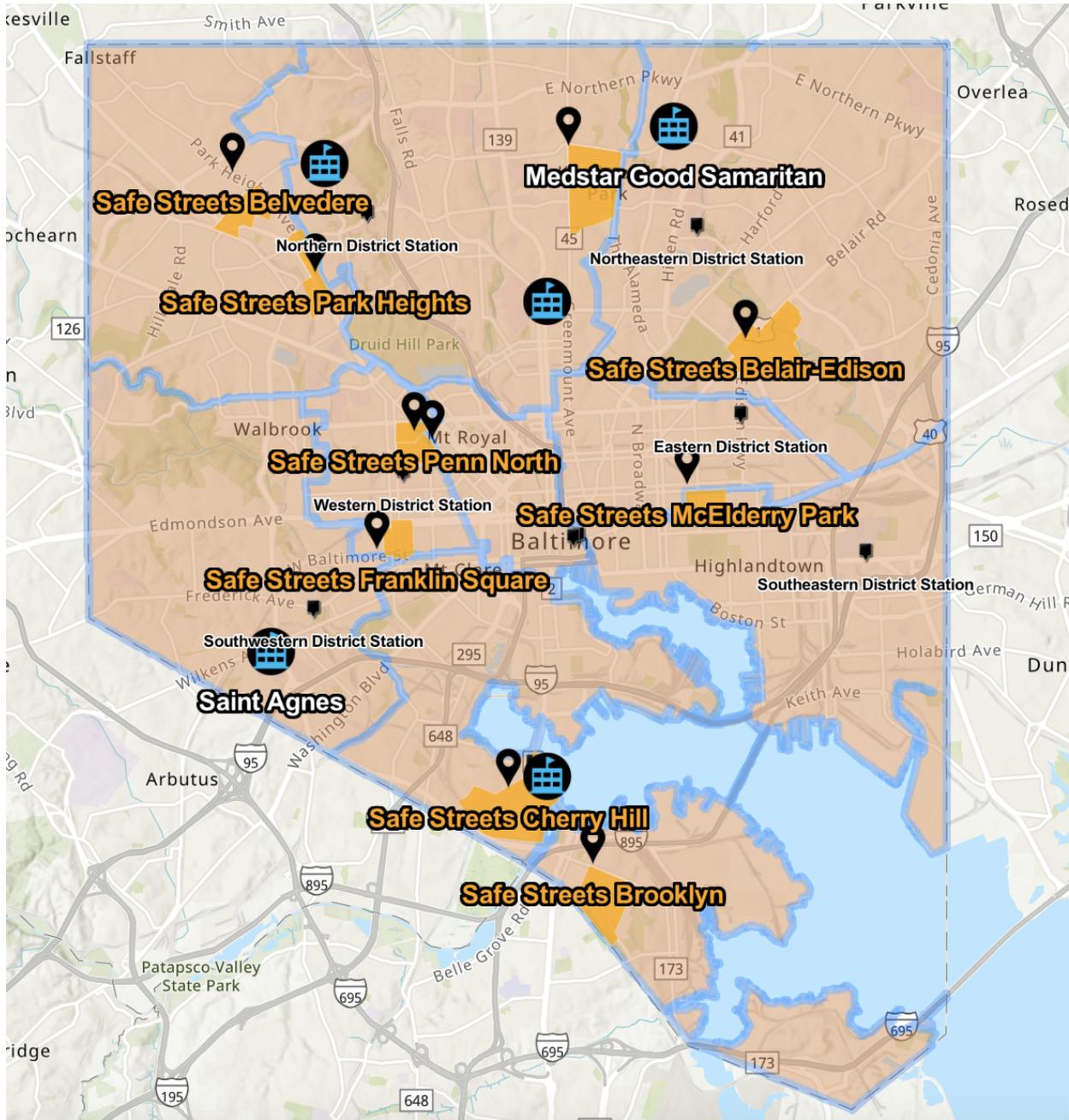
Next Steps: Longer-Term

- Use landscape analysis, violent crime data, and BPD top 30 posts for violent crime to identify where CVI partner organizations are needed to strategically build the ecosystem.
- Establish formal school-based violence intervention partnership with BCPSS.
- Develop a 5-year career pathway for frontline CVI workers.
- Assess academic evaluation of CVI, anticipated for the first half of 2023.
- Make determinations around a potential future RFP process for Safe Streets.



Appendix 1: CVI Ecosystem Map

[Click here to view the interactive map](#), which will be updated to include additions to the growing Community Violence Intervention (CVI) ecosystem.





Appendix 3: Safe Street Post Data

As mentioned in this report, Baltimore City is home to 10 Safe Streets sites, each with their own staff and physical location based in the community, across eight administrators. Each Safe Streets site is intentionally located in a BPD post in the top percentile of gun violence across the city.

The following chart includes information about Baltimore's sites, when they opened, and in which BPD post geography they work.

Opened	SSB Site	BPD Post
2007	McElderry Park	221
2008	Cherry Hill	924
2013	Park Heights	612
2016	Sandtown-Winchester	731
2019	Belair-Edison	415
2019	Belvedere	614
2019	Brooklyn	913
2019	Woodbourne-McCabe	711
2019	Franklin Square	732
2019	Penn North	524

The chart on the page that follows shows the number of shootings, both fatal and non-fatal, that occurred within a Safe Streets post geography, broken down by year.⁸ The yellow highlighted cells indicate the year in which the Safe Streets site was opened.

⁸ Shooting data by year and police post was provided to MONSE by BPD.

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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Director



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	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19	'20	'21
McElderry Park (221)	5	5	12	14	9	9	11	13	6	7	4	6	4	8	8	2	14	19	15	25
Cherry Hill (924)		29	21	20	40	12	19	15	7	8	10	11	1	10	12	16	11	13	7	24
Park Heights (612)							8	8	7	4	3	7	5	5	4	6	5	2	6	2
Sandtown-Winchester (731)										13	10	11	4	17	24	20	11	15	8	17
Belair-Edison (415)													3	3	2	1	1	1	5	1
Belvedere (614)													16	25	11	22	19	17	16	19
Brooklyn (913)													9	22	27	31	17	17	17	16
Woodbourne-McCabe (711)													7	11	11	16	8	9	9	1
Franklin Square (732)													0	4	2	3	5	2	2	2
Penn North (524)													4	13	11	3	6	12	11	0