

THE BLUEPRINT FOR A SAFER PHILADELPHIA

PRESENTED BY COUNCILMEMBER CURTIS JONES, JR.



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The Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia

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Discussion Topics and Solutions

- Community Engagement
- Data Collection and Analysis
- Policy Development
- Implementation and Monitoring
- Evaluation and Reporting

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On Saturday, September 30, 2023, we hosted the Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia Crime Summit at Saint Joseph's University designed to facilitate a solution-focused discussion on ways to address violent crime in Philadelphia. Our vision was to create a response to the 100 Shooting Review Committee Report of 2022, a document that focused on the root causes responsible for the City's gun violence crisis. The aforementioned report was developed by many law enforcement experts and city agencies.

The Crime Summit brought together over 150 stakeholders from the private sector and multiple government agencies, including the Philadelphia Law Department, Philadelphia Police Department, Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, boots on the ground credible messengers, the PA Human Relations Commission, Ceasefire PA, the School District of Philadelphia, the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, Belmont Behavioral Health Center, and the Defender Association of Philadelphia to name a few. All who attended were aligned on a common purpose: To engage in a candid dialogue to develop a "Blueprint" that would improve the quality of life in the city and assist in relieving the plague of senseless violence.

Following the opening remarks, a series of 13 breakout sessions commenced focused on various issues related to crime in the City. The purpose of each breakout session was to facilitate an informed discussion about the topic at hand and to offer solutions. Saint Joseph's University students took notes at each session throughout the day.

This document summarizes the over 130 critical recommendations, perspectives, and solutions offered throughout the Summit. As such, it is our hope that this will serve as a useful tool for Mayor Parker and her administration. Additionally, we also hope that this crime summit represents not just one day in time but, instead, a jumping-off point so that we can continue to gather experts and concerned citizens together to improve the lives of Philadelphians.

I would like to thank all, the moderators of the breakout sessions, my staff, Josh Cohen, Charlita Davis, Anthony Glass, Alyssa Neducsin, Jala McDaniel, Shay Quinones, Sarah DeBeradinis, Sophia Mosley, and Caroline Stack, St. Joseph's University, and most importantly all the stakeholders that attended. We have a mandate - from President Biden, to Governor Shapiro, to members of City Council to move Philadelphia in a safer direction. The Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia will do that. Carpe Diem. Let's get to work!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CJ' followed by a stylized flourish.

Curtis Jones, Jr.



Education and the School to Prison Pipeline

“There are 48 zip codes in the City of Philadelphia 19 of them produce a majority of the inmates on State Road. We need to close prisons and open opportunity.”

Expand Safe School Corridor Programs

The Problem

Students coming to and from school face a variety of challenges. In neighborhoods such as Kensington, students have to dodge the effects of drugs and gun violence. Arrival and dismissals are also a catalyst for violence and fighting, as school yard fights can spill out onto city streets.

The Solution

Safe School Corridor Programs are designed to bring members of the community together to provide students with a safe passageway to their school building from the surrounding neighborhood. These volunteers walk with students to make them feel safe and disrupt any illegal activity. Each school, public, charter, and parochial in the City of Philadelphia should meet on a weekly basis with stakeholders such as district police, the school district, and SEPTA to share and exchange safety tips. Cameras should be installed in the most violent educational corridors. Finally, crossing guards are the eyes and ears that prevent trouble, making sure that every school in underserved communities has one is key.

The Next Steps

Adequate funding should be made available to the School District to maintain and expand the Safe School Corridor Program. The Superintendent, The Charter School Office, and the Archdiocese must work with their local schools to set up community councils to implement this program and facilitate communication with elected officials.

Address Racial Inequities in Education

The Problem

Of the 48 zip codes in Philadelphia, 19 of them make up 90% of the inmates in the prisons on State Road. Racial disparities in healthcare and education must be focused on to address the school to prison pipeline and other issues.

The Solution

The Commonwealth's Fair Funding Formula must be reevaluated to provide funding to the schools with the most need. The needs of Samuel Gompers School is different from the needs of John Barry School.

The Next Steps

Pennsylvania legislators must work to provide fair funding to the Philadelphia public school system to ensure children have what they need to succeed.

Provide Access to Schools as well as Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Problem

Many students feel safer at their local school. But, once the school day ends, students must leave the building and enter an environment they may not feel comfortable in. In addition, many youth sports teams are being priced out of local schools and recreation centers which creates a barrier to access.

The Solution

By providing non-traditional and summer access to Philadelphia School buildings, students can have access to meals they might not get at home, security that they need, academic help they desire, and the support they require. In addition, by providing funding to the School District and the Department of Parks and Recreation for the costs of youth sports to compete at schools and parks and recreation facilities will destroy the barrier to access. There should be multipurpose buildings that incorporate education, recreational activities, libraries, and health centers in compatible spaces.

The Next Steps

The Parker Administration has already pledged support for a program like this to give students the help they need. However, City Council must work collaboratively with stakeholders to fund these programs, and the School District must ensure that it is adequately staffed.

Ensure Early Intervention in Schools

The Problem

The 100 Shooter Review Report noted that early intervention and engagement in the public school system is key. Schools must be safe and familiar places to foster growth. Unfortunately, in some schools throughout the School District, this is not the case. Classrooms have had bullet proof blankets placed on the windows, those with addictions have overdosed on schools' steps, and students are forced to live with the trauma of their classmates being killed. Because of trauma, young people are becoming desensitized. This is not normal, and students deserve help. Every person currently incarcerated in Philadelphia's prisons were children at one point. Prevention and intervention may likely result in diverting children and youth away from anti-social activities. Prevention and early intervention are key approaches that must be formalized to engage at risk children and youth to increase the likely of not becoming justice involved.

The Solution

Providing trauma informed counselors in every school in the School District five days a week will make a massive impact on the mental health and well-being of our students. In addition, requiring annual mental health screenings and providing treatment for the results of these screenings will help transform the youth of today. Finally, there must be intergovernmental cooperation to identify at-risk youth.

The Next Steps

City Council, the Administration, and the General Assembly must work together to fund this initiative and find the necessary amount of counselors to adequately staff our students. By keeping psychiatrists on school staff, students can receive proper treatment for their issues. The School District must hire enough professionals to be available to every student.

Provide Conflict Resolution Training

The Problem

Some students in the School District of Philadelphia have resorted to choosing violence over dialogue. In 2020, City Council passed a resolution introduced by Councilmember Katherine Gilmore Richardson authorizing the Committee on Education to hold hearings on adding conflict resolution training to the School District curriculum. Hearings were held in 2020 and 2021.

The Solution

Conflict resolution training increases the ability to think before you shoot and allows for the constructive dialogue that is the first step in resolving conflict.

The Next Steps

The School District of Philadelphia must fully evaluate the use of conflict resolution training in schools and ensure that this training is available at every school in the District. Training should also be provided through the use of performances to help students learn to think before they shoot.

Youth Courts

The Problem

Children in school frequently get into disagreements with other students over their interpersonal relationships or issues like bullying. This creates an environment for fights and even potentially gun violence.

The Solution

Establishing youth courts in district schools give students who have been accused of wrong-doing the opportunity to defend themselves. According to the National Gang Center, youth courts are able to reduce juvenile delinquency through peer pressure. Youth courts show youth that their actions have consequences and that a trial by a jury of your peers might not always return in your favor while also avoiding fights.

The Next Steps

The School District of Philadelphia must work to establish these programs in schools and work to adequately train students and staff and oversee these proceedings effectively.

Reduce Drop-Out Rates

The Problem

In the Philadelphia public school system, the dropout rate has been increasing over the last few years. When youth are not being properly educated, they are not being prepared to take on the world as an effective member of society and that means they can sometimes turn to illegal activities.

The Solution

After determining which schools in the District have the highest number dropout rates, The School District must flood those schools with counselors, social workers, and psychologists. There also needs to be an in-depth understanding of the needs of parents so they can be the cultivators of youth minds. The use of community schools, The Department of Human Services, and community umbrella agencies can also be effective. A Parent University 2.0 would also be an effective tool.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work collaboratively with the School District of Philadelphia to fund these initiatives to ensure that the appropriate resources are brought to the appropriate locations.

Use Art Therapy and Performing Arts

The Problem

Many young people as well as at-risk youth in Philadelphia who suffer from trauma and PTSD do not have a healthy or safe place to heal from what they have seen or what has happened to them.

The Solution

Creating partnerships between effected students and organizations like Mural Arts Philadelphia, art clubs, or performing arts groups can give students a creative outlet to express themselves, as opposed to picking up a gun. Interactive theater creates dialogue to talk through dangerous scenarios. These programs can be used to demonstrate the truth behind incarceration, that it does not come with "street cred," and it may also teach youth people to "think before you shoot."

The Next Steps

The Administration must work with Mural Arts to develop this relationship with the School District. City Council must also diligently provide funding to Mural Arts to allow them to carry out this program effectively. The School District and the Administration must also work with groups like The Mighty Writers and Herman Davis' Peace and Love to allow for collaborative partnerships to flourish.

Provide Funding for School Supplies

The Problem

Over 300,000 people live below the poverty line in Philadelphia. This creates massive problems for kids who need school supplies, money for lunch, a warm coat, or books to read. Without these essential materials, there is no way for students to be able to compete on equal academic footing.

The Solution

At-risk youth should receive a weekly stipend providing 50 or even 25 dollars a week that can be used to further their academic strengths. Through initiatives like "The Promise" (see recommendation), we can create a social contract for youth to increase outcomes.

The Next Steps

City Council, the Administration, the School District, Cradles of Crayons and the private sector must work together to identify a pilot program for at-risk youth to test this project for a one-year period. After identifying the strengths and weaknesses, these stakeholders can then make the necessary reforms and identify appropriate funding sources.

Ensure Teachers are Culturally Competent

The Problem

The City of Philadelphia is a majority minority city. Black and brown educators create better between dialogues with their students. Gun violence is correlated to both educational shortcomings and poverty, so ensuring that Philadelphia's public schools are the best they can be is necessary.

The Solution

Ensuring that every classroom is fully staffed is the first priority that must be addressed. Further, making sure that our schools in high crime and high poverty areas are safe spaces for every student that needs them. In order to do this, offering to pay for prospective students teaching degrees in return for a teaching in a City school would be a way to increase the amount of teachers in the School District.

The Next Steps

The Administration must work to provide funding to the School District for this initiative. In addition, The School District should work with local universities to form this program and choose its inaugural class.

Fund Summer School

The Problem

Sometimes, despite students' best efforts, they need to attend summer school. However, summer school programs do not compare to the rigor of the academic year and students are not prepared for the years ahead. In addition, summertime learning loss and a lack of summer activities increases the drop-out rate.

The Solution

It is common knowledge that if a student cannot read by the 4th grade they can fall into gun violence. Ramping up funding for summer school and year-round academic programs will help ensure students are prepared for their academic careers.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must provide funding to the School District for this purpose.

Disrupt the School to Prison Pipeline

The Problem

Four city or city-adjacent organizations that deal with our youth are the School District, The District Attorney's Office, the Department of Human Services, and the Defender Association of Philadelphia. However, there needs to be more coordination among these organizations.

The Solution

These departments should conduct weekly strategy and planning calls to centralize needs for youth in Philadelphia. A memorandum of understanding should be completed to allow for data sharing among these entities.

The Next Steps

The Administration, the Defender Association, and the School District should start conducting these meetings within the first 100 days of 2024.



Poverty and the Criminal Justice System

**“When black men get locked up,
black women and children get
locked out.”**

Create a School to Paycheck Pipeline

The Problem

Many city departments are facing critical worker shortages. There are 1,200 unfilled positions in the Police Department, 900 in the Department of Prisons, 500 in the Water Department, 500 in the Fire Department, 450 in the Department of Human Services, and 400 in the Department of Streets. These are essential positions that need to be filled. Many high schools have CTE and vocational programs that prepare our young people for positions just like this, and there are many more young people looking for a career upon high school graduation. The Philadelphia Streets Department currently has the Future Track Program that can translate into 40-50 young people earning a living wage and better than average benefits. But, not everyone is part of these programs.

The Solution

By working with our city departments and tech schools, students can learn life-changing skills that will last for years to come. These programs must be expanded to create a school to paycheck pipeline.

The Next Steps

The Administration must incentivize City operating departments to identify pathways for high school students to join their staff upon graduation. The School District must also be involved with this process to expand CTE programs in community schools.

Address the Economic Needs of Communities

The Problem

The needs of every neighborhood in the City is different from each other. What is needed in Manayunk is different from the needs of Fox Chase, Kensington, Grays Ferry, Pennsport, North Philadelphia, Germantown, Lawndale, and Mayfair. Each of these neighborhoods has a different heartbeat that needs specific individualized plans. Non-functioning street lights and vacant properties create a fertile breeding ground for crime.

The Solution

Every neighborhood needs to create a neighborhood improvement plan that details the needs of their community from an economic, law enforcement, crime, youth opportunities, housing, and transportation perspective, and should make concrete recommendations on what needs to be done to improve quality of life in these neighborhoods. This will also work to improve community unity.

The Next Steps

The Administration should work with neighborhoods to release comprehensive improvement plans and then work to implement those proposed solutions.

Focus on Skills in the Workforce while in Prison

The Problem

The point of imprisonment is supposed to both punish and rehabilitate an individual. Philadelphia succeeds in the punishment but fails in the rehabilitation. Many individuals once released from prison do not have the necessary skills to maintain civilian life without returning to crime.

The Solution

By offering targeted skills programs within prison walls which will culminate in certifications and a pathway to union employment, returning citizens will be able to leave incarceration with the skills to succeed. Initiatives like the Promise can provide a helping hand for food, transportation, and medicine for returning citizens.

The Next Steps

The Administration and the Department of Prisons must work with local unions in Philadelphia to develop workforce training programs that will provide technical skills and guarantee returning citizens a job upon release.

Reduce Fines and Fees for Returning Citizens

The Problem

Upon release from prison, many individuals who have been incarcerated lack stable employment. Because of their record, they might also find it hard to find a job upon release. Unfortunately, due to these conditions, the imposition of court costs and fees can become an incredible burden on returning citizens. This could potentially lead to defaulting on payments or returning to crime in order to pay these fees back. There are so many other payments that returning citizens need to be concerned with such as food, transportation, housing, medical, and child support but they all get pushed to the backburner so court fines and legal fees can be paid.

The Solution

There are more than 240 organizations that hire returning citizens. By partnering with these organizations, individuals who have served time in prison could be able to begin the process of applying for a job while still incarcerated and then will be able to start shortly after their release. Coupling this with delayed payment on court costs and fees or creating a payment schedule to allow for smaller payments would allow returning citizens to not have to pay crushing fees immediately and can gradually pay them back. By working to address these critical issues, providing individuals with a way to address key costs is important.

The Next Steps

City Council, the Administration, and the Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity must work with local businesses that employ returning citizens to create a prison to paycheck pipeline for qualifying individuals. The First Judicial District of Pennsylvania should create a program to allow for the payment of fines and fees to be paid back over an appropriate period of time. Finally, by working with colleagues at the state level, legislation can be passed to ease these burdens as well.

Increase Coordination among City Departments

The Problem

At the Crime Summit, the Director of the Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity asked all attendees that lead a city department to stand. He then stated that many times these organizations feel alone and isolated from other departments over the course of their work.

The Solution

The Administration must work to increase collaboration among all city departments to ensure everyone is ready, willing, and able to work together.

The Next Steps

The Police Department should work with the Department of Human Services, The Department of Human Services, the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania should collaborate on key initiatives similar to the way the Criminal Justice Advisory Board operates.

Host Entrepreneurship Conferences and Business Success Tips

The Problem

If we cannot find a job, we should create one. While 18% of City jobs are vacant, when access to a job is prohibitive the entrepreneurship model should be explored.

The Solution

Jobs like painting, moving, and extermination are low-cost sole proprietorships that should be used as viable alternatives when there are barriers to employment. The Chamber of Commerce should sponsor monthly luncheons for the business community to meet with local entrepreneurs to share tips and tricks. In addition, a weekly podcast should be started with rotating major players in the business community so they can share their tips for success.

The Next Steps

The Chamber of Commerce should begin sponsoring these events by the summer of 2024.

Provide Second Chances

The Problem

Many returning citizens find it to be difficult to find employment after being released from prison. Many organizations are unwilling to provide second chances to those who are trying to better themselves.

The Solution

Businesses can receive an incentive if they agree to partner with returning citizens. Businesses that receive certification as returning citizens friendly can receive either tax credits or reimbursements for salaries. These programs should be expanded if more businesses are interested in partnering.

The Next Steps

Currently, under the Fair Chance Hiring Program in the Department of Commerce, businesses can be reimbursed \$6 per hour for the salary of a returning citizen if they are being paid \$15 per hour. That number should be expanded to provide a greater incentive for businesses, and more work must be done to get businesses involved in these programs. The Commerce Department must facilitate this.

THE BLUEPRINT FOR A SAFER PHILADELPHIA



Combating the Threat of Illegal Guns and Increasing the Closure Rate of Homicides

"Processing ballistics is an essential component of trials. Without witnesses, we cannot have successful prosecutions."

Bolster Witness Protection

The Problem

The worst kept secret in Philadelphia was that the Marriott used to house witnesses was located across the street from the Criminal Justice Center. Witnesses would see the going to the Criminal Justice Center and as a result would frequently refuse to testify. In order to convict someone who has committed a crime, witnesses must come forward to testify in court about what they have seen. However, with the current no-snitch culture that targets witnesses who intend to testify, many will not do so in fear of their lives. Cases can be dismissed in court because of the failure of a witness to appear in court to testify.

The Solution

City Council must continue to fund witness relocation programs. Creating an inter-agency, inter-state, program where the Department of Housing and Urban Development renovates properties for witnesses to live in while preparing to testify would be a way to improve witness protection. Once they have successfully testified, they can then be relocated back their original residence or to a location of their choosing. At that time, HUD will also have identified dozens of other properties that they have begun rehabilitating to accommodate a new group of witnesses. This creates a "shell-game" to keep witnesses protected and criminals in the dark.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must create a working group consisting of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, The Philadelphia Housing Authority, and the District Attorney's Office to work towards facilitating this program. In addition, City Council and the Administration must continue to provide adequate funding in local, state, and federal budgets for witness relocation purposes. Upon development, we should measure its impact on reliable witness participation in Court.

Create The “Helping Hand” Inmate Release Program

The Problem

When an inmate is released from prison, The Department of Prisons sometimes does not step in to ensure that those being released have a stable release plan. Inmates can be released in the dead of winter at two in the morning without so much as a winter coat, no housing, no food, and only a transportation ticket to Bridge and Pratt. This frequently contributes to recidivism because there is little help for those in reentry. Rodney Hargrove was killed right outside the prison when he was released and waiting for a bus.

The Solution

The City of Philadelphia must require that when an inmate is released, they have a home plan for where they will be able to live, work, and maintain a sustainable wage. Current state and city programs have fallen short.

These home plans could contain necessary resources upon release from incarceration such as food and housing vouchers, medication assistance, mental health resources, job referrals, and clothing just to name a few.

The Next Steps

The Administration must appoint a Commissioner for the Department of Prisons that will prioritize this initiative and ensure that returning citizens have what they need to succeed. The City must also partner with rideshare programs to assist with transportation, provide gift cards to cover with food costs, and work with organizations like the Urban League and the Urban Affairs Coalition to provide for this program.

Evaluate Gun Buy Back Efforts

The Problem

Gun buy backs have been hailed recently as a method to reduce crime and get illegal guns off the street. However, this does not tell the full story. Many times, the firearms that are turned in at these events are not the guns that are being used to commit crimes and people just bring unwanted firearms for the reward.

The Solution

The City of Philadelphia must explore new options for gun surrender programs. Gun buyback programs are a part of the solution to get the number of firearms off the streets. They cannot be the only solution. St. Louis, Missouri had a program where police officers would knock on doors and ask parents of at-risk youth for consent to search their homes for illegal firearms (See Council Resolution 230906). This program has created a much higher number of illegal guns being removed from the street and could contribute to a decrease in firearms crimes if implemented in Philadelphia.

The Next Steps

The Police Department must look at programs outside of Philadelphia to understand best practices that can be replicated in our city. City Council and the Administration must also work in lockstep to appropriate funding to increase rewards for gun buybacks with higher incentives for specific firearms.

Create a Criminal Justice and Public Safety Reinvestment Fund

The Problem

There are numerous worthwhile programs that contribute to public safety in Philadelphia. These things include boots on the ground credible messenger groups, recruitment for officers in the Philadelphia Police Department, funding for inspectors in the Department of License and Inspections which can shut down nuisance businesses, money to provide for witness relocation, or gun buyback programs. However, the City must choose what initiatives to pay for through various funds.

The Solution

A Criminal Justice and Public Safety Reinvestment fund which would take unused funds from public safety departments at the end of the fiscal year, as well as reinvest new fines placed on various quality of life crimes could be used to fund these worthwhile programs.

The Next Steps

City Council must pass legislation to make this fund a reality. City Council would need to pass a resolution authorizing the creation of the fund, an ordinance authorizing a ballot question to be voted on during a special election, and an ordinance must be introduced to create or enhance these fines. This is anticipated to happen in the Spring of 2024.

Bolster the Gun Violence Intervention (GVI) Program

The Problem

GVI, also known as Group Violence Intervention is designed to target the small number of people committing the largest amounts of violence. The program is well designed and effective in reducing violence, but this program must be expanded and boosted to increase its reach. More similar programs must be created to allow youth not eligible for GVI to receive support and develop a stronger safety net.

The Solution

Expanding the GVI initiative to every police district in the City, and increasing the number of staff will allow for greater utilization of this program.

The Next Steps

City Council must work with the Administration to fund this initiative and ensure it is brought to the scale.

Decrease Timelines for Search Warrants

The Problem

It can take eight hours to properly obtain a search warrant from a judge on the Court of Common Pleas. This drastic timetable can lead to one of two options; defendants getting away and hiding evidence, or an illegal search that jeopardizes prosecution.

The Solution

In order to solve this massive problem, assigning a specific judge to oversee search warrants on a particular day can cut down on this backlog. It will allow for faster processing of search warrants so searches can be conducted in a quick, efficient, and constitutionally compliant manner.

The Next Steps

The First Judicial District at its earliest opportunity must create a schedule assigning judges to oversee search warrants and making sure that information is readily available to all who need it will go a long way in improving the prospects of search warrants.

Combat Ghost Guns

The Problem

Ghost Guns are untraceable firearms that are purchased as kits and then assembled by users. These firearms have no serial number and are increasingly being used in a larger number of homicides and non-fatal shootings.

The Solution

Philadelphia has passed laws regulating ghost guns, but as with many firearms restrictions, they have been challenged because of preemption. Working with colleagues in the PA General Assembly to further regulate firearms, including ghost guns, is necessary. Finally, working to hold manufactures of ghost guns liable in Court must remain a priority through aggressive lawsuits.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work in lock step with legislators at both the state and federal levels to address the scourge of ghost guns in communities. In addition, appointing a City Solicitor committed to furthering lawsuits against ghost gun manufacturers is key. However, without adequate funding for these initiatives they cannot be as strong as they need to be.

Examine Gun Shops

The Problem

Half of the firearms used in illegal shootings come from one-percent of licensed gun dealers.

Many times this is through straw purchasing. Gun shops exist for a profit, but they need to be better partners in reducing the threat of illegal guns. There is currently a six-month backlog in converting paper sales records into electronic records. This makes it difficult for investigators to identify suspicious sales. Gun shops are also missing or ignoring the obvious signs of straw purchasing.

The Solution

Gun shops must be a part of the solution. Many times, these businesses see potential straw purchasers enter and leave their store with five of the same make and model firearms. This is obvious straw purchasing behavior. These activities should be reported to the proper authorities. The Philadelphia Law Department has filed a lawsuit against three of these shops for enabling straw purchases but more needs to be done. Perhaps even rewards should be provided to firearm shop owners who make reports that lead to the successful prosecution of straw purchasers. In addition, passing legislation to specify a timeline for how long it can be before paper records are converted could speed up the process for identifying bad actors. Additional state-wide legislation can limit the amount of guns a person can purchase in one month.

The Next Steps

Straw purchasing is already prohibited. And, dealers are already licensed by the Philadelphia Police Department. The Philadelphia Police Department should begin inspecting gun dealers in the City Limits on annual compliance with existing laws to address the diversion of firearms into underground markets through straw purchasing and illegal sales. And, they should deny permits to dealers who repeatedly fail to comply with existing legal requirements.

Fund Public Defense

The Problem

Attorneys at the Defender Association of Philadelphia represent 70% of the defendants in Philadelphia's court system, but, funding for the Defenders is woefully inadequate. Salary comparison between the Defenders and the private sector means that they cannot retain their top talent. Without top talent at the Defenders Association, cases could be potentially overturned on appeal leading to criminals being released from incarceration. There are also not enough attorney's to adequately staff their child advocacy units.

The Solution

The solution to this is plain and simple. Provide funding to the Defender Association of Philadelphia for salary purposes.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must prioritize funding to the Defender Association in the fiscal year budget and all appropriations bills passed by Council.

Discussion Topics and Solutions

- Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline
 - "The Promise"-Pathway to a job, higher education, or the military
- Effective changes to disciplinary policies
- Strategies to improve school safety
- Reduce the correlation between attendees at School District of Philadelphia schools and prisoners on State Road





Addressing Mental Health

“Prisons should not be warehouses for those who need treatment for mental health.”

Better Define Definition of Trauma, Mental Health, and Break Stigma

The Problem

With the closure of mental health institutions, individuals with mental illnesses either end up on the street or in prison. Neither a place where they will receive the level of care they need. In some cases, quality of life can increase when an individual is incarcerated because they are no longer living on the street. This is not a sustainable system. Many times individuals that could benefit from mental health support services refrain from doing so because of stigma.

The Solution

In order to better define the issues that face us, experts from many different backgrounds must come together to make these determinations. There must also be standardization for how providers provide services to ensure everyone seeking care receives what they need. More work needs to be done to understand compounding trauma as it evolves.

The Next Steps

The Administration must bring together interagency stakeholders meetings within the Department of Public Health, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services to make determinations on how the Administration will define these terms and work to address them over the next four years. However, the government must not be the only ones involved in this area. Many for-profit, nonprofit, cultural, culturally competent/anti-racist, and religious organizations must be engaged as well to provide funding for mental health.

Provide Safe, Free, and Anonymous Mental Health Support Services

The Problem

Access needs to be expanded to support systems for mental healthcare. Current systems do not have the necessary resources to reduce stigma and bridge divisions across society while also being affordable to the residents who need it most. For too long, the criminal justice system has been used to disguise the mental health needs of inmates.

The Solution

Community based platforms must be incorporated to provide support. Tapping into existing resources for public-private partnerships must be examined to understand the opportunities that are working and need to be expanded.

The Next Steps

The Department of Public Health must work with registered community organizations and other neighborhood groups to bring culturally competent and trauma responsive mental health support systems to those who need it most. The Department should also leverage all the supports allotted through Medicaid to get the resources needed to Black and Brown communities who have experienced health disparities for generations. The Administration and must work to make sure that these programs are free of charge.

Use Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

The Problem

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is one of the most effective ways to treat substance use disorder and mental health disorders. Heavy drinkers are 2.67% more likely to be shot than non-drinkers. The traditional mental health system must envision new ways of working to meet the moment.

The Solution

The Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services should explore partnerships with the private sector such as EMIR Healing Center to create different types of mental health support services.

The Next Steps

DBHIDS should hire a staff member to specifically explore nontraditional private sector partnerships and invest in organizations capable of doing the work and relatable to Black and Brown communities.





Alternatives to Incarceration

**"We cannot arrest ourselves
out of this crisis."**

-Commissioner Blanche Carney, Philadelphia Department of Prisons.

Create Community Courts

The Problem

Under the “broken windows theory,” low hanging-fruit quality of life crimes lead to more crime down the line. Many times, these crimes are committed in low-income communities far away from Center City where these crimes would be tried in the Criminal Justice Center. This creates problems for witnesses’ ability to come to court and testify. Programs like the accelerated misdemeanor program (AMP) court have been effective ways to bring courts to the community. To prevent quality of life crimes, we need a more thorough review of charging and prosecution thresholds

The Solution

Establishing community courts in neighborhoods would give the ability for residents to make it more easily to court as well as offer lower-level offenders with alternatives to incarceration. However, there must be evaluation to ensure that these programs are cost-effective so that the “juice is worth the squeeze.”

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work together with the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, the District Attorney’s Office, and the Defender Association of Philadelphia to establish these courts, as well as to effectively fund these initiatives. These stakeholders must also form a working group to study potential reforms that would consolidate motor vehicle violations, evictions, and other types of cases to create a one-stop shop for the criminal justice system. The Philadelphia Police must build courtrooms in each of the 21-district headquarters to make these courts a reality.

Expand Specialty Courts

The Problem

The City of Philadelphia has a variety of specialty diversionary courts including Driving while Intoxicated Court, The AMP Court, Project Dawn Court, Mental Health Court, and Veterans Court. Each one of these organizations caters to a specific population and works to provide alternatives to incarceration

The Solution

By bringing these courts up to scale, Philadelphia can work to divert low-level offenders out of the criminal justice system. Specialty and diversion courts also need to be expanded to ensure youth access. In addition, centralizing these courts in specific neighborhoods at local police district courtrooms can create a one-stop-shop for those involved.

The Next Steps

The District Attorney's Office, the Defender Association of Philadelphia, and the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania must work to expand their offerings into more locations.

Reimagine Alternatives to Prison

The Problem

There are many alternatives to incarceration or diversionary programs. Many times, people would be better served by being diverted from the criminal justice system. These systems already exist, but there are more creative options that can be developed to show individuals the consequences of their actions.

The Solution

Working to establish unique alternative sentencing programs can create an awareness that actions have consequences. These programs include boot camps for youth, sentencing to voluntary military service, or services at a funeral home like Sister Khadijah Alderman's would make his possible.

The Next Steps

The First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, State Legislators, The Philadelphia District Attorney's Office and the Defender Association must work together to establish potential partnerships.





Law Enforcement

"It is not criminal justice reform or public safety. It is criminal justice reform and public safety."

Increase Law Enforcement Recruitment

The Problem

The Philadelphia Police Department is currently suffering from inadequate staffing levels with roughly 900 positions left unfilled and 800 officers enrolled in the DROP program. The Department needs to be fully staffed by officers who look like the communities they serve. There must also be a change in mind-set as well, this leads to avoiding the over-stigmatizing of communities.

The Solution

-In 2023, City Council appropriated \$2,000,000 in funding for recruitment. The Pennsylvania General Assembly is currently debating legislation to relax fitness and reading requirements for recruits until after they have graduated from the academy. In addition, the current use of the police recruit training model should be expanded as well as a review and reevaluation of the questions and answers that most commonly lead to candidate disqualification should be conducted.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work to prioritize funding for police recruitment in the annual budget and bi-annual transfers of appropriations. Advertisements targeting specific groups should be aired to increase recruitment. Finally, City officials must work collaboratively with partners at the State level to pass legislation easing recruitment requirements.

Increase the number of Foot Patrol and Bike Officers in Philadelphia

The Problem

While the City is suffering from a crime crisis, Philadelphia Police Officers can sometimes be so overwhelmed that it is necessary for community policing to be placed on the backburner.

But nothing deters crime more than knowing the officers that protect and serve in the community you live reside.

The Solution

By increasing the number of sworn officers, the Police Department will be able to effectively staff their police districts. On November 9, 2023, City Council announced \$2 million in funding for police retention and recruitment, and the City must work to expand the police explorers' program to create interest in potential high school applicants. In addition, a diverse pipeline with Historically Black Colleges and Universities from the classroom to the police academy would potentially be successful.

The Next Steps

The Administration and the Police Department must work with state-wide universities to assist in establishing this pipeline and developing curriculum appropriately as well as seek support from organizations like the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement and the Guardian Civic League to help with recruitment.

Decrease Detective Caseloads

The Problem

Detectives in the Philadelphia Police Departments can receive 4-5 new cases a day and can have well over 100 active cases at a time. This is an unmanageable caseload and can lead to serious issues that can affect case closure rates. At the end of the day, a shooting is only a failed murder. Any time an officer cannot get a lead on a suspect is a problem we cannot afford.

The Solution

Continued police recruitment can bring new police officers onto the force which will also allow for the reallocation of resources that lowers the workload of overburdened officers.

The Next Steps

City Council must work collaboratively with the Administration to address funding opportunities for police recruitment.

Increase Coordination between SEPTA, The Police Department, and University Police Departments

The Problem

Many of the major universities in our city sit on major public transit lines. These include the bus, trolley, regional rail, Broad Street Line, and Market-Frankford Line. If a shooting occurred at the Cecil B. Moore Subway Station, Philadelphia Police, SEPTA Police, and the Temple University Police Department would all respond to address this issue. Many times, these police forces interface inefficiently when jurisdictional responsibilities overlap.

The Solution

Each University should convene monthly working groups of all relevant public safety stakeholders so that when a crime happens, each entity can be prepared to act. In addition, cameras should be utilized and integrated with the Delaware Valley Intelligence Center so issues can be addressed in real time.

The Next Steps

The Philadelphia Police Department and the Administration must work with all relevant stakeholders to convene these monthly meetings as force multipliers in their communities.

Reexamine the Potential Reestablishment the Fairmount Park Police and/or Establish a Horseback Town Watch

The Problem

Philadelphia has hundreds of miles of the Fairmount Park System within its borders.

In areas all over the city like Pennypack, Lorimer, Valley Green, Belmont Plateau, and Chamonix, violent attacks have been destroying the sanctity of our parks. However, many years ago, the Fairmount Park Unit was disbanded by the Philadelphia Police Department.

The Solution

The Philadelphia Police Department should reestablish the Fairmount Park Police Unit or work collaboratively with stables in the city to partner with town watch groups for a mounted town-watch patrol.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work to prioritize funding for the Police Department for the reformation of this unit and work with local stables for the use of their horses.

Increase the Use of Wiretaps

The Problem

Wiretaps are an invaluable resource for fighting crime. Many people who commit crimes communicate with others on cell phones and provide details of what they have done. If an investigator is listening in, this information can be taken and used in prosecuting that individual in a court of law. However, this is not nearly enough resources to bring this up to the level of what is needed. One wire only examines one line, typically at a minimum of 16 hours per day. This totals roughly \$30,000 per month. In a large drug bust, 43 separate lines were tapped resulting in \$1.2 million worth of expenses per month.

The Solution

Wiretaps need to be used outside of routine gang and drug investigations. In order to accomplish this, more police officers must be hired to accomplish this goal. There must also be changes made to the current prosecution model by encouraging vertical prosecution for certain cases and ensuring that experienced prosecutors are handling specific cases.

The Next Steps

Funding must be provided to the Police Department and the District Attorney's Office to expand the use of wiretaps in investigations as well as increased personnel to oversee its implementation. There must also be collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Agency for funding for these initiatives as well.

Fund the District Attorney's Office "DATA" Lab

The Problem

The grant funded District Attorney's Transparency Analytics "DATA" Lab is a unique unit that can transform data in universal information. However, the grant funding for this program is preparing to expire in the near future. People deceive, data can't.

The Solution

In order to keep this program going to its fullest potential, more funding and grant options must be identified so that Philadelphia can prosecute its most violent criminals.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work to fund the DATA Lab through the annual budget process and the biannual transfer of appropriations. In addition, the City must work with the private sector to identify other sources of funding that can be tapped into.

Further Train Law Enforcement

The Problem

Officers conducting routine search and seizures frequently find useful evidence that can be used at trial to gain a conviction. However, sometimes this evidence was obtained through inadvertent illegal means, which leads to the evidence being thrown out and barred from entering trial. Without this information, conviction is difficult if not impossible. Technological advancements lead to other advancements. As we evolve in our understanding of law, order, and justice, there is a thin line tread that further training will strengthen.

The Solution

Routine trainings must take place in collaboration with legal entities to ensure that evidence found is obtained through legal means so that justice can be served without the threat of a verdict being overturned.

The Next Steps

The Philadelphia Police Department must work cooperatively in conjunction with the District Attorney's Office to enhance routine trainings for core preparation of evidence.

Strengthen Community Policing

The Problem

Police should be considered guardians of communities not warriors in them. However, when officers lack training, experience, and cultural competency, issues arise in those communities. More diverse interactions lead to understanding norms.

The Solution

The Philadelphia Police Department must prioritize recruiting officers from the communities they serve. HBCU pipelines are another step to be taken. Organizations like Police Athletic League can facilitate interaction between high-risk youth and guardians in the community. By doing this, officers will have the faith, trust, and support of the communities they defend.

The Next Steps

The Police Department should increase its use of community policing strategies like "Coffee with a Cop," Captains Roundtables, Trunk or Treats, National Night Out, PSA's, neighborhood interventions and mediations. These all respond to community needs and strengthen law enforcement relationships with communities they serve.

Create a Citizen Community Policing Center

The Problem

Community Policing is a vital method for strengthening the relationship between the police and the community. But unfortunately there are no spaces for this to effectively occur. Philadelphia is one of the oldest police departments in the nation, and there needs to be more opportunities for civilians to learn about their work.

The Solution

Repurposing public spaces for these purposes, such as police district headquarters and recreation centers could give spaces to this worthwhile goal. There needs to be understanding of shared interest. In addition, use of the Philadelphia Civilian Police Academy should be encouraged so citizens can learn about police procedures.

The Next Steps

The Police Department should examine potential locations and release a list of locations for each of the city's police districts.



Use of Technology to Combat Crimes

“Drone technology is another tool in our toolbelt to fight crime. We need to increase the tools in our tool belt.”

Investigate Drones

The Problem

There is a crime and gun violence crisis in Philadelphia. However, many times these crimes go unsolved because video evidence cannot be produced, or a suspect cannot be identified.

The Solution

Drones are an effective crime fighting tool. These machines can be used for surveillance or to track the location of offenders. In September, The City Council Committee on Public Safety held a hearing on Resolution #230523 examining the use of drone technology. The Committee learned how effective drones are in fighting crime in both Chula Vista, California and Brookhaven, Connecticut. Drones can be a cost-effective force multipliers utilized in response to gun shots as well as surveillance with the strict approval of those who wish to protect civil liberties. However, at the crime summit, there was disagreement. A pilot program was recommended that outlined the following characteristics. Drones could be used to monitor high crime commercial corridors and for purposes like amber or silver alerts. Many expressed concerns about being overly watched by drones, so this must be avoided. Before drones can be used by surveillance, large community meetings should be undertaken to understand the concerns of neighborhoods about these programs. Drones could be used to combat looting and retail theft, but measures for security must be taken due to concerns they will be shot at. Drones could be used to follow stolen vehicles or illegal ATVs/dirt bikes as well as monitor school safety. At the end of the pilot program a side-by-side comparison analysis must be done to understand if the program can or should be continued. Students within the School District should also be taught to work on these drones and be provided with stipends for performing routine maintenance.

The Next Steps

City Council must work with the Administration to fund programs for drone technology while at the same time working with the law department and other legal advocacy organizations to meet our constitutional obligations.

Increase License Plate Readers Usage

The Problem

In an investigative analysis that aired on June 29, 2023, by NBC10, the number of functioning license plate readers are woefully inadequate to tackle crime.

The Solution

By working to increasing the number of functioning license readers in Philadelphia, this technology can be deployed to identify stolen vehicles and avoid both live stop violations and civil rights concerns.

The Next Steps

City Council must work collaboratively with the Administration to fund this program through to have another tool in the toolbelt to fight crime.

Use Cell Phones

The Problem

Up until the 2021 100 Shooter Review Committee Report, homicide detectives did not even have dedicated cell phones that could be used to coordinate their work. Cell phones can give officers connections to cameras as well as acoustic shot technology for better improved situational awareness. While detectives have access to this resource, not all officers do.

The Solution

Provide each sworn member of the Philadelphia Police Department with a city issued cell phone that could be used exclusively for police business.

The Next Steps

The Administration must fund this initiative through the budget and transfer of appropriations. The City must also work to identify the appropriate department to carry out this initiative from a technological perspective.

Interrupt Monitoring of Police Radio Scanners

The Problem

Many times those who commit crimes, especially looting listen to police scanners as ways to track and evade law enforcement.

The Solution

There must be exploration of technology that can scramble technology used by law enforcement to ensure privacy such as changing frequency to a police only station.

The Next Steps

City Council must introduce a resolution authorizing hearings in the Committee on Public Safety to better examine this issue and develop a plan for success.

Examine Facial Recognition Technology

The Problem

Facial recognition technology could be used as a tool to fight crime. This could be integrated with drone technology or with CCTV cameras to identify repeat offenders, but, there are extreme privacy and constitutional concerns for this technology.

The Solution

More work must be done to understand the ramifications of using this technology.
City Council must take a leading role in this investigation.

The Next Steps

Work must be done with state and federal partners to ensure there is limited use of this technology such as for those on no-fly lists, terrorist watch lists, escaped convicts, and those with active warrants.

Improve Camera Infrastructure Technology

The Problem

Philadelphia has thousands of cameras in its arsenal, but, the problem is hardware, software, and cost-effective storage. For example, due to the fact there are not enough individuals to always monitor the cameras, cameras are sometimes not pointing in the right direction at the time of a shooting and only catch the tail end. Officers must be proactive in preventing crime as opposed to reactive post-pursuits.

The Solution

Philadelphia's camera infrastructure must be completely overhauled to ensure it is prepared to combat crime in the city and its neighborhoods. AI programs should also be used to monitor surveillance video. This will cut down on the number of officers needed to monitor cameras.

The Next Steps

The Administration must provide funding for this initiative in the FY'25 budget. Funding for this project should also be sought through the bipartisan infrastructure law.

Utilize Video Doorbell Cameras

The Problem

Video doorbells can be invaluable tools in fighting crime. These devices can be connected to the police who can monitor them for evidence that can be used in court.

But not everyone has this technology.

The Solution

Video doorbells should be distributed to high crime blocks so they can be used for public safety initiatives. This should be done by providing cameras to block captains. This will likely deter package thieves as well.

The Next Steps

The Administration, Town Watch Integrated Services, and the United Block Captains Association should provide funding for this initiative so cameras can be distributed to the 57 Blocks most susceptible to gun violence. These cameras would be placed at the four corners and four houses in the middle of the block.

Enhance the Delaware Valley Intelligence Center (DVIC)

The Problem

The Delaware Valley Intelligence Center (DVIC) operates as a real-time camera monitoring center that coordinates multiple law enforcement offices to see crime as soon as it happens, but, sometimes, crime still gets missed.

The Solution

The DVIC should incorporate facial recognition where legal and have live eyes in the areas that crime statistics warrant.

The Next Steps

The Administration should prioritize funding to pay for this expansion as well as work with legislators on the state level for state resources as well.



Collaboration with the Private Sector and Boots on the Ground Credible Messengers

"The best deterrent for gun violence is a job. The private sector can make that connection."

The Promise

The Problem

Time and time again, young people in Philadelphia are not confident about their futures. This is because upon graduation from high school, there are not many readily available options that can connect them with stable and life-long employment. If children do not have the resources to get the things they need, they might steal them. So, ensuring kids have the proper resources for success is necessary.

The Solution

By working with the private sectors and organizations like JEVs Human Services, The United Way, The Urban Affairs Coalition, The Urban League, community umbrella agencies, The School District, The diverse Chambers of Commerce, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act program and the Department of Human Services we can create a pipeline for at-risk youth between the ages of 13 and 18 which will set them up with opportunities upon graduation. When a student that agrees to the Promise Initiative is in high school, they will be assigned a mentor that will work with them throughout their career. If a student maintains a C or better average while in school and avoids criminal activity, and they will be guaranteed one of four options, a year-round job, admission to a college, attendance at a trade school, or the ability to join the military. Workers in the Managing Director's Office who coordinate group violence intervention program currently have very high caseloads for youth. These numbers must be lowered to allow for the better facilitation of a program that 40% of those approached join into. This worthwhile program will break years of generational hardship and provide transformational change to black and brown communities to raise their median income.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work together with the appropriate stakeholders to identify those most likely to shoot or be shot, diverse workplace options, and boost behavioral health supports. Funding must also be provided by City Council and the Administration to this program as well the private sector.

Host a Parent University 2.0

The Problem

Children in Philadelphia go to school with two book bags. One with the materials they need for class, and the second with the problems of the day. Parent Universities provide parents the skillsets necessary to address children's needs so that we can prevent problems that will go forward into adulthood.

The Solution

Parent Universities are events that are designed to give parents the skills they need to care for their children. This may be through providing academic assistance, computer and financial literacy skills, and counseling services to assist in addressing the problems of the day. Socioeconomic issues can extend from home, and the child with his head down might mean a lot of different things. The City must host annual parent universities to make sure parents have the skills they need to succeed. According to the Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity, parents being provided programming to assist in educating their children, and also hiring parents to staff these events creates a system that improves the livelihood of children, while also providing an economic benefit to parents.

The Next Steps

City Council and the School District must work together to host yearly parent universities in the City. A Parent University 2.0 will be hosted in 2024 by the Office of Councilmember Curtis Jones, Jr. The complex social issues impacting our youth today require parents that are equipped to help them.

Monitor Grant Funding for Anti-Violence Groups

The Problem

There is currently millions of dollars appropriated each year for anti-violence grants through both the Managing Director's Office and the District Attorney's Office. While these programs have been successful, as evidenced by this Blueprint, crime is a major source of concern for Philadelphians. Therefore, there is not enough oversight or reports provided to the citizens on the effectiveness of these programs.

The Solution

There must be annual reporting and investigation of this funding done to ensure that the juice is worth the squeeze.

The Next Steps

The Office of the City Controller must exercise oversight of these organizations to understand where money is going and how it is being utilized.

Utilize Universities

The Problem

Philadelphia has some of the best universities in the world. However, they are not always involved in crafting the solutions despite the world class faculties and access to research. the City should collaborate with those who can help.

The Solution

The City should set up collaboration centers between city employees and university faculty. Temple, Penn, and Drexel all have law schools that can examine civil liberty concerns, local engineering schools can examine technology issues, schools of social work can collaborate with the Department of Human Services. St. Joseph's University hosting this Crime Summit is an excellent example of this potential collaboration.

The Next Steps

The Administration should work with the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, Temple University, St. Joseph's University, and Villanova University to make informed decisions over the coming years.

Understand Best Practices

The Problem

In Philadelphia, organizations tend to work in silos. They work independently of each other and do not completely collaborate with one another. There is not much examination of what other city's private sectors do to address gun violence.

The Solution

Organizations like the Civic Coalition to Save Lives or the diverse chambers of commerce that have large amounts of organizations in their orbit should hire consultants to study best practices among other municipalities to understand what is working, what isn't working, and what needs to be done for improvement.

The Next Steps

Organizations like these should immediately hire these professionals in their organizations to begin this work.



PHILADELPHIA JUVENILE JUSTICE



Youth Involvement in the Criminal Justice System

**"There comes a point when
we need to stop just pulling
people out of the river,
I'm going upstream to find
out why they're falling in."**

-Desmond Tutu

Create Neighborhood Safe Spaces for Youth Sports

The Problem

Local youth sports teams that offer community-based sports are being priced out of school athletic facilities and recreation centers. This pricing out of teams have limited youth sports opportunities.

In October, City Council passed Resolution #230724 authorizing hearings of the Committee on Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs and Education examining costs and liabilities for the School District of Philadelphia and the Department of Parks and Recreation to ease the barriers to access in youth sports.

The Solution

Organizations like PAL and organized sports teams are an engagement tool for at-risk youth. This also creates a better atmosphere for community policing and are therefore a critical aspect of violence intervention. Free coaching clinics and certifications must also be offered to provide mentorship to at risk youth. In return, these individuals receive technical skills to be better mentors and coaches in an environment of underutilized recreation centers.

The Next Steps

The Administration must work to prioritize funding in the budget and the bi-annual appropriations transfers to cover the costs with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the School District so that sports teams will not have to burden themselves with these fees

What do you do when the shooter lives with you?

The Problem

Households and parents often avoid tough conversations when a member of their family is a part of the problem. This includes what do you when the shooter lives with you, meaning discovering a firearm in a child's room or noticing that children have new expensive items that the parents didn't pay for. This should lead to conversations, but many times this does not happen.

The Solution

Parents are not alone in the endeavor of parenting and there is a depth of both public and private resources that can be called in to provide essential assistance, but parents must take the first step.

By searching children's rooms, parents can receive a wealth of information that they otherwise would not receive. Voluntary search programs like the one that was utilized in St. Louis, Missouri could be a beneficial tool to find illegal guns.

The Next Steps

The City of Philadelphia must identify more trauma informed intervening agencies that can assist parents in their time of need.

Use Neighborhood Negotiation Teams

The Problem

Neighborhood negotiation teams are credible messenger groups that work to dissolve conflict in their communities. They have the credibility on the streets to be able to get in-between two warring factions and negotiate a ceasefire. However, there are small numbers of these groups, and therefore they cannot solve every problem that needs to be addressed.

The Solution

Current organizations like The Philadelphia Anti-Drug Network have this credibility now. The programs must be funded, and expanded to get others involved in protecting our communities.

The Next Steps

These organizations are deeply understood in communities. By being given the technical assistance they need, they can maintain conformity among group structures.

Decrease Unnecessary Arrests for Young People

The Problem

Current Chief of School Safety and Police Commissioner-Designate, Kevin Bethel, shared how schools can be a safe haven for some students, including him when he was a child. When students do not have food, they can go to school. When students do not have heat, they can go school. But unfortunately, many young people who go to these schools, particularly black and brown children suffer from unnecessary arrests. This causes years of problems for them down the line.

The Solution

Expansion of the Philadelphia Police Department Diversion Program would provide both a massive and welcomed change to this issue. As opposed to walking kids out of school in handcuffs, there is a balance that is created. This trauma informed program meets kids where they are and does not force them into unnecessary detention. However, special care must be made to reward progress. If a young person meets most but not all required benchmarks for diversion programs, but is making a positive effort to achieve them, they should not be thrown back into the criminal justice system. Initiatives like “The Promise” Initiative would be beneficial in accomplishing this. Community based programs have saved thousands of young people from the school to prison pipeline and these programs must be expanded to save thousands more.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work together to identify and fund these programs at the level needed to succeed. In addition, the District Attorney’s Office, Defender Association of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Police Department, and the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania must work together to identify the best alternatives to incarceration for our young people. The First Judicial District must utilize existing programs that have shown success. Bolstering the Juvenile Assessment Center is key to identify at-risk youth to reduce time in custody.

Identify Overnight Facilities for At-Risk Youth

The Problem

Many young people who are at-risk to gun violence, sometimes do not have safe or stable home environments. Many facilities designed to house at-risk youth like Glen Mills were in artificial environments outside the city limits, and this only delays the inevitable.

The Solution

Reestablishing locations like the House of Umoja Boy's town would allow for young people to be in a safe environment with mentor figures and learn urban coping skills. In addition, awarding weekend visits home for good behavior could be used as an incentive. These types of programs are needed more than ever.

The Next Steps

The First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, the District Attorney's Office and the Defender Association must work to identify organizations that can serve as overnight facilities for at-risk youth. In addition, stakeholders must work together to allow for young people adjudicated delinquent to be sentenced to these programs which will alleviate overcrowding at the Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Services Center.

Encourage Adult Involvement for Youth

The Problem

An interested adult is the best anti-crime weapon. However, due to a variety of reasons, parents cannot be as active as they would like to be in their kids' lives. This could be because of work obligations, fears that they have about their parenting abilities, or a disconnect with their children.

The Solution

Numerous solutions such as the Parent University 2.0 exist for rebuilding parent's relationships with their children. As we known, children carry two "bookbags" (See Solution #). Having the tough conversations necessary to make real change requires trust that must be formed. Parents must be able to attend workshops to increase their parenting skills and take an active role in their children's lives like searching their rooms for illegal items.

The Next Steps

In order to facilitate these objectives, parents need outlets to be able to improve these skills such as attending a Parent University. But at the end of the day, parents must realize that they are not supposed to be their children's friend, they are there to protect them from threats they might not even realize exist.

It Takes a Village

The Problem

The 95th Mayor of Philadelphia, W. Wilson Goode, Sr. acknowledged that without strong role models in the lives of young people, they will never be able to achieve success. It takes a village to raise a child, but many in the neighborhood fail to step up and help when it comes to addressing the behaviors of children. Respect also needs to be cultivated among youth.

The Solution

Building strong neighborhood bonds goes to a monumental way to identifying the village required to raise a child. Holding community events like food-truck festivals, night markets, holiday events, and summer concerts, shows that law abiding citizens are retaking the streets, because we should not be held hostage to crime.

The Next Steps

The Administration must hold events in neighborhoods throughout the City to cater to diverse populations by showcasing the goodness of the people who live in their communities.

Use the Amachi Mentoring Program

The Problem

Some kids today lack sustainable role models they can look to for guidance. Without these role models, many children get sucked into worlds they cannot handle and end up becoming versions of themselves they would have never otherwise imagined.

The Solution

The Amachi Mentoring Program founded by Mayor Goode in 2000, forging relationships between adults and children affected by parental incarceration to show intergenerational interactions with the justice system. By 2016, Amachi was in all 50 states. One adult paired with one child worked together for a couple hours a week for one year. He noted this program, over time, influenced 350,000 children. It resulted in 75% of participant children attending school, improving their grades, attitudes towards authority, and overall staying out of trouble.

The Next Steps

Funding must be provided to ensure the success of programs like these.

Engage Youth through Credible Messengers

The Problem

As has been stated many times, youth need but many times do not have, active role models in their lives. But sometimes the people who step into that space cannot meet them where they are for a variety of reasons.

The Solution

Local influencers with positive messages in the community should be used as mentors for young people who need them. These influencers most likely have a more similar lived experience to the youth they are working with and can work them on a more personal level.

The Next Steps

The relevant city department and agencies should work together to identify these credible messenger stakeholders like Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

Consider Use of Social Media

The Problem

Young people are using social media in ways it was never designed to be used. Kids are posting videos of their crimes almost as content to impress watchers and use it as a warning for their enemies. City Council has passed multiple resolutions such as #171137 and #210265 to examine the use of social media and its impact on crime, but more must be done on the issue.

The Solution

Solutions for social media use is multi-faceted. Social media education must be provided to youth so they can learn how to safely use those outlets in a responsible manner. Law enforcement must maintain a constant presence on these platforms to watch for illegal activity and evidence. Finally, policy must be developed on the federal level to regulate social media platforms to ensure protection of children.

The Next Steps

The School District of Philadelphia must provide courses in every high school in the district for social media literacy. The Philadelphia District Attorney's Office and the Philadelphia Police Department must hire analysts to monitor social media for illegal activity by known individuals. In addition to these initiatives, funding must be provided to the School District as well as to the Police Department and the District Attorney's Office to meet the moment. Legislators at the federal level must craft regulation legislation for social media companies as well as record companies and radio stations.

Incorporate Youth Voices

The Problem

Those closest to the problem are closest to the solution. Many young people in Philadelphia are close to the problem and could certainly help with the solution. Unfortunately, many times the voices of youth are pushed away because adults feel they have no experience to be able to comment on matters. Because of this, valuable perspective is lost.

The Solution

Bringing youth voices to the forefront must always be the priority. Expanding and centralizing the Mayor's Youth Commission and requesting their input on key matters would ensure that youth have a say.

The Next Steps

The Administration must ensure that the Mayor's Youth Commission is fully staffed with a diverse group from neighborhoods all over the City. In addition, they must work with groups such as The Philadelphia Students Union, YEAH Philly and the Youth Sentencing Project to ensure that everyone is represented.

Understand Youth Involved in Gun Violence

The Problem

Youth are involved in the criminal justice system, that is not a secret. However, there are multiple reasons that children end up in the criminal justice system that need to be addressed. One out of four children in the delinquency system were in the dependency system. Those children are also very likely to be arrested in the future.

The Solution

Family is important for children, and being removed from that family structure can be extremely traumatizing. This means trauma support services must be deeply ingrained in the DHS system. Children in the foster system should be assigned a trauma informed counselor or be able to attend trauma centers to come to terms with the issues they are having.

The Next Steps

The Hospital Violence Intervention Program Collaborative, launched in partnership with all six of the City's leading Level One Trauma Centers Violence Intervention Programs, brings together these acclaimed programs that support victims and families after hospitalization for their wounds by providing wraparound services to help victims and families recover from gun violence. This program must be expanded and strengthened.

Create an Intermediate Age Court

The Problem

Under the law, children over the age of 18 are charged as adults. However, the brain does not fully develop until the age of 25.

The Solution

An intermediate court system should be established to try individuals between the ages of 18-25 in recognition that the brain is not fully developed and there could be differing reasons for crimes committed.

The Next Steps

The First Judicial District of Pennsylvania and state legislators, The Defender Association of Philadelphia, The District Attorney's Office, and other stakeholders should work to make this system a reality in Pennsylvania's court system.

Reduce the Population at the Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Services Center (PJJSC)

The Problem

The Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Services Center has at times been horrendously overcrowded. As a result, children have had to sleep on the floor, use the bathroom in their cells, lose out on education, and not be able to see their parents.

The Solution

The relationship between the state and local Department of Human Services must be evaluated and evolved. Constant evaluation of DHS's services should be ongoing.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work with legislators at the state level to recognize time spent at the PJJSC as time served. In addition, The Defenders Association and the District Attorney's Office must prioritize placing youth in diversion programs that reinforce rehabilitation as opposed to punishment. The First Judicial District of Pennsylvania must utilize readily available alternatives to detention centers whenever feasible.

Incorporate “Block Parents”

The Problem

Youth involved in the criminal justice system at times do not have stable role models in their neighborhood or on their block. Much like a “block captain” block parents can be forces of respect that look out for kids in the neighborhood and help them when they need it.

The Solution

Related back to the “it takes a village” mentality, fostering interconnected block parents, adults “on duty” on a particular block with valuable life experience, can build trust and connections in communities. In addition, “block parents” should be able to receive activity grant funding to provide for play spaces, free lunches, toiletries, and school supplies.

The Next Steps

Non-profits should come together to form this program by utilizing members of their networks to carry out this solution. These “block parents” bonds can serve as a guide to move youth in a positive direction.

Utilize Available Resources

The Problem

There are many different resources available for Philadelphians to take advantage of, but, unfortunately the average citizen is not aware of these resources and how to access them.

The Solution

The City should collaborate with community umbrella agencies to leverage available resources by topic, by neighborhood, and by zip code. A parent should be able to know where to go to get what they need to provide for themselves and their families.

The Next Steps

The Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Human Services, The Free Library of Philadelphia, and the Office of Children and Families should form active partnerships with community umbrella organizations so they can tap into their networks to make sure our citizens know what is available to them in their time of need and display these services on their websites.

Empower Youth with Youth Centered Engagement

The Problem

Time and time again, youth feel that they are being unnecessarily controlled. They are constantly being told what to do while nobody is take the time to understand their needs, interests, or skills. Youth are incredibly talented and are well equipped to be leaders in their neighborhoods. But, many are rarely given the chance.

The Solution

Positively engaging youth and meeting them where they are must be centralized in any solution to youth involved in the criminal justice system. By taking interest in their lives, youth will feel more supported. In addition, providing youth with positions of responsibility will create a sense of pride in themselves.

The Next Steps

Adults in Philadelphia and city employees dealing with youth should take time to understand the youth they are working with. In addition, when possible, adults should delegate tasks to youth so they can feel included.

Integrate Elderly Wisdom

The Problem

Elderly individuals such as grandparents can be valuable resources in their communities.

Many times, grandparents need to step in to raise their grandchildren and undertake a "second tour of duty."

The Solution

Integrating the elderly into creating the solution is key to solving the problem. There must be an easily accessible network of resources that can be utilized. In addition, pairing high school journalists with elderly people to share their stories and reading workshops build bonds that connect generations.

The Next Steps

The Mayor's Commission on the Aging should be revamped to make sure the voices of Philadelphia's aging population is spotlighted.



Drill Music and the Music Industry

Fight Drill Music Proliferation

The Problem

Drill music is a genre of hip-hop that details gang/group violence and activity. The violence that this music causes cannot be understated. Similar to the crips and the bloods, groups use this music to communicate their messaging, taunt others, and threaten more violence. Music producers will sometimes take out insurance policies on artists that perform drill music so that in the event they are killed, they will still make a profit.

The Solution

By working with music producers to stop the drill music that proliferates communities, there will be less violence because of group conflict.

The Next Steps

Working with local DJs and music stations like Power 99 and 103 Beat, which are credible messengers will be able to make a unique impact on the proliferation of drill music through positive public messaging. In addition, by creating regulations on what time of day this music is played, young people will not have as much access to that genre of music.

Understand Drill Music and the Music Industry

The Problem

Drill Music is a prominent form of expression, yet often the messages being promoted are violent and angry. The music originated as a platform for liberation and to create a sense of community among low-income areas. Although, the messages are often vulgar, and disruptive to the youth in the area promoting harmful themes of violence and gang activity. While drill music is a symptom, it is not a cause of the problem.

The Solution

It is important that there continues to be a consistent dialogue about the dangers of drill music, and the effect it can have on the youth. Drill music should be free expression that does not lead to actual violence. The discussions must be understanding, not judgmental as it is important to note that most listeners reside in urban communities. There needs to be a recognition that this music has a large influence in young communities, both as artists and listeners. This means early intervention in these communities is crucial.

The Next Steps

It is important to address that as a community there is needs to be a reduction of glorification and promotion of drill music on social media. There needs to be increased resources provided to young drill artists, that give them knowledge about the harm of this industry. There needs to be a space where youth can go to feel heard to discuss troubles in their community, as opposed within drill music.



POLICE

Combating Specific Types of Crime

"Every shooting is a failed murder."

Evaluate Street Lighting

The Problem

Time and time again crime is committed in areas of low visibility, this might be in a back alley or a corner with an out light keeps them from being seen. Without being able to identify a shooter, detectives cannot close cases.

The Solution

In order to fix this issue, there must be an immediate evaluation of streetlights to determine their weaknesses.

The Next Steps

The City must continue its replacement of streetlights to LED bulbs, and importantly, prioritize these resources in the 57 Blocks most susceptible to gun violence.

Enforce Red Flag Laws

The Problem

Red flag laws give citizens the ability to call out red flag behavior which call into question someone's ability to possess a firearm. Things like domestic violence have few predictive warning signs, and verbal threats should serve as a red flag for intervention. In 2018, City Council passed the Gun Violence Protection Plan to take firearms out of the hands dangerous individuals, but because of preemption there has been zero enforcement by the First Judicial District Pennsylvania. In 2022, City Council passed Resolution #220752 calling for enforcement of red flag laws to no avail. The federal Bipartisan Safer Communities Act provided \$750 million dollars for states to implement red flag laws, but The Commonwealth has yet to do so.

The Solution

Enforcing red flag laws would have a massive impact on protecting the safety of individuals from harm, but the State must allow us to act first.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Mayor must work collaboratively to lobby the state for the enactment of red flag laws which have been passed by the house, focusing on terroristic threats, to address real time dangers similar to protection from abuse orders, or allow Philadelphia to enforce its own red flag law. Negotiations should also include preemption reform for reasonable firearms restrictions.

Enforce the Lost and Stolen Gun Ordinance

The Problem

In 2008, City Council passed legislation requiring an individual who loses or has their firearm stolen report it within a given time period. Due to preemption this law has yet to be enforced, and as a result has been involved in extensive litigation in the Commonwealth Court. In March of 2023, City Council passed Resolution #230225 calling on the PA General Assembly to temporarily suspend firearm preemption for cities of the first class so they can enact commonsense firearms legislation.

The Solution

Enforcement of the lost and stolen firearm enforcement would help keep firearms out of the hands of those who cannot have them as well as directly address the threat of straw purchasing in the gun violence epidemic,

The Next Steps

City Council must work with the Administration to lobby the Pennsylvania General Assembly on preemption reform to allow Philadelphia a chance at enforcing its firearms legislation. In addition, appointing a City Solicitor who is dedicated to the mission of challenged the constitutionality of preemption will be extremely beneficial at addressing this crisis.

Decrease the Backlog of Felony Warrants

The Problem

Many of the current open felony warrants are for violation of probation or violation of house arrest orders. The longer that these individuals are not taken into custody, the more opportunity there is for a crime to be committed. There are currently 100 open homicide warrants and 100 open shooting warrants. Fugitives run all over the country and the world to try and escape capture. But it is important to remember that supporting shooters has consequences.

The Solution

Funding for the Philadelphia Sheriff's Office must be prioritized. The Sheriff's office needs funds to protect their deputies by providing them with riot shields, SWAT vests, and new vehicles are needed to ensure the safety of law enforcement personnel and increase their effectiveness. The Sheriff's Office at its current levels are currently involved in taskforces dealing with guns and illegal narcotics, but there is so much more that can be done if funding is prioritized. With funding, the Sheriff's Office could also be boots on the ground forces knocking on doors to access the needs of communities and then provide them.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work to provide funding to the Sheriff's Office and then work collaboratively with the Sheriff to follow through with implementation of these programs.

Require Firearms Training

The Problem

In recent years, there have been a surge in legal handgun purchases. As a result, shootings committed by those who own their firearm legally have increased as well. Currently, it is easier to get a license to own a firearm than it is to drive a car, because there is not learners permit for a firearm. In fact, no training is required to purchase one at all.

The Solution

Require that to purchase a gun you must meet a certain threshold of firearm training to ensure that they can be used safely and correctly.

The Next Steps

The Administration must lobby state legislators in Harrisburg to add this reasonable step to purchase a firearm.

Reduce Retail Theft

The Problem

In neighborhoods all over the city, corner stores and other small businesses have closed because of retail theft. These retail theft rings frequently have people stealing from businesses and then selling the contraband online. These rings have caused many business owners to take matters into their own hands. While at the same time, many lack resources like cameras, security systems, or loss prevention officers. Even though businesses have the ability to ban those who steal from their stores immediately, there is little enforcement to keep these individuals from re-offending. Finally, often, corner stores will purchase stolen goods and sell them at a discounted rate, sell them on eBay or even sell door-to-door.

The Solution

Developing grant programs to help struggling businesses recover from retail theft is an essential tool in allowing business to thrive. One way for this to be funded is to increase fines on those who trespass in a business after they have been banned. Stores should also conduct safety audits that will show them where vulnerabilities lie in the system and how they can be addressed. The fines for purchasing stolen goods must also be increased.

The Next Steps

City Council is planning to vote on legislation adding a \$1,000 fine for trespassing in retail establishments. This legislation will be voted on and should be signed into law by the Mayor by the end of 2023. In 2024, the Administration and the new Police Commissioner must prioritize enforcement of this law to protect local businesses. City Council must also work with the Administration and the Commerce Department to develop grant programs that can be utilized by struggling businesses. State legislators must pass comprehensive legislation to increase penalties for receiving stolen goods.

Enhance the Private Criminal Complaints Unit in the District Attorney's Office

The Problem

The Office of the Philadelphia District Attorney operates the private criminal complaints unit to review violations of protection against abuse orders. However, this office closes at 4:30 p.m. and is not open on weekends to receive complaints. Even when complaints are made, there can be a delay in having a hearing on the matter.

The Solution

By operating the unit on a 24/7 basis, the District Attorney's Office will be able to respond to PFA complaints more quickly. In addition to the DAO, The Courts must work to appoint special hearing masters that can quickly resolve these cases as they arrive.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must prioritize funding to the District Attorney's Office and the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania to implement 24-hour programs and staff those units. State funding should also be sought for this purpose.

Recruit Block Captains for Neighborhood Watch Purposes

The Problem

Block Captains in Philadelphia are the building blocks for stable communities. They act as liaisons to city government and can help address issues before they become large problems. Town watch groups are groups of concerned citizens that patrol their neighborhoods to report illegal activity and keep a constant presence in the streets. The problem is that these entities operate independent of each other and sometimes do not collaborate on key programs, strategies, or initiatives.

The Solution

By recruiting some of the more than 5,000 block captains to participate in town-watch initiatives, we can stream line these two groups to create pockets of ready, willing, and able volunteers.

The Next Steps

The City must work with Town Watch Integrated Services as well as Philadelphia More Beautiful to train block captains and town watch patrols to work alongside each other to solve neighborhood problems together to create cross-trained citizens

Create Civil Unrest Notifications

The Problem

2020 and 2023 saw peaceful protests that were infiltrated by looters. Ten of millions of dollars were lost in revenue and repairs have devastated businesses. However, there is no central notification system that shows where looting is taking place and who is responding at a given time.

The Solution

Small businesses are the lifeblood of our city. Businesses suffering from looting have suffered irreparable harm because they will never reopen. A notice system through text must be created to serve as a safeguard of our over 100 commercial corridors. This will allow for businesses to close down and secure themselves to prevent looting.

The Next Steps

Interagency cooperation is key. The Administration and City Council must work together with the Chamber of Commerce and the law enforcement to create this system and ensure that it is accurate, efficient, and effective.

Enact Safe Storage Requirements

The Problem

When legally owned firearms are not properly stored, they can become accessible to others. 80% of the guns used in school shootings are taken from family members who did not store them properly.

The Solution

Passing safe storage legislation at the state level would be the most commonsense way to avoid this problem. But requiring gun locks be used or other storage requirements, these firearms will not be able to easily fall into the hands of young people. This will cut into the number of fratricides in Philadelphia.

The Next Steps

In May, City Council passed Resolution #230332 calling on the PA General Assembly to pass legislation creating safe storage requirements. While the PA House acted on Council's recommendation and passed them, the bill currently sits in limbo in the State Senate. The Senate must act on this piece of legislation, and the Administration as well as City Council must lobby for its passage.

Invest in the “57 Blocks”

The Problem

The 57 Blocks Theory is a transformational study that has shown that just 57 of the thousands of blocks in Philadelphia account for the largest amount of gun violence. In recent years this number has increased to 87. These blocks are typically in low-income neighborhoods that receive little to no investment from the City, despite the perception. There is not enough support from the private sector to these communities. More must be done to focus on the reality of crime not the perception of it. Crime is opportunistic, and we must invest instead of arrest.

The Solution

By flooding those 87 Blocks with every resource available, whether that be law enforcement, economic, technological, or other sources, providing investment will make a tremendous impact on addressing gun violence and poverty in those areas. Utilizing proven strategies like “risk terrain modeling” can be a successful tool as well.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must work together to adequately provide and fund these resources and ensure they are getting and effecting the people who need it most.

Address The Kensington Crisis

The Problem

Philadelphia, especially the Kensington neighborhood, is at the heart of our nation's opioid epidemic. Despite how some make it appear, Kensington is in desperate need of relief. They need an all of government, World War II style investment to bring the neighborhood back to its former glory.

The Solution

In March 2023, City Council passed a Resolution introduced by 7th District Councilmember, Quetcy Lozada, calling for the establishment of a Marshall Stabilization and Recovery Plan for Kensington and the surrounding neighborhoods in Philadelphia, and hearings of the Committee on Public Safety with government officials and neighborhood organizers, were held on the resolution in May and July at Conwell Middle Magnet School in Kensington. Declaring a State of Emergency for the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia would also be a significant step in the area. States of emergency should be declared on the local, state, and federal levels.

The Next Steps

By the end of 2023, City Council will release the Kensington Marshall Plan. Each of the recommendations presented should be swiftly implemented by stakeholders in the Kensington community. The Administration should declare a state of emergency on day one. City Council and the Administration must then jointly lobby the state and federal governments to do the same.

Use Social Media to Investigate Looting

The Problem

Many times during looting, criminals will post evidence of their activities on social media. But, because there are a lack of resources, many times this evidence could be missed and then deleted. An example of this was the "Meatball arrest" in 2023.

The Solution

The Police Department and the District Attorney's during times of social unrest should be actively searching social media for evidence of retail theft and looting so that offenders can be appropriately prosecuted.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration should provide funding to the Police Department and District Attorney's Office for this endeavor.

Bolster the Retail Theft Task Force

The Problem

Law enforcement departments do not communicate enough with each other when it comes to retail theft. Law enforcement needs to take the appropriate measures to make retail theft more of a priority than they do now. At the point of incident, it must be clear that retail theft has consequences.

The Solution

The Retail Theft Task Force needs to be bolstered. In stores that have been repeatedly victimized by retail theft, a marked police car should sit outside of each business as a deterrent. Another solution is to train patrol officers to specifically address and investigate retail theft. They would be able to obtain warrants, gather information, and identify suspects while freeing up detectives to investigate more serious matters. There must be better communication among officers in different units to ensure that they are collaborating in an efficient manner. Finally, creating a specialized unit to address retail theft within the Police Department could alleviate some communication issues.

The Next Steps

The Administration and Law Enforcement entities must work together to continue this work addressing retail theft. The Department of Commerce should also be working to ensure that businesses have the funding they need to succeed.

Deter Elder Abuse

The Problem

In Philadelphia, the elderly should be treated with respect. But, unfortunately, many have been the victims of crime through phone scams claiming that a relative is under arrest and bail is needed, there is an IRS debt, or that their financial information has been compromised. Campaigns like “be sure before you open the door” are effective in keeping the elderly safe from home invasions.

The Solution

Effectively funding the District Attorney’s Office Elder Abuse Unit must be a priority.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must provide funding to the District Attorney’s Office for this purpose.

Encourage Walking Escorts College Campuses

The Problem

Philadelphia has some of our nation's preeminent universities. Unfortunately, some of the neighborhoods that surround these universities suffer from crime that have impacted their students, especially during the night-time hours.

The Solution

Walking escort services like what is available at Temple University are programs where students can register to have someone walk them to specific locations on campus when they feel unsafe. These programs are highly effective and should be bolstered.

The Next Steps

Funding should be provided to these programs to ensure they have the resources they need to be successful and continuous.

Accept Student Input on Crime

The Problem

On many college campuses, Departments of Public Safety or other similar organizations are responsible for leading campus public safety efforts. But, unfortunately, many times, these do not completely incorporate the voices of students.

The Solution

Universities should establish safety councils where students can come together with the administration to make public safety decisions that are inclusive for all.

The Next Steps

Universities should establish these councils and they should provide annual reports to the City Council Committee on Public Safety about their progress on improving safety on campus.

Access a Potential Restart of Operation Safe Streets

The Problem

The City of Philadelphia has had numerous successful programs that have been discontinued. We should not reinvent the wheel. Operation Safe Streets which was instituted under the John F. Street Administration is the perfect example. The program was a law enforcement and crime prevention program implemented in Philadelphia in 2002 which resulted in safer neighborhoods. During the first year of the program, police confiscated \$89.9 million worth of drugs compared to just \$24.7 million the previous year.

The Solution

Operation Safe Streets, which has similarities to Cherelle Parker's Neighborhood Safety and Community Policing Plan, should be restarted.

The Next Steps

All relevant city departments and agencies should work to implement this program within the first 100 days.

Understand the True Cost of Crime

The Problem

Crime costs money. That is no secret. But what is unknown is how much a crime cost fully. For example, when a homicide is committed, how much is spent on salaries of those involved in investigating, how much is the cost of incarceration, medical examination costs, and court costs. Property values even get effected in communities plagued by gun violence. But little is actually know about the complete costs of these crimes.

The Solution

The Controller's Office should study the true cost of crime on City residents and produce a report within the first 100 days in office.

The Next Steps

The Administration and the Controller should convene a working group to study this issue and compile the report within the first 100 days of the Administration.

Understand Nuisance Businesses and Risk Terrain Modeling

The Problem

3% of the land can make up 80% of crime. Corner stores with illegal gambling machines, gas stations selling liquor by the drink, and smoke shops selling drug paraphernalia all contribute to a rise in crime.

The Solution

Cracking down on nuisance businesses can go a long way in addressing this problem. Combating smoke shops and illegal gambling machines will also assist in this. Philadelphia will soon have representation on the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board with the soon to be confirmation of Council President Darrell Clarke. This will provide a greater interest and attention to stop-and-go establishments.

The Next Steps

Funding for the nuisance business task force as well as developing a legislative agenda to combat quality of life crimes must be prioritized.

Combat “Jugging”

The Problem

Jugging occurs when someone goes to the bank or an ATM and withdraws money. There is an increasing and alarming trend where individuals are being followed home and then being robbed.

The Solution

There must be a stronger law enforcement presence to combat this issue. Undercover units should be stationed around banks and financial institutions to look for suspicious activity. Risk terrain modeling should also be considered to combat this issue.

The Next Steps

The Police Department must further investigate and examine this issue and develop a concrete plan to stop it.

Rethinking Ghost Cars Solutions

The Problem

Ghost cars are vehicles that have had their license plates removed rendering them immune to identification. These cars are then commonly used during the commission of a crime.

The Solution

License plate readers are the solution to combating ghost cars. Even though they cannot pick up a ghost car, they can alert law enforcement to the location, and they can look for security footage or cameras to try and identify the vehicle.

The Next Steps

Funding must be provided to increase usage of license plate readers. Grant funding, as well as state and federal money should be identified for this purpose.

Address Stolen Cars

The Problem

In Philadelphia, car thefts and carjackings are causing a major problem for residents.

Stolen cars are then many times used to commit other typically violent crimes.

The Solution

By furthering the use of license plate and GPS readers, law enforcement can work to track down these stolen cars and bring the thief's to justice.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration must provide funding to law enforcement to further this program and work with legal organizations to ensure that this program is constitutional.

Appoint a Strong Chief Public Safety Director

The Problem

Currently, the city's response to public safety and the departments that oversee it are very disjointed. In May of 2023, voters approved the creation of a new cabinet level position to oversee public safety departments. At this time, the position of Chief Public Safety Director has not been filled.

The Solution

Appoint a strong inaugural Chief Public Safety Director that can bring key community and government stakeholders together in the same room to create solutions for Philadelphia's crime problem. The Chief Public Safety Director will be responsible for advising the Mayor in a data driven manner.

The Next Steps

The Mayor must nominate a strong Chief Public Safety Director upon taking office, and Council must approve that nomination soon after.



Data

**“There are known unknowns.
Data becomes information
that is useful.”**

-Donald Rumsfeld

Reimagine Data

The Problem

Multiple different groups in Philadelphia like the Controller's Office, Police Department, the District Attorney's Office, and the Inquirer all release crime related data. These different modes can sometimes cause confusion about type of data and metrics being used. Allegheny County has been using an integrated data system for decades, and it has been a success.

The Solution

Philadelphia may consider switching to an integrated data system to bring all city-wide data pertaining to crime, health, and city services under one platform so residents can have up to the minute information. This should also include major crime initiatives like recovered firearms or seized narcotics.

The Next Steps

The Administration must collaborate across departments to create this one-stop-shop information hub within the first 100 days. In addition, they should examine best practices in other cities like Pittsburgh and New York City to understand data mapping in those cities



**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**



Combating Institutional White Racism

"Today's problems have foundation in our past. Yet, we must move beyond them to create the future that our city deserves."

Combat White Institutional Racism

The Problem

The school to prison pipeline plays a prominent role in our school system. Teachers in low-income districts are not equipped with the proper diversity, equity, or inclusion training to break the institutional racism. Housing also plays a large role in discrimination, and many are not aware they are able to file complaints with Housing and Urban Development.

The Solution

More teachers of color need to be hired to work in schools and administrative positions. All educational employees should attend anti-racism training, focusing on unconscious bias and racism.

The Next Steps

In addition to police officers, schools should hire culturally competent social workers. Legislators and political officials need to collaborate with schools and nonprofit organizations to address micro-aggressions and increased acts of both hate and violence.





Crafting a Positive Public Messaging Campaign

“The vast majority of people are law abiding. Only a small percentage act outside the law. Yet if we listen to the media, murder and mayhem is all we have to offer. That is not true.”

-Queen Mother Falaka Fattah.

Break the Distrust in the Government

The Problem

There is a large level of distrust in the government by its citizens. This stems from events like the MOVE Bombing, the Holmesburg Prison Experiments, police brutality and more. This distrust leads to disengaged citizens. There is also a disconnect in media narratives.

The Solution

A vast majority of young people are doing the right thing and are not involved in crime. Highlighting young people and the positive work of people in the community are ways to break the distrust

The Next Steps

Focusing on spreading good news as often as possible through press releases and news coverage should be a priority for the Administration's communications team.

Utilize Social Media Messaging

The Problem

The city's messaging is currently not centralized. The Mayor has a small communications staff and at present does not capture all available markets to reach constituents.

The Solution

The Mayor should hire a large and dedicated communications staff. In addition, non-traditional messaging sources such as news media reports as well as social media should be utilized to ensure that city messaging is seen by everyone old and young.

The Next Steps

There should be a diverse staff that can communicate through all ages and racial demographics. The private sector should also contribute funding for this purpose.

Create Public Service Announcements

The Problem

Many times, administrations use public service announcements to communicate their priorities. But, sometimes have not adequately communicated their messages effectively.

The Solution

There are numerous different methods that must be utilized for success. Messaging needs to be consistent. These messages must showcase the greatness of Philadelphia. These announcements must have effective concise messaging to get to the heart of the issue. Young people must be involved to make sure that young people are a focus. These announcements must be diverse to make sure all races are represented. They must be neighborhood centric and focus on the victories of Philadelphia. #wethepeople, #wordsdomatter, #whywewote. In addition, public access channels should reestablish showing Philadelphia's most wanted criminals.

The Next Steps

The Administration communications team must take all of these factors into account when formulating their public messaging campaign. This campaign must also be well funded to be successful. Recruiting credible messengers including the formerly incarcerated and young people must be a priority, and funding must be available for this purpose. They must also work with Channel 64 to restart the Philadelphia most wanted program.

Use Non-Traditional Media

The Problem

The City of Philadelphia performs a lot of media outreach but do so through the major media markets.

The Solution

Government officials should perform more outreach with smaller news sources such as podcasts. Once a month, a lunch should be sponsored by the Administration and Council for all news sources so they can come and have both on and off the record conversations. Special emphasis should be placed on smaller outlets to ensure they have the opportunity to attend and participate.

The Next Steps

The Administration and Council should plan to have the first lunch by the beginning of budget hearings.

Provide Security for the Press

The Problem

In today's political climate, press have come under heightened scrutiny and have faced multiple threats.

The Solution

Protection should be provided to all reporters and journalists while in city facilities like City Hall or the Criminal Justice Center.

The Next Steps

City Council and the Administration should provide funding to either the Police Department or the Sheriff's Office to carry out this mission.

Enhance Messaging

The Problem

Over the past few years, messaging has been misconstrued and sometimes disconnected. This has led to a decrease in trust from the public. There has also not been a complete utilization of the media market. There has also been a fact vs. fear mentality. Sometimes you are safer on the subway than you are in Rittenhouse Square.

The Solution

The Mayor must be the cheerleader for the city. They must ensure that priorities are being expertly articulated, and that there are credible government messengers being able share the progress the City is making. If possible press statements should start on positive notes. Finally, the press needs to see the good things the government is doing, publicize short-term success, and face mistakes head on.

The Next Steps

The Administration communications team should implement these solutions in their messaging campaigns.

Thank You to our Stakeholders!

African American Chamber of Commerce

Belmont Behavioral Health

Ceasefire PA

Chamber of Commerce

Children First

Citizens Police Oversight Commission

City Avenue Special Services District

City of Philadelphia

Defender Association of Philadelphia

District Attorney's Office

EMIR Healing Center

Enterprise Center

Father's Day Rally Committee

Guardian Civic League

Human Rights Coalition

JEVS

Mothers in Charge

NOMO
Office of Representative Madeline Dean
Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office
Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency
Pennsylvania Commission on Human Relations
Philadelphia City Council
Philadelphia Police Department
Philadelphia Youth Commission
Philly Truce
Recapturing our Youth
School District of Philadelphia
Senior Law Center
SEPTA
Sheriff's Office
St. Joseph's University
Temple University
The Civic Coalition to Save Lives
The Philadelphia Masjid
The Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia
Urban Affairs Coalition
U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of
Pennsylvania
Women Against Domestic Violence

Sources Index

Education and the School to Prison Pipeline

Expand Safe School Corridor Programs:

Resolution 230060: Authorizing the City Council to Committee on Education to hold public hearings to examine the progress of the school safe corridor program, to understand its effect on violence reduction.

Address Racial Inequities in Education:

Resolution 230059: Authorizing the City Council Committee on Education to hold public hearings to evaluate tracking for post-graduation pathways including college retention rates, career alternatives, military opportunities, and the school-to-prison pipeline.

Provide Access to Schools as well as Parks and Recreation Facilities:

Resolution 230724: Authorizing the Joint Committees on Education and Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs to hold public hearings to examine the cost and liabilities for the School District and the Department of Parks and Recreation to ease the barriers of access to youth sports.

Ensure Early Intervention in Schools:

100 Shooter Review Committee Report:

<https://phlcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/100-Shooting-Review-complete.pdf>

Provide Conflict Resolution Training:

Resolution 200430: Authorizing the Committee on Education to conduct hearings exploring the benefits of the School District of Philadelphia mandating conflict resolution training at all curriculum levels.

Establish Youth Courts:

National Gang Center on Youth Courts Reducing Juvenile Delinquency:

<https://nationalgangcenter.ojp.gov/spt/Programs/132>

Reduce Drop-Out Rates:

Resolution 067807: Authorizing the Committee on Education to investigate and conduct hearings related to the reported crisis faced by the City of Philadelphia regarding the high dropout rate among public school students prior to high school graduation, for the purpose of examining the reported data and exploring corrective measures that can be taken to encourage high school graduation.

Use Art Therapy and Theater Therapy:

Herman Davis Website on Art Based Therapy:
<https://weneedpeaceandlove.com/about-us/>

Provide Funding for School Supplies:

Cradles to Crayons: <https://www.cradlestocrayons.org/philadelphia/>

Disrupt the School-to-Prison Pipeline:

American Bar Association on the School-to-Prison Pipeline- <https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human-rights-magazine-home/empowering-youth-at-risk/shutting-down-the-school-to-prison-pipeline/>

Poverty and the Criminal Justice System

Create a School to Paycheck Pipeline:

Current Open Jobs in City Government: <https://www.phila.gov/jobs/#/>

Address the Economic Needs of Communities:

Resolution 220303: Authorizing the Committee on Public Safety to hold public hearings examining the use of technology to solve shootings in the neighborhoods surrounding the 57 blocks where 10 or more people have been shot since 2015.

Reduce Fines and Fees for Returning Citizens:

Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity Report on The Impact of Criminal Court and Prisons Fines and Fees-<https://www.phila.gov/media/20210505004207/FinesandFees-final.pdf>

Provide Second Chances:

Department of Commerce Fair Chance Initiative:

<https://www.phila.gov/programs/fair-chance-hiring-initiative/>

Combating the Threat of Illegal Guns and Increasing the Closure Rate of Homicides

Bolster Witness Protection:

Resolution 220250: Calling on the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office, Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, Philadelphia Sheriff's Office, Office of the City Controller and the Managing Directors Office to conduct a joint evaluation of the City's current witness relocation and protection programs.

Create The "Helping Hand" Inmate Release Program:

Family Speaks Out After Man is Killed Outside Philly Prison one Hour After Release <https://6abc.com/curran-fromhold-correction-facility-philadelphia-prison-shooting-man-just-released-from-killed-holmesburg/10430158/>

Evaluate Gun Buy Back Efforts:

Philadelphia Inquirer Op-Ed on Gun Buy Backs-<https://www.inquirer.com/opinion/commentary/gun-buybacks-dont-reduce-crime-20231120.html>

Resolution #230906-Calling on the Administration to further examine the "consent-to-search" program in the City of St. Louis, Missouri, as an alternative to gun buy backs to increase the understanding of its potential impacts on the continual efforts of gun seizures in the City of Philadelphia

Bolster the Gun Violence Intervention (GVI) Program:

Group Violence Intervention in Philadelphia:

<https://www.phila.gov/media/20220105112259/Jan32022GunViolence-003.pdf>

Combat Ghost Guns:

Law Department Press Release: <https://www.phila.gov/2023-07-05-city-of-philadelphia-sues-primary-distributors-of-ghost-guns-polymer80-inc-and-jsd-supply/>

Examine Gun Shops:

Law Department Press Release: <https://www.phila.gov/2023-07-25-city-of-philadelphia-announces-lawsuit-against-gun-shops-that-facilitate-illegal-straw-purchasing-of-firearms/>

Fund Public Defense:

Bill #230767-Authorizing transfers in appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 from the General Fund, certain or all City offices, departments, boards and commissions, and the Grants Revenue Fund, certain or all City offices, departments, boards and commissions, to the General Fund, certain or all City offices, departments, boards and commissions, the County Liquid Fuels Tax Fund, certain or all City offices, departments, boards and commissions, the Municipal Pension Fund, certain or all City offices, departments, boards and commissions, and the Transportation Fund, certain or all City offices, departments, boards and commissions.

Addressing Mental Health

Better Define Definition of Trauma, Mental Health, and Break Stigma:

Resolution 230733: Recognizing Governor Shapiro's Executive Order to create a Behavioral Health Council in which state leaders, local governments, and community providers join forces to design and implement a statewide action plan with aim to address how to effectively deliver exceptional mental health and addiction care services.

Use Cognitive Behavioral Therapy:

American Psychological Association on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy- <https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/patients-and-families/cognitive-behavioral>

Alternatives to Incarceration

Create Community Courts:

District Attorney's Office Diversion Unit: <https://phillyda.org/juveniles/diversion-policy-programs/>

Expand Specialty Courts:

District Attorney's Office Diversion Unit: <https://phillyda.org/juveniles/diversion-policy-programs/>

Law Enforcement

Increase Law Enforcement Recruitment:

New City Council Funding Results in Increased Applications for Philadelphia Police Department Summer Recruitment: <https://www.phila.gov/2023-08-14-new-city-council-funding-results-in-increased-applications-for-philadelphia-police-department-summer-recruitment/>

Increase the number of Neighborhood Foot Patrols and Bike Cops in Philadelphia:

Cherelle Parker's Neighborhood Safety and Community Plan-
<https://www.cherelleparker.com/244-2/>

Decrease Detective Caseloads:

100 Shooter Review Committee Report:
<https://phlcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/100-Shooting-Review-complete.pdf>

Increase Coordination with SEPTA, The Police Department, and University Police Departments:

Macys Apprehension: 1 killed in double stabbing at Macy's in Philadelphia:
<https://www.cbsnews.com/philadelphia/news/macys-philadelphia-stabbing-arrest/>

Use of Technology to Combat Crimes

Investigate Drones:

Resolution 230523: Authorizing the Committee on Public Safety to conduct hearings regarding the use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems, also known as drones, as an additional law enforcement tool that would enhance public safety in the City of Philadelphia.

Increase License Plate Readers Usage:

Philly police to get 200 new license plate readers amid questions about efficiency, privacy: <https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/investigators/automatic-license-plate-readers-ineffective-in-preventing-stolen-vehicles-in-philly-records-show/3595513/>

Use Cell Phones:

100 Shooter Review Committee Report:

<https://phlcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/100-Shooting-Review-complete.pdf>

Enhance the Delaware Valley Intelligence Center (DVIC):

Delaware Valley Intelligence Center: <https://dvicphila.org/?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

Collaboration with the Private Sector and Boots on the Ground Credible Messengers

Monitor Grant Funding for Anti-Violence Groups:

City Controller Anti Violence Data Release:

<https://controller.phila.gov/philadelphia-audits/fy23-anti-violence-budget/#/>

Utilize Universities:

Temple University: <https://www.temple.edu/>

St. Joseph's University: <https://www.sju.edu/>

Drexel University: <https://drexel.edu/>

University of Pennsylvania: <https://www.upenn.edu/>

Youth Involvement in the Criminal Justice System

Create Neighborhood Safe Spaces for Youth Sports:

Resolution 230724: Authorizing the Joint Committees on Education and Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs to hold public hearings to examine the cost and liabilities for the School District and the Department of Parks and Recreation to ease the barriers of access to youth sports.

Use Neighborhood Negotiation Teams:

The Philadelphia Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Network (PANN): <https://www.paan1989.org/>

Use the Amachi Mentoring Program:

Amachi Mentoring Program Website: <http://www.amachimentoring.org/bio.html>

Consider Use of Social Media:

Resolution 210265: Calling all social media companies to take a proactive role in fighting the Gun Violence epidemic nationwide by monitoring and removing inciting posts off platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

Reduce the Population at the Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Services Center (PJJC):

Disturbing new photos inside Philly's juvenile jail show kids sleeping on floors in crowded, filthy cells: <https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia/philadelphia-juvenile-justice-services-center-dhs-20231029.html>

Drill Music and the Music Industry

Fight Drill Music Proliferation:

Are drill musicians chronicling violence or exploiting it? <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2023/03/is-drill-music-chronicling-violence-or-exploiting-it/>

Understand Drill Music and the Music Industry

Philly artists and advocates weigh the impact of drill music — minus the violence: <https://why.org/articles/philadelphia-artists-advocates-drill-music-anti-violence/>

Combating Specific Types of Crime

Evaluate Street Lighting:

Risk Terrain Modeling: <https://www.riskterrainmodeling.com/>

Enforce Red Flag Laws:

Resolution 220752: Calling on the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania to fully implement the Philadelphia Gun Violence Protection program, as established in Chapter 10-2300 of the Philadelphia Code; and further authorizing the joint City Council Committees on Legislative Oversight and Public Safety to hold hearings on the impact implementation of red flag laws could have on gun violence in Philadelphia.

Reduce Retail Theft:

Resolution 230591: Authorizing the City Council Committee on Public Safety to hold public hearings examining “three strikes you’re out laws” and to understand their potential impact on retail theft in Philadelphia.

Invest in the “57 Blocks”:

57 Blocks Coalition: <https://www.57blocksphilly.org/>

Address the Kensington Crisis:

Resolution 230120: Authorizing the City Council Committee on Public Safety to hold public hearings to examine the open-air drug market and other barriers to clean, safe, crime-free streets in Kensington.

Resolution 230121: Calling for the establishment of a “Marshall Stabilization and Recovery Plan” to combat the issues facing Kensington and the surrounding areas in Philadelphia.

Deter Elder Abuse:

Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office Elder Abuse Unit: <https://phillyda.org/safety-and-justice/special-cases/elder-justice-unit/>

Encourage Walking Escorts-College Campuses:

Temple University Walking Escort Program: <https://temple-news.com/temple-expands-boundaries-for-walking-escort-program/>

Understand the True Cost of Crime:

Resolution #220844-Authorizing the City Council Committee on Public Safety to hold a public hearing examining the actual cost of crime on Philadelphia residents.

Understand Nuisance Businesses and Risk Terrain Modeling:

Systematic review and meta-analysis of risk terrain modelling (RTM) as a spatial forecasting method, By: Zoe Marchment and Paul Gill: <https://crimesciencejournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40163-021-00149-6>

Combat “Jugging”:

Cash-carrying customers targeted by trio of robbers outside local banks: <https://www.fox29.com/news/cash-carrying-customers-targeted-by-trio-of-robbers-outside-local-banks-police>

Rethinking Ghost Cars Solutions:

Philly police to get 200 new license plate readers amid questions about efficiency, privacy: <https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/investigators/automatic-license-plate-readers-ineffective-in-preventing-stolen-vehicles-in-philly-records-show/3595513/>

Appoint a Strong Chief Public Safety Director:

Philadelphia City Council Press Release on the Chief Public Safety Director: <https://phlcouncil.com/city-council-introduces-charter-change-legislation-to-create-office-of-chief-public-safety-director-to-coordinate-public-safety-efforts/>

PRESENTED BY COUNCILMEMBER CURTIS JONES, JR.



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