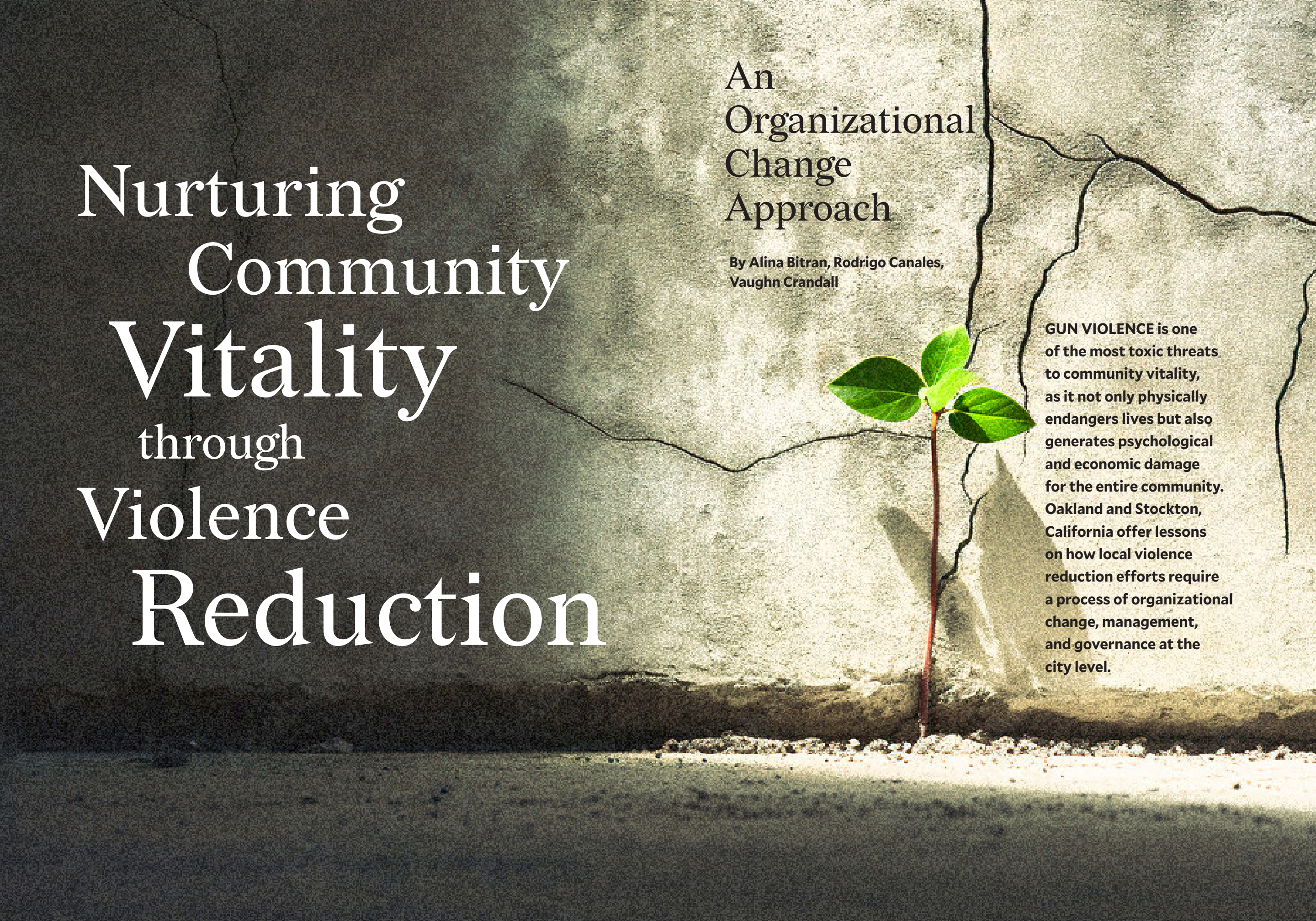


Nurturing Community Vitality through Violence Reduction

An Organizational Change Approach

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GUN VIOLENCE is one of the most toxic threats to community vitality, as it not only physically endangers lives but also generates psychological and economic damage for the entire community. Oakland and Stockton, California offer lessons on how local violence reduction efforts require a process of organizational change, management, and governance at the city level.

By implementing a citywide, data-driven approach that called for deep organizational change, Oakland and Stockton, CA were able to make important progress in reducing homicides and non-fatal shootings while also improving citizen trust and community-police relations. The overall strategy rested on an equally weighted triple bottom line: (1) reduce shootings and homicides on the community level, (2) reduce recidivism and improve safety for the people at highest risk, and (3) improve citizen trust and community-police relations. The approach is ultimately a public safety proposition that recognizes the role of the police and the justice system but also acknowledges that communities most impacted by crime, violence, and poverty deserve to be safe in a way that does not primarily rely on jailing people.

While both cities encountered a host of challenges and setbacks, they made significant progress on their respective triple bottom lines, as measured by reductions in violence, a decrease in overall arrests and other types of police enforcement, decreased rates of re-arrest and victimization of intervention participants, and improvements in available indicators of citizen trust and confidence. Yet in both cases, progress required a combination of political alignment and leadership; a strong management team; expert embedded advisors; an iterative process of design, testing, scaffoldings of managerial support; and a commitment to the institutionalization of new organizational processes.

This article is based on (i) an extensive review of public and working documents; program activities; crime data; analysis, and in the case of Oakland, a formal impact evaluation and (ii) in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 40 stakeholders that participated, to different extents, in the implementation and subsequent consolidation of the approach in both cities. These stakeholders include members of police departments (including chiefs, deputy chiefs, captains, and lieutenants),

district attorney's offices, city governments, national research organizations, and community leaders, community intervention practitioners, probation officers, and formerly at-risk individuals, among others.

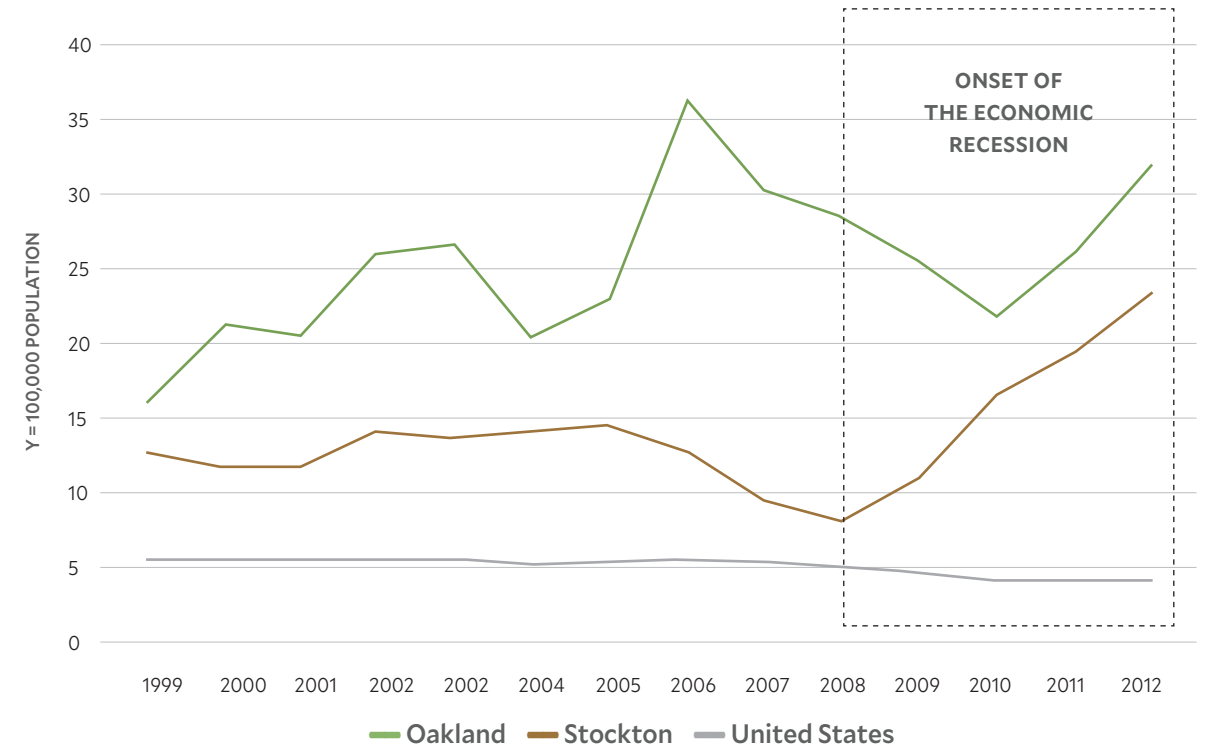
Two Cities Search for a New Violence Reduction Strategy

For decades both Oakland and Stockton faced long-standing gun violence problems, amplified by and connected to a host of other complex challenges that drain community vitality: poverty and inequality, segregation, over-incarceration, and police-community distrust. Prior strategies to reduce violence had been attempted but had been launched by and contained within subunits of a single city agency, rather than deployed as department- or citywide strategies. Initial efforts failed to (i) align critical political decision-makers, (ii) devote senior managers to work officially and full-time, (iii) align working partners around a shared definition of the problem to build a citywide approach with a focus on the highest-risk people, or (iv) build management systems to sustain the work overtime. The initial interventions showed promise, but it was difficult to sustain the attention and effort they required. Violence was framed as a crisis that needed to be “solved,” as a one-time issue, rather than an ongoing social and urban problem that needs to be constantly monitored and managed with discipline and rigor. Thus, initial success reduced the salience of the crisis. For instance, Stockton experienced such considerable success in an earlier version of the intervention that political priorities quickly drifted toward downtown revitalization and development, shifting resources and attention away from violence reduction. Predictably, and as shown in Figure 1, violence rose again, and the cities resorted to traditional, aggressive policing tactics.

In 2011 and 2012, amid rising violence,

Figure 1. Homicide rate in Oakland, Stockton, and the United States (1999–2017)

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation - Crime in the U.S.



public disorder, and strong community pressure, community-based organizations, city leaders, and the Oakland and Stockton police departments (OPD and SPD, respectively) were actively searching for an approach to violence reduction that could build police-community trust and nurture community vitality, without relying primarily on incarceration.

Both cities brought in the California Partnership for Safe Communities (CPSC), a technical assistance organization specializing in developing public safety strategies to advance these goals and help implement data-driven, citywide violence reduction strategies.

In Oakland, a community advocacy organization—Faith in Action (FIA, formerly Oakland Community Organizations)—had for many years advocated with the OPD and the Mayor's Office to reduce violence and pursue police reforms needed to build citizen trust. This external pressure, amplified by the rising

violence, helped police and city leaders make difficult decisions about priorities. It also forced the OPD to reexamine current enforcement practices and reconcile them with their stated values. Ultimately, Mayor Jean Quan, City Administrator Deanna Santana, and Police Chief Howard Jordan all agreed that the City's many prior attempts to reduce violence had failed. All agreed to make reducing gun violence while building community trust their top public safety priority.

STOCKTON

Stockton's drive to bring in a data-driven, citywide approach to reducing violence and fostering trust was also led by a cross-section of stakeholders. In early 2012, the Stockton City Council convened the “Marshall Plan Committee on Public Safety,” which involved key criminal justice institutions, faith-based organizations, businesses, ethnic and cultural leaders, and elected officials and administra-

tors, to establish a comprehensive community and system-wide plan to reduce violence and bring the city back from the brink. Following an extensive consultation process—and thanks to the advocacy of faith-based organizations and newly appointed Chief of Police Eric Jones—the Marshall Plan Committee ultimately decided on a data-driven, citywide violence reduction strategy that could help rebuild community trust.

A Citywide, Data-Driven, Triple Bottom Line Approach

After a careful consideration process, the cities, backed by the support of motivated community members and civic leaders, ultimately opted to focus their violence reduction strategies on the highest-risk people directly involved in violence in the near term. Their approach was rigorously informed by three evidence-based frameworks: procedural Justice, focused deterrence, and performance management.

1. Procedural Justice offers a framework for building police legitimacy by emphasizing that any comprehensive strategy to strengthen police-community relations and build police legitimacy should ensure police (1) consistently treat people with dignity and respect, (2) give them “voice,” a chance to tell their side of the story, (3) make decisions fairly and objectively, based on facts rather than irrelevant factors such as race, socioeconomic status, or neighborhood, and (4) act in a transparent way that reassures people of their goodwill. Extensive work by Tom Tyler and Tracey Meares, among others, has demonstrated that departments that practice the principles of procedural justice see increased public support, cooperation, and compliance with the law (Weisburd and Majmundar 2018). Procedural justice is also designed to help uproot legal cynicism and foster community engagement.

2. Focused deterrence, meanwhile, offers a well-developed problem-oriented policing approach to reduce serious violence and other pressing crime problems. Focused deterrence acknowledges that violence generation is concentrated among a very small number of people and that focused problem-solving efforts that mobilize police and a range of working partners are more likely to be effective. In a review of all the available evaluation evidence, Braga et al. found focused deterrence strategies highly effective in reducing violence in 22 of 24 rigorous evaluations (Braga, Weisburd, and Turchan 2018). A similar review of available evidence for USAID by Thomas Abt and Chris Winship came to similar conclusions—focused deterrence is highly effective (Abt and Winship 2016). The CPSC’s version of focused deterrence also incorporated emerging best practices in community violence intervention, including relentless outreach, high-intensity case management, hospital response, violence interruption, and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), among other components.

3. Finally, CompStat, the dominant performance management framework in modern policing, offered important lessons for a measurement and accountability system designed to coordinate the actions of police organizations towards unified public safety goals with clear performance indicators. Coordinated by the CPSC, the cities filtered through these different lessons to effectively incorporate the strengths of performance management—timely and high-quality intelligence to understand and analyze crime problems, identify options for intervention, and push accountability for results down to the commanders of defined geographic areas—while seeking to avoid the weaknesses of a CompStat-type approach that focuses too much on policing *places*, and not enough on intervening with highest risk *people*.

Differences in Key Organizational Factors at the Outset of Implementation

Despite the similarities between Oakland and Stockton on the ebbing community vitality and the impact of the economic recession, the two cities were in different situations regarding the resources, momentum for reform, and oversight of their police departments. After a civil lawsuit in 2003 against the Oakland Police Department, the city entered a negotiated settlement agreement requiring the OPD to make significant reforms to ensure constitutional policing and to be overseen by a Federal Court Judge and Monitor. The police department was under federal oversight to enact structural reforms; consequently, it required and committed to working with outsiders. As will be discussed, this external scrutiny in some cases helped and in others complicated the push for reform. In contrast, despite its public safety crisis, Stockton did not have a clear police reform mandate. Although the department was under extreme pressure to address two related public crises—surging disorder and violent crime—it did not face similar pressure or external scrutiny for major structural reforms.

The two cities also differed significantly in their investments in violence prevention efforts. By the early 2010s, Oakland had invested many millions of public and private dollars in efforts to prevent and reduce serious violence. This included a voter-approved local public tax measure (Measure Y) that provided \$20 million in annual funding for community policing efforts and violence prevention programs. Private foundations had also invested millions of dollars in local community organizations to prevent and reduce violence. As one of the poorest cities in California, Stockton, meanwhile, had very little pre-existing violence prevention infrastructure outside of the mentioned Peacekeeper program, which mentors youth and young adults with the highest risk of gang involvement. These differences, in turn, shaped the initial scope and

sophistication of the stakeholders and institutions that could potentially participate in a citywide approach.

Finally, the two cities exhibited differences in terms of *who* spearheaded violence reduction and police-community trust-building efforts—a split that affected the haste and depth with which any strategy could trickle through each city. In Oakland, community organizers galvanized city leaders to move to violence reduction and trust-building efforts. An organizing campaign secured a commitment from city leaders to develop an effective strategy, and community actors remained involved in operations and governance throughout the process. Over time, a senior leadership team developed within the city government to drive the strategy, but external community stakeholders retained crucial accountability and partnership roles. In Stockton, the violence reduction and police-community trust-building effort was primarily government-driven, with the Chief of Police—and eventually the mayor—as key leaders and champions. It was only over time that a network of non-profit partners and community members would enter into partnerships with the city.

Implementation of the approach

While the two cities experienced differences in implementation—and in the timing and magnitude of certain challenges—in general, they both followed four stages of implementation: (i) initial adjustments, (ii) organizational change, (iii) stalled progress, and (iv) the institutionalization of the approach as a citywide strategy. It is important to note that these stages did not occur in the same order in the two cities; in Oakland, progress stalled after the years of organizational change, whereas in Stockton, progress stalled earlier, followed by deeper organizational change in later years. That said, the categories are useful in describing common milestones and challenges. During each stage, the partners

enacted a set of solutions in response to a different set of emerging or evolving challenges. Some of these solutions were informal and temporary, while others evolved to become more formalized mechanisms, organizational structures, or processes. Table 1 (page 38) summarizes each stage, its challenges, and the corresponding solutions that the cities enacted.

Figure 2 below summarizes the development of different scaffolds at each level, from line staff to city executives, across time.

Understanding the Dynamics of Violence: Problem analysis

As a first step in implementing a data-driven, citywide violence reduction strategy, the two cities—with the support of CPSC—set out to define and understand their problems of violence. Reducing record levels of violence was a stubborn challenge that required a problem-solving approach that could also enable

civic and community stakeholders to work effectively with the police. These partners needed a shared definition of their violence problem to define their work together.

The partners in Oakland and Stockton, guided by CPSC, assembled a diverse team, integrated from different units across the police department and beyond, to complete a “problem and opportunity analysis:” a systematic examination and review of several years of homicides to integrate all existing information, from agencies across the justice system, about victims, perpetrators, and their affiliations. Bringing together this diverse group of stakeholders across different areas allowed the team to integrate data that had typically been kept separate. This revealed previously unseen patterns and generated a new understanding of the hyper-concentration of violence.

For both cities, these analyses revealed that, consistent with prior research (Braga et

al., 2012; Weisburd, 2015), a surprisingly small number of people (fewer than one-half of one percent of a given community) generate most of the violence. In Oakland, the analysis found that fewer than 400 individuals were connected to up to 85% of citywide homicides; in Stockton, 200 individuals were identified to be at the highest risk of violence. The victims and perpetrators of violence were adult men (30-32 years old), well-known to the criminal justice system, but who constantly fell through the cracks because of the lack of information sharing across agencies. Gun violence was not random and driven by place but driven by retaliation shootings connected to personal disputes and running gang conflicts.

The analysis proved groundbreaking, as they directly challenged the historical and programmatic assumptions regarding the drivers, victims, and perpetrators of violence in the two cities. Specifically, the analyses revealed that current efforts did not target those at highest risk of violence. While the results revealed how poorly designed the cities’ historical approach had been, it also offered hope. Instead of saturating high-violence areas with police and making zero-tolerance arrests, the new strategy could focus a range of justice system and community intervention efforts on the relatively few, specific individuals at high risk. At the same time, efforts to prevent gun violence would have to be reoriented from youth- and area-based outreach in hotspots to specifically focusing on people embedded in high-risk networks and engaged in cycles of retaliation.

In other words, investing in problem analyses of this type helped police and justice agencies narrow their focus to individuals most likely to both perpetrate and be victims of violence. It also helped police agencies reduce their reliance on aggressive, unfocused enforcement tactics that tend to generate many arrests with little public safety benefit and significant community harm.

Turning Gun Violence into the Priority

When a city takes on reducing violence as a top priority, it often confronts the reality that the corresponding institutions are not well-organized for this purpose. Both Oakland and Stockton undertook initial efforts to prioritize violence reduction. However, while Oakland pursued organizational reforms during this early stage, Stockton’s initial approach was more conventional and superficial.

Building on other successful examples, Oakland addressed the problem of poorly organized institutions by creating a senior violence reduction management team; positioning them at the highest level within the City—as a direct report to the Chief of Police and the Mayor—and vesting them with agency and citywide authority. The mayor appointed Public Safety Director Reygan Cunningham as Ceasefire Director, a position that would offer civil service protection but would function as a dual report to both the Mayor and the Chief of Police. The Chief then appointed Captain Ersie Joyner, who brought a wealth of relevant experience as a former commander of homicide and years of experience as a street investigator, as Ceasefire Commander. These organizational structures safeguarded the autonomy of the approach and granted sufficient formal and informal authority to carry out the strategy.

Next, the OPD established a dedicated Ceasefire Section, which was placed as a direct report to the Chief of Police, to provide formal authority to guide the Department’s overall strategy. The Ceasefire Section refocused its resources on the small percentage of people and behaviors that drove the bulk of violence. By focusing specifically on the behaviors of individuals at high risks of violence—and not any “suspicious” individual—driven by data and intelligence, complemented with practices of procedural justice, precision policing was poised to reduce the number of negative

Figure 2. Development of scaffolds at each level over time (2012–2020)

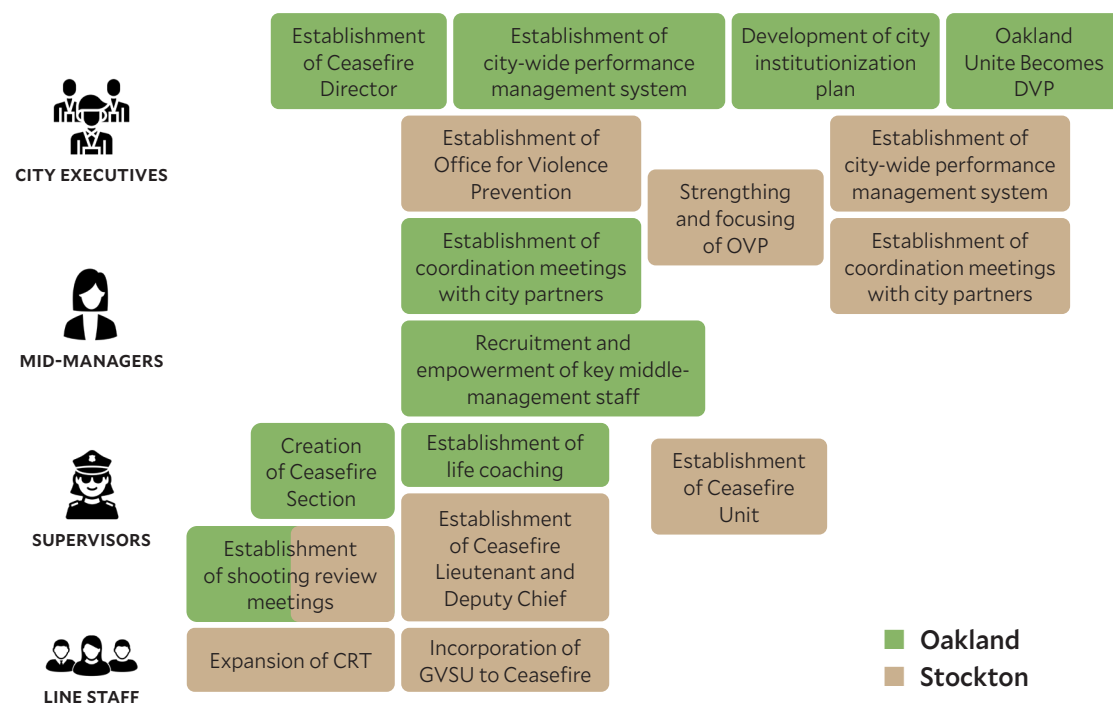


Table 1. Stages of Implementation, Challenges, and Solutions

INITIAL ADJUSTMENTS

City	Challenges	Solution
Oakland (2012-2013)	Siloed data across different units and agencies hindered the identification of, and intervention with, high-risk individuals. There was also a lack of central management. Traditional policing operations focused on place-based policing with heavy enforcement that did not align with triple bottom line objectives, while CVI and prevention work primarily focused on youth and not on those at the highest risk of violence. Community intervention efforts largely operated independently.	OPD undertook a problem analysis to understand its problem of violence. From the outset, the partnership pursued important organizational change. OPD created the Ceasefire Section and designed a dual leadership strategy: the Ceasefire Director (external coordination) and Ceasefire Commander (internal operations). The city created Oakland Unite (OU) to deliver services, support, and outreach to individuals at high risk. Finally, the partnership implemented Procedural Justice (PJ).
Stockton (2012-2013)	N/A	SPD undertook a problem analysis to better understand its problem of violence. The agency lowered the intensity of patrolling and grew the Community Response Team (CRT). SPD also participated in PJ training to learn how to build community legitimacy and trust through policing. However, no deep organizational change took place during this time.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

City	Challenges	Solution
Oakland (2013-2016)	While Oakland achieved relatively early success in its pursuit of organizational change, the approach remained concentrated within OPD. The city was in need of high-level leadership to support and operationalize the approach.	Through community advocacy and CPSC facilitation, the city approved Measure Z tax and the Executive Directive as a citywide mandate. The reporting structures also changed: the Ceasefire Section began reporting directly to the Chief of Police. CPSC helped OPD establish mechanisms (60/90-day plans) for inter-unit collaborations with Ceasefire Section. Human Services Department established a bi-weekly coordination meeting for data sharing, identification, and outreach purposes. The mayor started a quarterly performance review with key leaders for governance and accountability.
Stockton (2017-2018)	Despite establishing a new city partner, the Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) continued to pursue strategies that did not address the most at-risk population (e.g., primary prevention for youth yet uninvolved in violence vs. <i>tertiary</i> prevention on individuals engaged in violence cycles). The approach remained concentrated within a relatively small subset of units within SPD. This created inertia to revert to place- and enforcement-based policing.	The partnership continued working to pursue deep organizational change. CPSC and the city brought in David Muhammad from the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform; committed to a suite of data-driven and value-based processes for OVP (Office of Violence Prevention) for the identification of, and intervention with, high-risk individuals. SPD also finally established a dedicated Ceasefire Unit and provided tailored procedural justice training to specialized units working with high-risk individuals.



Table 1. Stages of Implementation, Challenges, and Solutions

STALLED PROGRESS

City	Challenges	Solution
Oakland (2016–2017)	Due, largely, to the sex scandal and the ongoing ‘brief chiefs’ phenomenon, Oakland found itself needing to resume the approach with diminished legitimacy, lacking key partners, and with the need to protect OPD from high turnover in key leadership and policy discontinuities. Meanwhile, Oakland Unite was losing focus on the highest risk population.	CPSC and the Ceasefire Director reunited partners. Developed a new problem analysis and communicated persistent urgency. The mayor renewed the Executive Directive and appointed a new chief that could convey a sense of stability. The partnership reinstalled the management cycle to summon agencies.

City	Challenges	Solution
Stockton (2014–2017)	After the initial adjustments—and following notable reductions in homicides—the city failed to make additional progress, as the partners experienced hurdles to pursue organizational change: inertia, the difficulty of organizing across agencies, and limits to their ability to align resources around a shared understanding of violence. SPD lacked a strong institutional city partner for the approach; consequently, the approach remained concentrated within a relatively small subset of units within SPD; inertia to revert to place- and enforcement-based policing.	The partnership worked diligently to promote the needed organizational change at both the city and police levels. The city established the OVP as an institutional city partner that could support the approach. However, this new office remained hesitant to work with high-risk individuals. Within SPD, the partnership achieved tactical changes, but continued—still, to no avail—to argue for the importance of establishing a full, dedicated Ceasefire section.

CONSOLIDATION

City	Challenges	Solution
Oakland (2018–2020)	While each of the different partners were seemingly pursuing the needed organizational change, the approach still relied heavily on individuals’ know-how, key leadership, and relationships. There was also a lack of certainty regarding the specific results achieved by the approach. Moreover, the intervention’s clients (i.e., at-risk individuals) continued to remain at the margins of the approach.	The partnership consolidated the management cycle. Independent evaluators conducted an impact analysis, proving positive results and bringing external legitimacy. The partnership also designed a citywide institutionalization plan and promoted inter-agencies institutionalization plans through elaboration of policies and staffing.

City	Challenges	Solution
Stockton (2018)	N/A	The partnership established weekly coordination meetings between OVP, SPD, and other key stakeholders for the purposes of data sharing and identification of high-risk individuals. This also allowed for the design of a complete performance management system, with clear performance reviews and reporting mechanisms. The partnership also designed new mechanisms, like the Leadership Council, to bring highest risk community members closer to the core of the intervention.



interactions and increase community trust in the department.

While Stockton did not initially create a dedicated Ceasefire Section within the SPD or new positions within the city, it did undertake efforts to prioritize violence. Initially, the SPD focused on reorienting the department's existing structures to focus on violence—a strategy that generated certain resistance, as it essentially meant that officers would decrease attention on lower-level crime or misdemeanors. In addition, the department pulled officers out of patrol—where officers were often reactive and did not generally contribute to preventing nor building an understanding of violence—and incorporated them into the Community Response Team (CRT), where, based on the new information, they would be better equipped to deal with violence. While the vision surrounding the approach shaped the overall priorities of the department, the CRT and the Gang Investigations Unit remained largely untouched in the broader organizational structure. Consequently, the new approach had a limited impact on their overall tactics.

For both departments, this shift towards focusing on a small percentage of people and behaviors that drove the bulk of violence marked not only an operational reorientation but a change in key routines, processes, and organizational culture within the police departments. For example, focused enforcement reduced discretionary time by providing officers with specific tasks and intelligence about the specific people they needed to focus on. Shifting this culture required thorough training of the officers, sustained managerial support and focus, and continuous advocacy by the strategy leadership.

Building Intelligence

Undertaking intelligence-driven policing focused on individuals driving violence called for a robust system to generate, integrate, and analyze real-time data and intelligence.

And to constantly translate that intelligence into specific, focalized, rapid action. CPSC encouraged the PDs to build new capabilities by reorienting existing resources. The OPD redesigned the Gang Investigations Unit—the team with the most developed know-how for the type of analysis—into the core of the Ceasefire Section. The new section worked to develop intelligence on violence patterns, violence drivers, and street dynamics, and to conduct focused and short investigations of those actively engaged in group violence to disrupt cycles of retaliation.

Stockton, meanwhile, also realized that its data analysis was insufficient—both in resources and skills. As an initial step, the SPD built out its data analysis unit, incorporated street-level analysts, and trained analysts to not just gather, but also interpret, data. Through these different mechanisms, the OPD and SPD aimed to develop, and ultimately strengthen, links for information gathering and sharing across analysts and field agents to integrate a more robust pool of information.

Building Initial Trust through Management Scaffolds

While these early restructuring efforts within the police departments were noteworthy, CPSC emphasized that data from a single unit or agency would not be enough. It was necessary to assemble data and intelligence from all relevant stakeholders, but no formal mechanism or institution existed. To tear down long-standing silos in data, CPSC helped the OPD and SPD establish and facilitate weekly shooting review meetings as separate, deliberate, and protected convening spaces for all partners to come together and share information on a more formal basis.

Shooting review meetings brought together police officers from different units and precincts, as well as other law enforcement partners, to review weekly data on shootings and homicides and establish an accurate and dynamic understanding of the

drivers of violence. Each stakeholder became responsible, and accountable, for a specific set of information to report on each week. The reviews were carefully orchestrated and facilitated to ensure a clear agenda, that each actor knew exactly what was expected of them, and that there was a clear focus on maintaining a clear, real-time, collective understanding of violence. This exercise allowed the different agencies, many of which were crucial sources of information, to collect and compile the different pieces of data and develop a comprehensive understanding of violence.

These meetings facilitated organizational change by assembling otherwise isolated stakeholders across enforcement agencies, establishing a shared language of data-driven evidence, serving as a project management tool, and building a sense of partnership anchored in the importance of the mission. As participants experienced the value of integrating data across departments and agencies, these meetings had the additional effect of generating trust between participants, streamlining communication across different units and departments, and dividing and distributing otherwise unclear or duplicated tasks.

To achieve these changes, the shooting reviews required intensive planning and expert facilitation. The type of engagement and information sharing sought was counter-normative for all participants and establishing a new set of norms and currencies of exchange required careful management and norm setting. CPSC and senior managers worked collaboratively to design, develop, and refine these key management meetings. Once the shooting reviews established new trust, sets of norms, and ways of relating, they allowed for novel, more complex processes and structures.

Procedural Justice and Trust Building

While the new approach to violence and the related organizational changes to the police departments were all aligned with the triple bottom line objective of promoting police-community trust, community stakeholders and police leadership believed that this objective required additional investment at a systemic level, particularly given Oakland and Stockton's long history of mistrust between the police and the community.

In 2013, with CPSC's support, officers from the OPD and SPD participated in procedural justice and implicit bias training at the Chicago Police Department. The training was co-designed by leading procedural justice scholars and the Chicago Police Department to teach the core principles of procedural justice to working police officers (to be “for cops by cops”). A procedural justice trainer noted that the training served as a sort of “reset button” that gave police officers, many of whom were tired and cynical, an opportunity to reflect on their purpose in selecting this profession in the first place. The training injected fresh energy and optimism to the departments, and when accompanied by sincere changes in operational and incentive structures, began to shape its enforcement practices and relationship with the community.

Building on their experience in Chicago, both Oakland and Stockton designed a procedural justice training tailored to each police department. Oakland brought in community partners early in the process to jointly develop and teach these concepts. The OPD also integrated procedural justice concepts in its strategy documents and internal communications (e.g., posters, memos, Chiefs' messages to staff, line ups, etc.). Next, procedural justice concepts were incorporated into promotional exams. Finally, the OPD began to integrate procedural justice into the performance reviews of line officers, including the review

of body camera footage with officers as opportunities for constructive feedback on their application of the principles of procedural justice in their interactions with community members.

Stockton, meanwhile, was invited to join the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice (NI) as one of the six pilot cities to implement evidence-based interventions to rebuild community-police relations over four years, 2015 through 2018. The objective of the program was to implement evidence-based interventions to rebuild trust with the public based on three primary pillars: procedural justice, implicit bias, and reconciliation.

Even in the first two years of the PJ training program, interviewees note that Oakland and Stockton's participation in procedural justice training brought about considerable change to what it meant to do policing more broadly. Whereas the approach remained relatively siloed within the police departments, the procedural justice program quickly reached all officers, offering a new shared set of values and language to reflect them. This became an inflection point in the OPD and SPD's processes of cultural change.

Procedural justice built a shared commitment to a new way of policing, but it did not, on its own, transform the metrics, systems, and mechanisms for dealing with violence. It was only through sustained internal efforts, backed by continuous engagement from CPSC and key partners that the philosophy drove deeper changes in how the OPD and SPD worked as organizations to generate trust with the public. Such an organizational process—from individual to organizational learning—took time.

Redesigning and Establishing New City Infrastructure

As police departments reorganized resources to focus on the problem of violence, the CPSC encouraged the cities to complement this with specialized city infrastructure. Oakland, for the most part, was able to redesign and reorient the priorities of existing agencies to better align with the needs of the new approach, while Stockton faced the need to create new, devoted infrastructure.

In Oakland, CPSC partnered with intervention expert David Muhammad, to help the city shift the focus from “youth and root causes” primary prevention to near-term intervention with individuals at the highest risk of violence. The city rebranded the existing network of social services as Oakland Unite (OU), whose central mission would be to deliver services, support, and outreach to those at the highest risk of violence. The first program that the partnership developed with OU was a network of life coaches. It sought to build relationships with individuals at the highest risk of violence, enhance coordination of service delivery, and achieve harm reduction goals.

In Stockton, a thorough review of prior violence reduction efforts led CPSC, Councilmember (and subsequently Mayor) Michael Tubbs, and Chief Jones to develop an Office of Violence Prevention (OVP), under the City Manager's Office. The OVP's original design and mission was to “institutionalize” the four key activities required to sustainably reduce gun violence:

1. Manage the analysis of violence to align strategic efforts across partners, use limited resources well, foster trust, and assess progress on key outcomes

2. Integrate and build the capacity of more community partners to play meaningful roles in engaging and supporting people and families involved in and impacted by violence, while building trust between community members and police.

3. Manage direct engagement and intervention with community members at the highest risk of violence in the near term.

4. Manage harm reduction, relationship building, and service efforts to ensure better outcomes for young men at the highest risk of violence.

This mission was grounded in the extensive research and experience of cities that have successfully addressed violence over time by institutionalizing these four key activities that required a fundamental shift from “business as usual.”

As a result, each component of OVP's mission demanded a complementary change in culture:

The establishment of this office marked an important symbolic and substantive commitment to redefining the city's approach to public safety, with an entire office, rather than a disjointed outreach program, dedicated to violence.

Despite the new infrastructure, however, both Oakland and Stockton continued to face challenges in effectively focusing on high-risk individuals. Oakland Unite's early programs and services continued to focus largely on youth despite its restated mission. Similarly, despite its ambitious mandate and aspirations—or perhaps because of them—Stockton's OVP pursued a very broad mission and, in line with the inertia of the earlier Peacekeeper program, focused the bulk of its efforts on primary violence prevention, like outreach programs with youth at schools. Over several years, CPSC and Michael Tubbs engaged and pushed OVP leadership to refocus outreach interventions on high-risk individuals; however, a vacuum in leadership and lack of political appeal of shifting its target population limited the OVP's focus and effectiveness. For both cities, it took new leadership, technical assistance, and a political mandate to bring city infrastructure closer to working with individuals currently involved in gun violence.

Leadership and Alignment

One of the key factors that helped both cities overcome these challenges was the ability to secure and anchor support at the highest levels of political and agency leadership in the city, aided by sustained pressure from community leaders. Notably, in the absence of formalized mechanisms or structures to pursue and sustain organizational change at the earlier stages of implementation, individual authority figures could take this role themselves and, through the weight of their leadership, bring others along. This occurred in both cities through strong leadership at the city, police department, and community levels at key moments in implementation.

At the police department level, Stockton experienced consistent and stable police leadership during the entire time under Eric Jones, while Oakland experienced a rapid series of police chief changes and turnover; with strong leadership for periods of time from Howard Jordan and Sean Whent before they both ultimately resigned under pressure. During the times of stable leadership, the chiefs in both cities were avid supporters of the triple bottom line approach and procedural justice; consequently, they implemented the required early tactics within the departments to focus on the new strategy—even in the face of resistance (although as mentioned, Stockton was more hesitant to push for deeper organizational change at the early stages of implementation).

Oakland was able to secure the support of city government leadership considerably quicker than Stockton. In November 2014, Oakland elected Mayor Libby Schaaf, a steadfast supporter of the approach since her time as councilmember. The approach had strong political backing during her term, which allowed the partnership to push for broader organizational changes. For Stockton, renewed support at the city government level occurred in 2017, when Michael Tubbs became mayor.

Tubbs had not only a professional, but also a personal understanding of and connection to violence and poverty in Stockton; he was convinced of the triple bottom line approach. Mayor Tubbs and Chief Jones developed a joint vision for the city around violence prevention; this alignment in vision and objectives translated into considerable progress and sparked mutual commitment and pressure.

Finally, key leadership figures within organizations dealing with high-risk populations proved essential to the institutionalization of the approach. In Oakland, Peter Kim, a well-known community organization manager, arrived as the new manager of Oakland Unite in 2014 and eventually advanced OU's processes into a central pillar of the approach. In Stockton, at CPSC's recommendation, Daniel Muhammad became the director of OVP and was able to push for the much-needed program development and organizational change, finally making the OVP a robust partner for the approach (as will be discussed below).

Hurdles to Change

The early years of the intervention yielded immediate results in the triple bottom line objectives for both Oakland and Stockton. In Stockton, homicides dropped by 55 percent, from 71% in 2012 to 32% in 2013, and reached the lowest point since 2008 (Figure 3). Although the cities seemed to be achieving considerable initial success, this progress eventually flattened for the two cities: in Stockton between 2013 and 2016 when key partners retreated and hesitated to engage in profound organizational change, and in Oakland in 2016, when intense leadership turnovers and a notorious scandal threatened the partnership.

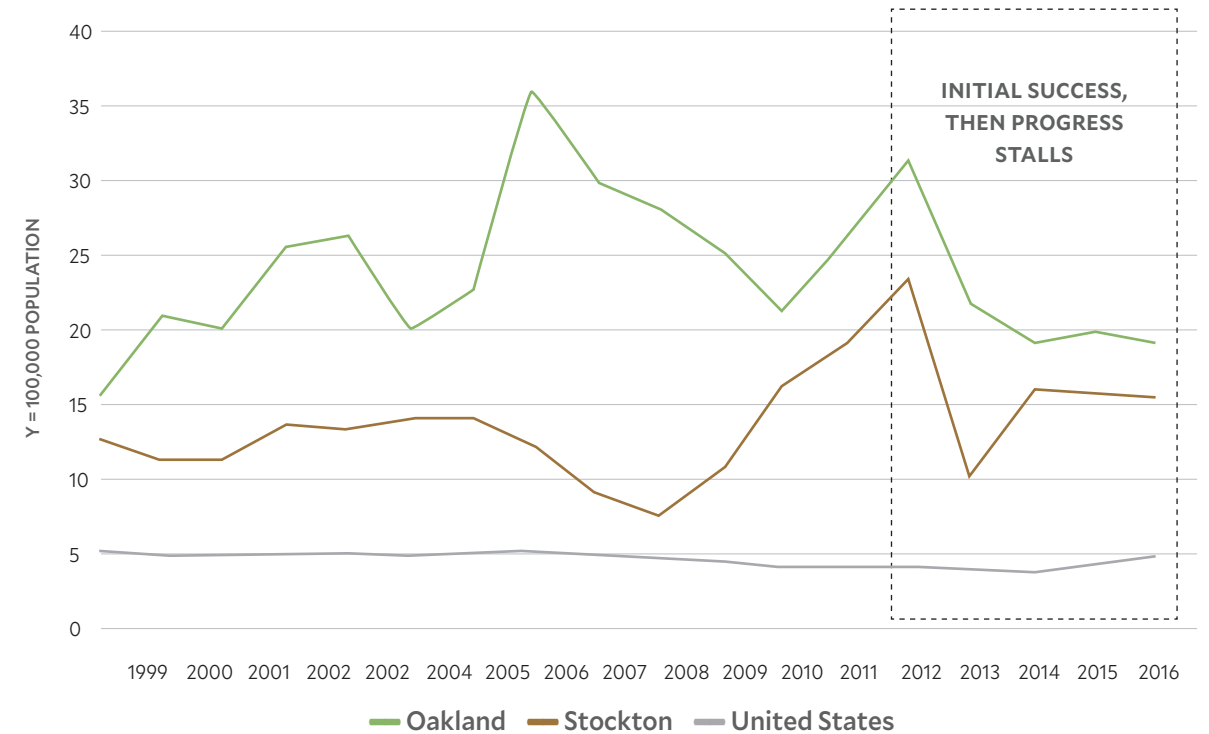
In Stockton, the stalled progress occurred almost at the outset (2014), following the early, promising results of the intervention (and prior to the pursuit of true organizational change).

Ironically, the early success of the approach had the unexpected consequence of leading several stakeholders to believe that the work was “done,” and consequently, to shift attention and retract from the intense effort that the approach demanded. There was, after all, a competing range of issues that required attention during the recovery from bankruptcy, such as the city's high rate of unemployment. The shifting of attention at this point hindered the important, necessary work to ensure that the initial reductions—still fragile—could be effectively sustained over time. This was also compounded by the institutional weakness of OVP and the resistance to pursue profound organizational change.

In Oakland, meanwhile, progress stalled in 2016, marking the rupture of a year characterized by gradual organizational change. In March 2016, amid organizational development, scandal shook the entire police department, the city, and the partnership as a whole: an investigation resulted in the charging, suspension, or resignation of more than a dozen officers who were accused of engaging in sexual relations with an underage woman. The OPD subsequently went through three different police chiefs within two weeks. The ongoing turmoil at the top distracted the organization from its commitment to procedural justice and trust-building. The events also ignited severe disappointment and distrust among the OPD's partners, and in many cases, shattered working relationships. Oakland Unite, for instance, distanced itself from the intervention and diminished its focus on high-risk individuals. The events also fractured the trust that the community had gradually rebuilt with the police department over the previous years, and many lost faith in the intervention. Although the key activities of the intervention were, at least visibly, put on pause for a few months, during the last quarter of 2016 organizations gradually resumed their work on the ground. This was made possible by the strong middle-management leadership

Figure 3. Homicide rate in Oakland, Stockton, and the United States (1999–2016)

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation - Crime in the U.S.



from OPD, the technical assistance from CPSC coordinating the recovery, and the institutional protection provided by city policies.

Notwithstanding this resilience, this risk highlighted the importance of continuing to institutionalize the intervention quickly and sustainably at the city level.

Pursuing Profound Organizational Change

As mentioned, an important reason why progress stalled in Stockton was the city and police department's hesitance to engage in profound organizational change. The SPD had reoriented resources and instituted tactics to establish new enforcement mechanisms and strengthen data and analysis capabilities. But this had all been done by an ad-hoc, cross-unit team with mostly informal structures and processes, which created commitment and energy but was dependent on

specific individuals and their relationships. Its internal processes and structures remained intact. Consequently, despite “checking all the boxes,” the approach hit a wall.

Sustained progress required a new, formal organizational structure, but was met with severe resistance. First, the department was stretched thin, and redeploying resources meant diverting them from other ongoing efforts. Some of the competing initiatives, moreover, were much “easier” to understand and implement, such as procedural justice training, which built on the SPD's existing infrastructure for continuous learning and had no direct implications for operations or performance management.

Eventually, with strong support from Mayor Tubbs and CPSC, the SPD assigned a dedicated, senior deputy chief to the program; moved the Gang Violence Suppression Unit (GVSU) into the program (which helped seal an evidence-based, triple bottom line approach to investigations); and assigned a dedicated

Lieutenant with a dedicated team of street-level officers. It would, however, take until 2018 for the SPD to establish a dedicated Ceasefire Intervention Unit. These changes transformed the program from a temporary and independent set of tactics deployed by a few officers to an established, organizational strategy. CPSC emphasized the importance of sustaining these changes through efforts to obtain continuous buy-in from mid-level managers, through executive partnership meetings to educate, inform, and orient the executive leaders of the agencies, as well as to reconfirm their commitment to the strategy.

SPD also introduced a new PJ training specifically for the specialized units—the officers focused on the people at the highest risk of violence, as Oakland had also done a few years prior. Officers learned from outreach workers, residents who had lost family members to violence, and young people at risk of violence. This training is noteworthy for two reasons. First, it marks the appropriation of NI training by the SPD. For the first time, the SPD was no longer a mere recipient of a national curriculum; it was now (with the support of CPSC) tailoring and adjusting this training to its specific needs and priorities. Second, this training symbolized an important fusion between procedural justice and the broader strategy. The interaction between the approach and procedural justice reinforced both programs, with a final product greater than the sum of its parts.

Similar efforts occurred around the restructuring of Stockton's OVP. Since its origins, the partners emphasized the urgency of pursuing organizational change within OVP to focus on high-risk individuals. Over prior years, CPSC had worked to move OVP towards value-driven and data-based management of its intervention work. That effort culminated in the city hiring CPSC/NICJR consultant Daniel Muhammad to co-manage OVP and institute a new work plan.

Under Muhammad's leadership, between 2017 and 2018 OVP underwent key transformations, including: (i) a drastic reduction in the number of clients¹ to better focus limited resources on the most at-risk prospects, (ii) a retraining of Peacekeepers to focus on high-risk adult males, rather than their traditional, younger population, (iii) the implementation of a data-driven decision making and a performance management cycle, and (iv) strengthening the partnership and coordination with other partners and service agencies. The office established new departmental protocols for Peacekeepers related to outreach, intervention, and case management focusing specifically on high-risk clients, and implemented a new theory of change. Through these transformations, the office became a key city partner for the approach.

Extending from Practice to Policy

At this point, both Oakland and Stockton had effectively reoriented resources and developed informal, temporary mechanisms to convene actors for the purposes of shared work. The cities had even gone as far as to create new, devoted infrastructure to attend to the problem of violence and had pursued several important organizational changes. Yet, this progress was still susceptible to the inertia of agency culture and performance incentives. CPSC helped the cities vouch for mechanisms that could alter incentives in a systematic way.

Oakland, for instance, developed two key city policies. One of these policies was Measure Z, which would replace the 10-year Measure Y tax that had funded much of the city's violence prevention infrastructure. Measure Z marked an important shift in the city's approach to violence with a clear emphasis on precision policing and services focused on individuals at a very high risk of violence. Its

approval was thus an indicator of the approach's early achievements in entering Oakland's political system to redefine the problem; build momentum and support and brand the approach as the city's best shot at tackling violence.

The other key policy was an executive directive, developed by CPSC and signed by Mayor Schaaf, which entailed the creation of a city governance structure for the approach, mandating its implementation, and anchored at the highest levels of city government. The executive directive had seven policies that aimed to create a comprehensive, institutional, and city-level implementation of the approach; for instance, by granting the authority to establish organizational processes across the city agencies, defining new reporting structures, and aligning the necessary resources to have a consistent citywide strategy. Along with Measure Z, the executive directive represented a critical step to make the approach the formal city policy and the central strategy for reducing violence in Oakland. Moreover, these policies provided institutional protection and continuity against threats, such as the leadership turnover and scandal.

Governance Structures and Accountability

Once Stockton and Oakland had reorganized management within the police departments for the purposes of focus and accountability, the partners aimed to establish systematic coordination meetings as a mechanism to keep the city partners involved and accountable. It is important to note that this process happened at different moments for each city, depending on whether the needed organizational infrastructure was in place. Whereas Oakland was able to launch this process relatively early in its implementation as part of broader efforts for organizational change (2014), in Stockton this did not occur until much later (2017).

For both cities, CPSC, OPD, SPD, and relevant city partners drew heavily from emerging research to ultimately consolidate previous scaffolds into a thorough and consolidated administrative and performance management system that emphasized the strategy's commitment to evidence-based work. As illustrated in Figure 4, the management cycle was split into two types of meetings: (i) management and operations meetings,

Figure 4. Governance Structures



¹ The office chose the language of clients as it reflected a respectful, service-oriented approach that departed from implications in alternative labels such as "cases," "subjects," or "patients."

which involved shooting reviews; coordination and case management meetings; and (ii) governance meetings, which consist of monthly performance management meetings (Stockton) and quarterly performance review meetings with the mayor (Oakland).

Weekly coordination and data sharing

The weekly cycles consist of coordination and data sharing meetings for the institutions working on the ground. The first is the shooting review meetings. While they first emerged as a scaffold to temporarily account for the lack of communication and information sharing across and within institutions, shooting reviews gradually evolved into sophisticated routines that formalized the collaboration and information-sharing protocols between police departments and law enforcement agencies. They established a structure to gather intelligence, develop analyses, communicate priorities, and hold accountable strategies grounded in the problem analysis. Culturally, they helped shift longstanding police practices entrenched in place-based, strong enforcement towards person-focused, precision policing.

In addition to weekly shooting meetings, both the OPD and SPD implemented coordination meetings with the relevant city partners. At the early stages of implementation, it was virtually impossible to engage in coordination meetings of this nature, as the relevant city partners either did not exist, were not willing to come to the table with the police, or were not adequately focused on high-risk individuals. By this point, however, the sustained efforts to reorient the cities' violence prevention infrastructure allowed Oakland and Stockton to establish coordination meetings with the Human Services Department (HSD) and the Office of Violence Prevention (OVP), respectively, to discuss all shootings that occurred during the week, build on each other's knowledge to generate assessments of risk, and coordinate tailored strategies to provide

comprehensive support. As city partners' capabilities further consolidated, these coordination meetings evolved into a managerial routine with a unified focus, clear responsibilities, and deliverables that prompted new organizational arrangements between stakeholders that had only interacted informally with the strategy. The meetings tailored a set of formal mechanisms to address coordination and resource issues, set working boundaries, and share feedback from stakeholders (particularly regarding law enforcement). Moreover, the meetings aligned organizational modifications inside the agencies. For instance, the meetings allowed for a shared definition among diverse agencies of who was at the highest risk, which also reframed institutional capabilities towards attending them.

OVP and HSD, too, ultimately established their own, internal data-driven meeting to review the quality, strategy, and implementation of the violence reduction efforts. Like the shooting reviews, the case management meetings provide an opportunity for outreach workers and relevant personnel to review and discuss the status of all caseloads. Crucial to these meetings are the data and referrals that the police departments share during the prior coordination meetings, which outreach workers use to develop short- and long-term group strategies for each of the individuals in the caseloads. In the case of Stockton, in particular, the existence of these meetings further attests to the transformational change within OVP: from a loose, unfocused Peace-keeper program to a focalized agency that speaks the same data-driven language as its institutional partners.

The new governance structures became important tools for change within the police departments and city agencies. Organizationally, they established a structure to gather intelligence, develop analyses, communicate priorities, and ensure accountability across stakeholders. The systematic meetings also marked a new opportunity for police and

outreach cultures to coalesce around the same information—which was based on their previously negotiated and discussed shared values. Whereas cooperation during the early years depended on the personal relationships and disposition of individuals from different organizations, or on temporary scaffolds, the formalized organizational structures, increased capabilities, and consolidation of accountability and communication channels solidified these partnerships over time, taking them beyond individuals and the relationships between them to codify them in organizational processes, structures, and roles.

Creating Accountability through Performance Management

In addition to the weekly coordination meetings, CPSC helped the partners implement performance management meetings. In terms of performance reviews, police, outreach, and community leaders come together monthly to monitor progress toward violence-reduction goals, refine strategies, and solve operational challenges. For each approach operational component, indicators help the partners understand whether they are: (i) focused on the small proportion of individuals driving violence, (ii) working at a scale that promises citywide results, and (iii) implementing their initiatives in a way that is consistent with both the partnership's values and accepted best practice. The organizations then undertake strategic planning based on monthly performance management data.

CPSC also helped the partners institutionalize performance reviews and monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting mechanisms. In Oakland, as part of the final piece of the development of a robust governance structure, in 2015, Mayor Schaaf proposed establishing performance review meetings to review progress on the implementation of the approach. Importantly, these meetings symbolized an inflection point when the mayor

became directly engaged in operating the intervention. In Stockton, the SPD presents the results of its quarterly shooting review and informs OVP of emerging trends and patterns. The organizations subsequently hold discussions on how to interpret and tailor ongoing strategies when necessary and report to funders. Finally, the OVP publishes an annual report, which captures annual performance statistics. The office subsequently updates its strategic plan based on the outputs of this report.

The quarterly and annual accountability system offers an objective mechanism to monitor whether the partners, both individually and collectively, are attending to and achieving their stated objectives. In other words, everyone—including partners and funders—knows what each partner is supposed to be doing and has robust enough information to determine whether they are indeed complying and attaining the pre-established objectives.

Finally, there was an important handover process in terms of capacities. Early on, CPSC spearheaded most data analysis exercises, as these represented an otherwise overwhelming challenge both technically and resource-wise. During this period, however, CPSC undertook important efforts to ensure that the organizations could successfully uptake and institutionalize these processes such that, eventually, there would no longer be a need for CPSC. This was possible by parallel efforts to strengthen organizations' infrastructure; for instance, SPD growing out its analysis unit and OVP personnel engaging in extensive training. The two cities subsequently managed shooting reviews, case management meetings, and other coordination mechanisms without external support. Moreover, they have developed the capacity to not only generate and share this data, but also analyze it and make decisions accordingly.

Institutionalizing the Approach

While performance management and accountability cycles among the relevant partners undoubtedly contributed to the consolidation of the approach, the latter remained susceptible to changing political winds and external shocks. CPSC therefore continued to encourage the partners to institutionalize the program as a citywide strategy. Indeed, formal institutionalization would provide codified city plans and procedures to ensure the program's stability despite these threats, and with that, organizational resilience.

With CPSC's support, OPD, Oakland Unite, the Mayor's Office, and community-based organizations developed institutionalization plans with corresponding deadlines. Moreover, to manage the implementation of each agency's institutionalization plan, CPSC proposed four citywide sets of priorities. The performance indicators would orient the enhancement of key processes and formalize commitments across the relevant city agencies. The priorities for these plans entailed key staffing (mapping all vital executive, mid-level, and operational—not only top-level—positions for the operation of the approach), protocols (drafting protocols for service delivery, information exchange, public relations, and coordination), and analysis and governance (ensuring that the problem analysis would occur on an annual basis and consolidating the management cycle.)

After extensive efforts, the ambitious institutionalization agenda was only partially achieved. Abandonment or stagnation of such plans resulted from violence stopping to be a top-tier political problem. Moreover, the institutionalization plans were affected by a series of transitions within people and institutions, like the transition of the Oakland Ceasefire Director and Commander in 2018 and 2019.

Empowerment of High-Risk Individuals and Feedback Loops

Part of this institutionalization also included strategies by Oakland and Stockton to formalize efforts to put at-risk individuals, or clients, at the center of the interventions. Oakland launched these efforts between 2014 and 2017 by establishing formal focus groups and feedback sessions with clients, although these efforts were interrupted by the onset of the scandal. In Stockton, these efforts began tentatively in 2016, but occurred more regularly in 2018, when the city's OVP established the leadership council. The team identified an initial cohort of young men who had previously been near gun violence but were now making concrete strides toward safety and opportunity. Largely self-selected through regular attendance, participation, and follow-up, the group ultimately consolidated into an informal but strong core group that participated in personal and leadership development sessions, discussions, listening sessions with local police officers, and meetings with city and faith leaders. Beyond providing a shared space for participants—many of whom had at some point clashed with one another—to reflect on commonalities, the leadership council ultimately served as a key mechanism to provide feedback and input into the SPD and OVP. At times, this feedback even resulted in key, dynamic organizational change within these institutions; that is, to ensure that they are effectively serving the population.

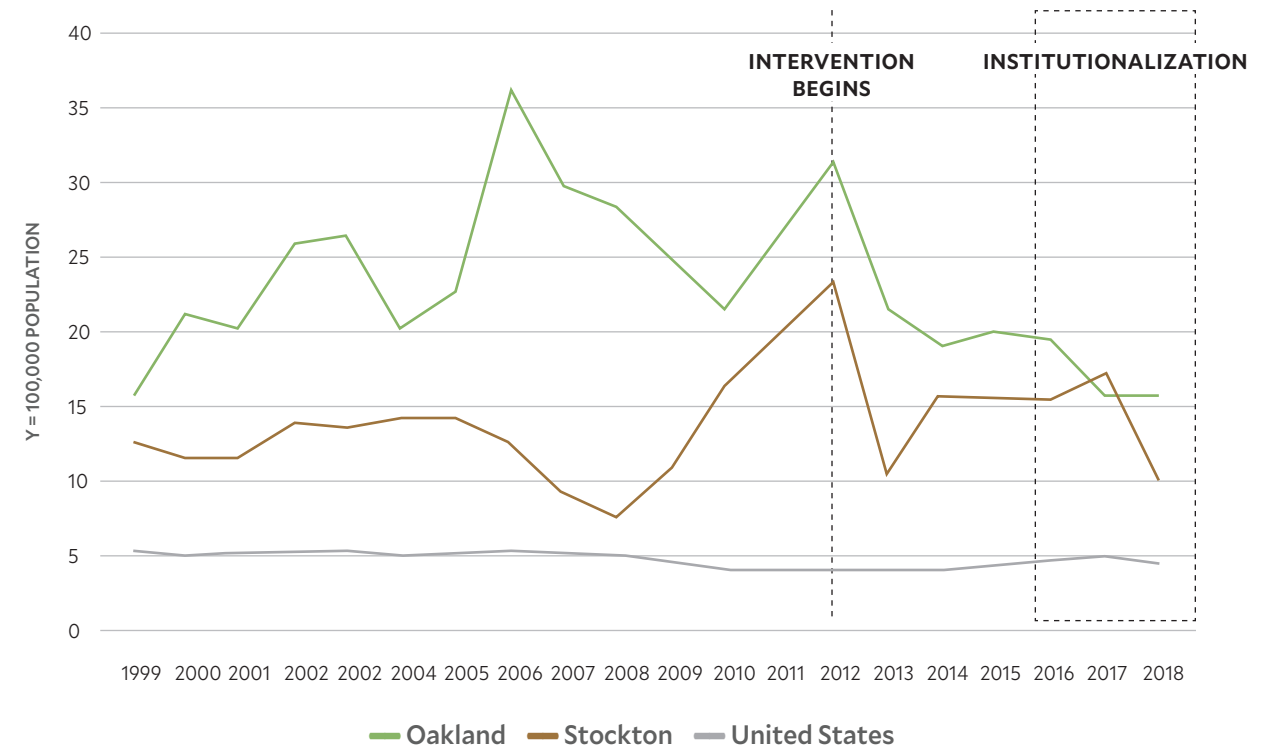
Impact Evaluation

Between 2012 and 2018, Oakland and Stockton experienced a significant reduction in homicides; for both cities, the homicide rate halved (Figure 4).

While the approach could claim success for much of this progress, some stakeholders pointed to other factors that could have

Figure 4. Homicide rate in Oakland, Stockton, and the United States (1999–2018)

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation - Crime in the U.S.



contributed to this reduction: the city was recovering from the 2007-2008 economic recession and the OPD had implemented effective policies under Whent's leadership to comply with the consent decree. Many community members and activists also pointed to Oakland's increasing gentrification as the likely cause of reductions. To gauge—and divulge—the true effects of the approach, the partnership required evidence that isolated its impact.

After a competitive process, researchers from Northeastern University (Anthony Braga, Greg Zimmerman), Yale University (Andrew Papachristos), and Rutgers University (Brunson) were selected to conduct a rigorous, academic evaluation of the program's impact. The research team tailored the impact evaluation to assess the strategy's triple bottom line goals and considered stakeholders' and the public safety subcommittee's input through four assessments: (1) place-based impact, (2) gang/group impact, (3) individual impact, and

(4) community/service impact, using both quasi-experimental and experimental assessments and in-depth qualitative interviews.

Overall, the evaluation showed conclusively that there was a direct effect of the intervention in reducing violence in Oakland. The main reason for the positive results was not chance, economic recovery, or other policies; it was the result of the approach. The evaluation rendered legitimacy to a strategy that, despite many obstacles, continued to have strong political support.

The evaluation found that the approach was directly responsible for citywide reductions in violence, appeared to contribute to reductions in victimization and recidivism, as well as potentially, for improved community-police relations. Overall, the places, groups, and individuals subjected to the intervention experienced reduced violence. The approach was associated with a 32% reduction in citywide gun homicides; a 43% reduction in

group and gang-involved shootings; and a 20% greater reduction in shootings in neighborhoods that experienced the strategy relative to those that did not. There was also an estimated 27% reduction in shootings by gangs that participated versus non-participants. Reflecting the broader organizational changes that the approach spurred in Oakland, the OPD also reduced the number of citywide arrests by over 60% from the yearly average prior to its implementation.

Beyond violence reduction, the assessment also found that the intervention had succeeded in its other objectives as per the triple bottom line approach, namely, building police-community trust and reducing recidivism. Respondents agreed that the approach had greatly enhanced the city's capacity to systematically and thoughtfully reduce shootings and homicides. Participants also agreed that community-police relations had improved steadily since 2012. Stockton presented similar results and patterns, but its relatively smaller scale limited the extent to which an equally rigorous evaluation could be conducted.

Lessons Learned

The last ten years of implementing a data-driven, citywide triple bottom line approach through organizational change offers important lessons for cities wishing to pursue similar approaches to reduce violence and recidivism and improve community-police relations. The case showed how cities can use organizational scaffolds to experiment with and institute modular, stabilizing support to aid in developing new structures. The scaffolds helped the cities reorganize management to focus and become accountable for the problem of violence. With time, some of the scaffolds transformed into formal mechanisms. The cross-cutting lessons through this process include the need for shared problem definitions to facilitate alignment, the importance

of scaffolds to uphold change, the emergence of organizational structures, organizational complementarities, sources of resilience and continuity, and the empowerment of high-risk individuals.

Lesson 1: Shared problem definitions facilitate alignment

The implementation of the triple bottom line approach in Oakland and Stockton shows that to achieve political alignment among institutions and stakeholders that do not necessarily speak or collaborate, it is essential to establish a shared, fact-based problem definition upfront. Notably, both cities found that although addressing a shared problem, different institutions often did so from a different understanding, leading to contrasting strategies or approaches. For instance, different stakeholders held different (and often inaccurate) understandings about who the victims and perpetrators of violence were. An objective, fact-based problem analysis allowed the different stakeholders to agree on a shared definition of the problem. This, in turn, facilitated the stakeholders to make public commitments to address the problem and subsequently, to convene partners and resources to take on that problem. Only through an initial, shared definition of the problem were the two cities able to build a citywide approach focusing on the highest-risk individuals.

Lesson 2: The importance of scaffolds to uphold change

Once this alignment was established, different stakeholders who had not previously collaborated were quickly brought together to work on addressing a shared problem. The organizational structures of the citywide approach were supported by temporary, and often informal, structures or scaffolds to sustain the quick organizational change that the approach often demanded. The scaffolds allowed for experimenting with new inputs, activities, and objectives as the final process kept transform-

ing toward its final state. The initial shooting review meetings, for instance, were deliberately formed to bring together a diverse cross-section of line staff and managers around a shared problem, as no such structure yet existed. The shooting review eventually served as the anchor point for a formal, multi-faceted management system that mobilized police, probation, community intervention workers, community leaders, and others.

One important risk around scaffolds is that the initial scaffold creates results, and the implementing partners walk away thinking that the work is “done.” The implementation of the approach in Stockton followed this path in 2013 when following initial reductions in violence due in part to temporary scaffolds, stakeholders believed that the problem of violence was solved and that they could redirect their efforts elsewhere—thereby putting the intervention at risk. The implementation plan for an intervention of this nature should call for the swift identification of the scaffolds necessary to offer modular, stabilizing support to uphold change while more sophisticated mechanisms are in development. There must, however, be a simultaneous plan for how the scaffolds will ultimately translate into formal working structures and processes.

Lesson 3: Management structures

Some of these initial, temporary solutions did eventually formalize and emerge as new formal management structures that helped tear down silos and bring together stakeholders who did not systematically share information or work together toward a shared object of collaboration that was clear and useful. The resulting citywide architecture facilitated the creation of a data-driven governance system with periodic coordination and data exchange meetings, performance reviews, and accountability structures with a shared language around data that partners could agree to, communicate, distribute, and hold each other accountable for respective

activities. These management structures were essential for the approach to work.

Beyond the collaboration for the specific purpose of reducing violence, these sophisticated mechanisms could effectively be leveraged and deployed for other ends. Such is the strength, resilience, and data-driven rigor of these processes that they can exist independently of, and transcend, the contours of violence reduction efforts, specifically. These processes have gradually taken a life of their own and could mark a new way to organize resources around other city challenges, accordingly.

Lesson 4: Leveraging organizational complementarities

Another lesson worth noting is the importance of organizational complementarities. The approach was not implemented in a vacuum; rather, it interacted with a range of other ongoing strategies, mechanisms, and transformations. First, encouraging intervention partners to focus on individuals at the very highest risk of violence as identified by police intelligence more effectively shares the challenge—and with it, the tools and intelligence—of reducing violence across police and non-police organizations. This directly contrasted with the prevention frame, where the police are “on their own” in regard to near-term violence.

Another example is procedural justice training in the early stages of implementing the approach. For cities that had long relied on place-based and zero-tolerance enforcement, transitioning towards intelligence-based policing and direct communication with and empowering justice-involved individuals proved counterintuitive. Procedural justice (PJ) offered a simple and intuitive mechanism to gradually instill these practices within the department. In parallel to the instructions to do policing differently, the OPD and SPD could come to terms with the structural dimensions and reasons behind this indication—an internal

procedural justice in and of itself. The approach and PJ—especially when complemented through new incentives, performance metrics, and leadership philosophy—reinforced and compounded each other, and the final product proved greater than the sum of the two parts. Implementing stakeholders thus agree that cities attempting to implement a triple bottom line approach should consider the prior, or at least parallel, implementation of PJ.

Lesson 5: Early success, political governance, institutionalization, and technical support as sources of resilience and continuity

It is also important to point to the remarkable resilience and continuity of the approach in both cities, even in the face of resistance to organizational change and plateauing reductions in homicides and shootings. Whereas in other cities, these events may have generated an impulse to revert to other strategies, throughout the years, Stockton and Oakland adhered to the approach (albeit with occasional stalls in progress). This occurred for several reasons. First, the strategy became associated with early victories, both from its prior iteration and following the results of the initial year (2013) and the impact evaluation (in the case of Oakland). Second, the cities' strong political governance, where key decision makers, elected leaders, and, particularly in the case of Oakland, community advocates—held the vision for the work over time and in spite of significant competing issues. The resilience and continuity were also possible due to the systematic institutionalization of the approach into formal city policies and structures, such as the Executive Directive and Measure Z funding. Finally, CPSC also acted as a continuous source of stability and motivation for stakeholders—even when the focus was temporarily lost.

Lesson 6: Bring clients to the center

A final noteworthy lesson of the approach is the gradual process of client empowerment.

Initially, individuals at high risk of suffering and exercising violence were at the margins of the strategy. The otherwise diverse cross-section of stakeholders that designed and launched the implementation of the approach systematically excluded the voices of the justice-involved individuals that the strategy was trying to serve. Gradually, the partners grew privy to the importance of carving out spaces for these voices across the different components of the intervention. Clients' participation proved necessary not only for trust-building and symbolic reasons but also for the strength and efficacy of the intervention itself. This is a strategy for clients; thus, they must be at the center.

Looking into the Future

Despite the important organizational change and consequent triple bottom line results that the approach achieved in Oakland and Stockton, the intervention's structures are still precarious, and effectively sustaining them requires deliberate, full-time work. Perhaps at no time has this been more evident than over the past two years. After a steady trend of reductions in violence from 2012 through early 2020, in late 2020, years 2021 and 2022—with both new and long-standing challenges—rose again in both cities, when (i) a shift of political focus and management attention and (ii) key leadership transitions coincided with the (iii) external stressors brought about by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As mentioned throughout the study, the loss of political focus was a latent threat throughout the implementation of the approach. After years of declining violence, Oakland and Stockton may have deprioritized efforts to reduce violence as other political priorities emerged. Oakland, particularly, experienced large-scale reductions in violence, stable economic growth, and intense gentrification over the implementation period.

According to the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, Oakland (and San Francisco) was the U.S. city with the highest gentrification rate (31.3%) during the 2013-2017 period (Richardson et al., 2020). In this process, high-wage tech workers and expensive housing pushed lower-wage neighbors out of West Oakland—and social priorities changed. Newcomers perceived public safety needs very differently from ten years ago; notably, many had never experienced Oakland's homicide problem nor the effort it took to arrive at that present context. Voters' number one priority is now often homelessness, which has spiked 63% since 2017 (Associated Press, 2020).

The evidence demonstrates, however, that violent dynamics are driven by long-standing, structural factors that require constant, active management and attention. While violence is typically driven by a very small number of individuals, there are broader social processes that result in a somewhat continuous supply of new—if relatively small—cohorts of young men at extreme risk of violence. That is, the problem of violence is never fully “solved.” The shifting of attention at this point thus hindered the important, necessary work to ensure that the reductions—still fragile—could be effectively sustained through time.

In addition to the shift in priorities, Oakland and Stockton experienced important leadership and management transitions. In Oakland, this primarily occurred at the executive and senior management level. The original senior Ceasefire management team transitioned in 2018 and 2019, followed by the appointment of a new Chief of Police and the first Chief of the Department of Violence Prevention. Stakeholders note that these new leaders did not fully support or understand the type of organization and management work necessary to keep the approach afloat, and therefore made decisions that undermined the strength of the intervention. Meanwhile, in Stockton, the architects of the approach moved on or were let go. Two important shifts in leadership took

place towards the end of 2020: the Deputy Chief and Lieutenant overseeing the intervention's day-to-day operation moved on from the SPD. Then, in January 2021 Michael Tubbs lost his re-election campaigns as Mayor; shortly after, Muhammad, the Director of OVP, was let go by the city. Finally, the California Partnership for Safe Communities contract was terminated. These changes in leadership directly coincided with a sharp uptick in shootings and homicides.

Then, the year 2020 and the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic served as an external stressor that further exacerbated these dynamics. First, according to data from the FBI, homicides in 2020 in the United States rose about 30% from the year before—the largest one-year increase in over a century. In addition to the rise in homicides that coincided with the pandemic, COVID-19 directly impacted many of the pillars sustaining the approach. Residents of Oakland and Stockton, like residents across the world, experienced higher social anxiety, job insecurity, evictions, and disruptions to learning during lockdown. Stakeholders note that the compounding of these factors may have contributed to a rise in violence. In contrast to previous years, for instance, experts in Stockton note that up to a third of homicides in 2020 were related to domestic disputes—a trend consistent with the rise of domestic violence that accompanied the pandemic worldwide.

In practice, the confluence of shifting priorities and high leadership turnover—exacerbated by the pandemic—led to decisions that went against the principles of the approach. First, the Oakland Police Department cut half of the staff dedicated to the approach, in turn reducing the ability of the section to do the necessary work. Oakland Unite became the Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) and began to drift away from high-risk individuals and towards a broader, public health mandate with a focus on a range of violence prevention issues. Homicide numbers quickly returned to crisis levels. Meanwhile, in Stockton, the

Community Response Team (CRT) appeared to drift from a data-driven focus, leading to several notorious confrontations with the community in 2020. Finally, the pandemic led to several COVID-related changes to bail practices in both counties, and although their exact impact is unknown, for some people sent a message that the justice system was out of business.

While both cities were at this point relatively well organized around the problem of violence, the internal and external stressors of 2020 and 2021 profoundly threatened the structural pillars of the approach. The increasingly sophisticated organizational and management infrastructure that the cities developed served as a protective factor for the cities' ability to prevent violence sustainably and effectively; however, even the capacity of this infrastructure became increasingly diminished with the changing violence dynamics, loss of political will, and the disappearance of robust management teams capable of doing the work.

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