



CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON



Bureau of Police

Ted Wheeler, Mayor

Charles Lovell, Chief of Police

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December 23, 2020

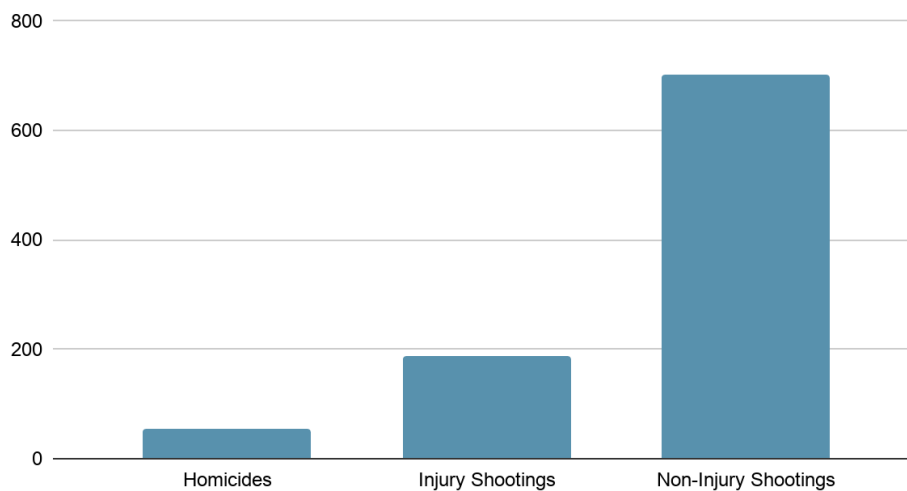
To: Mayor Ted Wheeler

From: Chief Charles Lovell
Portland Police Bureau

Subject: Gun Violence Reduction Plan

In 2020 the homicide and shooting rate skyrocketed in the City of Portland. We experienced 54 homicides, 41 of them by firearms. This is a 50% increase from 2019. Portland has not seen numbers like this in decades.

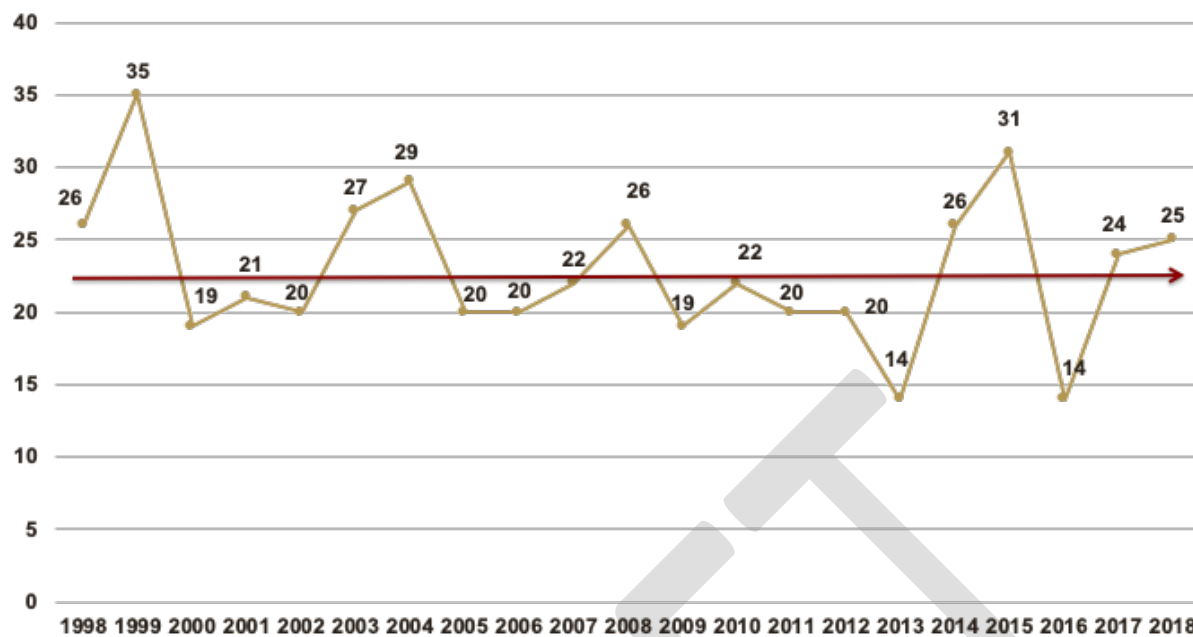
Shootings & Homicides In Portland 2019 vs. 2020



Portland's Historic Homicide Rate 1998-2020

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As public servants we have to recognize that not only are these numbers unprecedented, but they are unacceptable. The residents of Portland deserve not to have their homes shot up, be traumatized from shootings, or to have their sons murdered in our streets. Behind every one of these numbers is a **human** life, and a family and a community touched by that life.

We realize that some residents may believe that they are unaffected by gun violence, but the reality is that it touches all of us regardless of what neighborhood we live in. An independent study conducted by the Mayor's Office in 2019 demonstrated that each gun homicide in Portland costs taxpayers \$1.4 million per suspect.¹ These costs include crime scene response, hospital and rehabilitation costs, criminal justice system costs, incarceration costs, victim support, and lost tax revenue. So even if you are not personally impacted by the tragic death of the 41 individuals, you are paying for it. If Portland were able to reduce gun violence by just 20% that could result in a combined government savings of approx. \$20 million every year.²

As a city, county, and as a community we have to do better. We all deserve to live in communities where our children can play free of fear from gun violence. This means that we have to work together because the issue of gun violence is too big for community, police, service providers, or elected officials to address alone. Nationally there is no record of any city transforming this type of public safety crisis in the near term without the intervention of law enforcement. There is also no record of any city doing this work effectively without a focused intervention strategy. We need both to be successful. We have to work collaboratively toward common goals, respecting our experiences, and expertise. After many meetings, conversations, and much needed listening with community members, the Office of Violence Prevention, community-based organizations, PPB staff, elected officials, and individuals most impacted by violence we have collectively come up with the following goals:

¹ See Portland Cost of Violence Study: <https://www.portland.gov/oyvp/portland-gun-violence-assessment-cost-violence-report>

² See Portland Cost of Violence Study: <https://www.portland.gov/oyvp/portland-gun-violence-assessment-cost-violence-report>

1. Reduce shootings and homicides
2. Reduce recidivism amongst individuals participating in services and supports
3. Build community trust in the police that has helped to drive this crisis
4. Address historic racial and ethnic disparities in stops and other police activities

We acknowledge that addressing these goals will take more than the police bureau, and as a result we plan to rely on and reconvene with the Office of Violence Prevention to better understand the resources needed to accomplish these goals. Understanding the gravity and the urgency, the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) has simultaneously developed a multi-pronged approach that leverages academic research, investigative resources, community partnerships, and patrol resources. We have been working on addressing the crisis of gun violence in our community for some time, but the recent escalation has created a much greater sense of urgency for action, the need for introspection about the need for improvements, and above all else the need to be focused, fair and balanced.

The plan being recommended is data-informed, grounded in national best practice, and strives to minimize disparate impacts on historically marginalized communities. Additionally, because of PPB's resource constraints, both parts of this plan will require some level of added funding to address both the direct costs of the program and secondary costs arising from reassigning resources from patrol to focus on gun violence.

Part 1: Improving our capacity to respond to and prevent group involved retaliatory shootings

1.1. Re-establish Shooting Review Meetings

- In 2019 the Mayor's Office of Violence Prevention conducted a Problem & Opportunity Analysis that demonstrated that a majority of the gun violence in our city was being driven by individuals involved in high-risk social networks. The data demonstrated that 60% of gun homicides and 55% of shootings are group member involved.³ Based upon this analysis individuals with the following characteristics were identified as being at very highest risk of being a victim or perpetrator of gun violence⁴:
 - African American males age 18-44
 - Well known to the criminal justice system (average 10-12 prior arrests)
 - Prior or current Probation/Post-Prison Supervision
 - Involved in an active high-risk group/network
 - Has been previously shot or socially connected to a recent shooting or homicide victim.
 - Felony Conviction
- Although these characteristics are helpful for service providers to ensure that they are working with those most in need and at the highest risk, as Chief I recognize the need for Executives and

³ https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/portland_problemanalysis.-public-version-2.0.pdf

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staff at PPB to reinvest, refocus, redesign, and re-engage in Shooting Review meetings. It is at these meetings that on a weekly basis we were able to learn about and identify those individuals at the very highest risk of being engaged as a victim or a perpetrator in gun violence *now*. These meetings are the only opportunity for staff with intelligence and information on open homicide and shooting investigations to share information with each other and outside partners with the purpose of preventing retaliation. These meetings are the foundation for collaboration to identify those most at risk so intervention prevention services can be provided. In 2020 we moved away from full agency participation in these meetings and it has hurt our effectiveness as an organization and our ability to collaborate effectively with OVP.

- These meetings allow us to be focused and intentional in our actions and in our collaboration with OVP and ultimately help us to avoid unintended and unnecessary contacts with community members that tear at the fabric of trust building

1.2 Identification of individuals at risk of violence (either as a perpetrator or a victim) for referral to the Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) for wrap-around services or other interventions

- These Shooting Review meetings would allow for regular communication at Coordination Meetings with OVP regarding trends and service referrals for people at risk
- Having these meetings would also allow for regular and relevant communication with OVP and PPB's Crisis Response Team, Assault Detail, and On-Call Team
- Under the guidance and leadership of my executive team dedicated staff will need to be assigned to redesign, develop, and run Shooting Review meetings. Additionally, the same dedicated staff will attend Coordination meetings and provide information to OVP of people identified to be at the highest risk of being involved in gun violence. These meetings will be a one-way flow of information with OVP, because we respect their role and relationships in the community.

Part 2: Improving capacity for gun violence prevention

2.1. Re-establish a uniformed patrol team to engage in violence prevention and response

- 2 Sergeants, 12 Officers, 1 Public Safety Support Specialist, 1 Crime Analyst (PS3 and Analyst from within existing resources; sworn positions added)
- Conduct patrol operations to act on criminal intelligence gained in specific criminal investigations, conduct follow-up for shooting investigations, and respond to shooting scenes
- Proactively engage community members at risk of gun violence, as indicated by their presence at incident scenes or other indicators; seek to develop relationships between officers and community members in order to facilitate information sharing and connection with services.
- Includes 6-person on-call team for 24/7 shooting scene response
- Given the trust issues in our community, this team will need to be thoughtfully and intentionally designed and will require additional ongoing specialized training on tactics to prevent the likelihood of officer involved shootings and other damaging interactions with community as well as ongoing training on Procedural Justice, Implicit Bias, and Trauma Informed Policing

- Establish strong management and supervisory expectations for the work which are consistent with explicitly stated community goals and objectives.
- Request assignment of staff from Multnomah County Department of Community Justice
- Cost estimate: \$2,265,572 in FY 2020-21; \$4,531,144 in FY 2021-22; includes direct personnel costs, overhead, and projected increase in backfill overtime costs for patrol

2.4. Engage a research partner to perform an ongoing assessment of the program's effectiveness, in both quantitative and qualitative terms

- A quantitative success is fewer incidents of gun violence but equally important is cultivating trusting relationships in the community from those who authorize police to do this work.
- Provide feedback for PPB and community stakeholders on program effectiveness, as well as any unintended impacts such as disparities
- Include information about how the program is received by the people it is intended to help

Part 3: Investigative resources dedicated to addressing gun crime

3.1. Establish an on-call investigative team for shooting incidents

- 1 Sergeant, 6 Officers assigned to the team on a detached, on-call basis
- 1 Public Safety Support Specialist for next-day collection of video and other evidence and 1 Crime Analyst (from existing resources)
- Respond to process the scene and initiate investigations for shooting incidents involving injury, of a high-profile nature, or where actionable leads exist
- Reduces delays and increases efficiency and coordination of gun crime investigation efforts
- Cost estimate: \$153,348 in FY 2020-21; \$306,695 in 2021-22

Part 4: Accountability and Community Oversight

4.1. Reinvest in transparency through the restart of department-wide Risk Management and convene a community stakeholder group to establish the strategies and tactics for the patrol team

- Recognizing the need for accountability and transparency PPB will restart risk management meetings for the entire department and publicly release information on a regular basis on stops (including walking stops), searches, use of force, citizen complaints, traffic stops, required training and qualifications, mental health responses and outcomes, walking stops, vehicle accidents, sick leave, etc. The primary purpose of this meeting is to run the organization more efficiently, to make the executive team aware of potential issues early on

to mitigate risks, and to inform the management decisions, practices and accountability of the organization. These meetings will also provide the PPB the opportunity to be transparent and to provide data to be publicly transparent on data and outcomes.

- The community stakeholder group should include community leaders, service providers, and people with lived experience
- Both the risk management meeting, the data that the meeting generates, and the community stakeholder group is an opportunity to embrace these efforts as an ongoing opportunity to re-build trust
- The goal of the Risk Management meeting and the stakeholder group is to hold PPB accountable and advocate for support needed to do the work effectively.
- Both meetings will help to inform a strategy for proactive patrol function that is consistent with community expectations and eliminates disparate impacts on historically marginalized communities
- Promotes community support and ownership of the program
- Monitors program performance measures, particularly about racial and ethnic disparities

4.2 *Require enhanced reporting and accountability measures for the patrol team*

- Reports required for all investigative stops and consent searches with a community reporting process to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Detailed data collection and analysis for stops, searches, arrests, and use of force.
- Be able to clearly articulate how the work of this unit is fundamentally different from past units tasked with gun violence reduction.
- Monthly reporting to the Chief's Office OVP, and Mayors Office on performance measures
- Training in Trauma-Informed Care, Procedural Justice, implicit bias and Equity for both PPB and Multnomah County staff involved in this project
- Ensure Chief's Office and community -level oversight of selection for program officers, as well as the unit's strategies and tactics, as well as continual monitoring of performance measures

Added investigative capacity (Part 3) is likely to improve focus and speed of investigations which will enhance the ability to successfully prosecute cases, as well as providing some relief to our currently over-taxed investigative resources. This by itself is likely to have limited impact on the problem. However, increasing our investigative resources is not only the first step to enhancing our ability to prosecute cases; it also demonstrates that the city recognizes and values the experiences of the people and communities impacted by violence.

Improved deterrence capacity (Part 2) is likely to have a more pronounced impact on incidence of gun violence. Interdiction of illegal gun possessors will increase the perceived risk of carrying firearms in

public, which should deter gun violence in two ways: first, individuals will be less likely to carry firearms due to the risk of being caught and prosecuted; second, reduction in firearms possession will lead to the perception that it is less necessary to carry a firearm for self-defense.

Any approach we take to address gun violence must include a feedback loop including all stakeholders and partners which enables us to continually monitor both the impact on gun violence and qualitative measures to spot unintended consequences, such as damage to community trust.

DRAFT