

# ACT *for* Cincy

*Achieving Change Together*  
**Blueprint for Violence Reduction**

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- 03 Initiative Summary
- 04 Theory of Change
- 07 The Problem
- 08 The Vision
- 09 Strategic Goals & Initiatives
- 31 Governance & Accountability
- 32 Measuring Success
- 33 Conclusion
- 34 Appendix: Human Services Violence Prevention Fund
- 39 Appendix: Boots on the Ground Fund

# Table of Contents



# Initiative Summary



Cincinnati faces the challenge of reducing violence—especially gun violence—that destabilizes neighborhoods, limits opportunity, and threatens public safety. While violent crime is trending downward in the City of Cincinnati, the rate of gun violence remains unacceptably high. Achieving Change Together for Cincinnati (ACT for Cincy) builds on a public health approach to violence prevention, focusing on addressing root causes of violence through proactive and collaborative strategies. ACT for Cincy seeks to make neighborhoods safe and vibrant through community well-being, reducing illegal and unsafe access to firearms, and targeted policing innovations.

This blueprint is built around five strategic pillars that form the foundation of Cincinnati's theory of change:

1. **Thriving Neighborhoods**
2. **Reducing Youth Access to Firearms**
3. **Improved Wellbeing**
4. **Improved Youth Support**
5. **Policing Innovations**

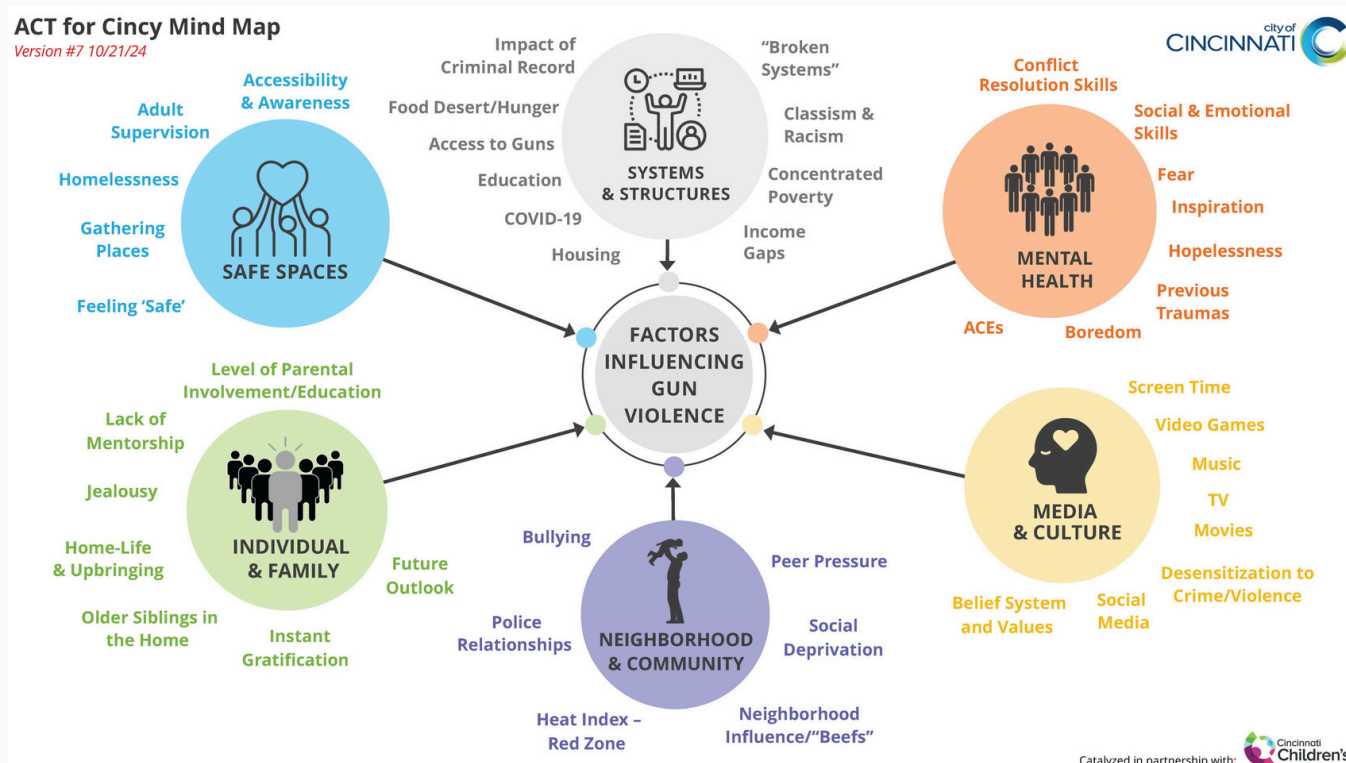
These pillars guide Cincinnati's strategy for achieving long-term safety by addressing violence holistically. They reflect our commitment to collaboration among public health professionals, law enforcement, educators, community leaders, and residents. Together, we aim to strengthen neighborhoods, provide meaningful opportunities for youth, and reduce violence sustainably.



# Development of Cincinnati's Theory of Change

This theory of change was developed over the last year in concert with the community, community-based organizations, and facilitating partners from Cincinnati Children's Michael Fisher Center for Child Health Equity. The City's theory of change was directly

informed by a series of dedicated focus groups and multiple community facing meetings that built a 'mind map' as well as a 'causal loop map' that capture factors that the community has identified as directly causing and influencing gun violence in Cincinnati:









# Key Findings

## Root Cause Factors Leading to Gun Violence:

The community identified several interconnected root causes of gun violence, including poverty, lack of access to quality education, limited employment opportunities, and inadequate mental health resources. These systemic issues create a cycle of disadvantages that make communities more susceptible to violence. The causal loop map developed during the sessions highlighted how these factors are compounded by historical inequities and social determinants of health, underscoring the need for comprehensive interventions that address both immediate and underlying causes.

## Community Trust and Engagement as Critical Components:

Focus groups emphasized that trust between the community and law enforcement, as well as other city agencies, is vital for any successful violence reduction strategy. Many community members expressed that traditional, enforcement-based approaches without community collaboration have historically exacerbated tensions and hindered

progress. Building community trust through transparency, collaboration, and culturally responsive practices emerged as a key priority, as this approach fosters a more cooperative environment for implementing violence prevention initiatives.

## Youth Engagement and Opportunity Creation:

One of the most recurrent themes was the importance of investing in youth as a preventative measure against gun violence. The lack of accessible, positive outlets for young people—such as recreational programs, job training, and mentorship opportunities—was identified as a major contributor to the cycle of violence. The community and stakeholders agreed that a proactive approach that provides youth with pathways to education, career development, and personal growth is essential. This focus on youth engagement not only addresses an immediate need but also helps build a long-term foundation for reducing gun violence.



# The Problem



Gun violence in Cincinnati follows a predictable pattern — violence peaks in the summer months and slowly drops through the Fall and Winter months. Year-to-date comparisons show 2024 has fewer shooting incidents and victims than the past 3 years. When comparing shooting counts through summer months (January - August), 2024 witnessed consistently lower volume than 2023; however, shootings in the last month (October 2024) have been unusually high, particularly shootings involving youth victims. This has included shootings after youth football games, a shooting outside a school following dismissal, and a double shooting related to ongoing interpersonal conflict.

In a city of 52 neighborhoods, there are five neighborhoods that consistently rank at the top for gun violence, including YTD 2024: Over-The-Rhine, Avondale, West End, Winton Hills, and Westwood. In addition to these persistent neighborhoods, East Price Hill and Roselawn have also seen intermittent spikes in gun violence since 2023. The violence tends to concentrate around problem properties, known for illicit vice activities or poor place management.





# The Vision

Every Cincinnati neighborhood will be safe, thriving, and free from violence. All residents—especially youth—will have the opportunity to achieve their potential, with access to education, employment, and social services that support well-being. Our goal is to create communities where residents feel empowered, neighborhoods flourish, and violence is reduced at its source.



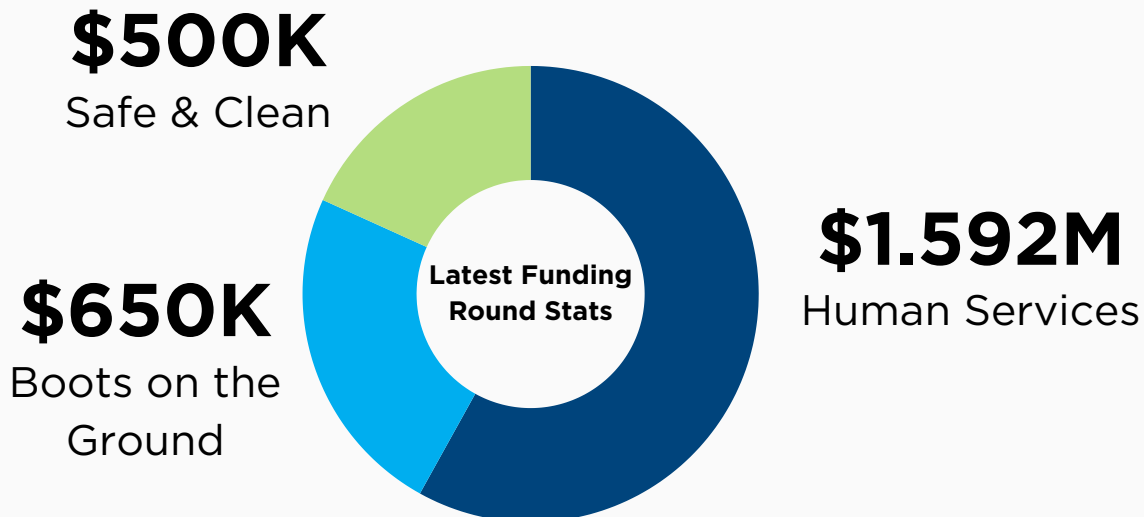
# Strategic Goals & Initiatives

## Pillar 1: Thriving Neighborhoods

Healthy and vibrant neighborhoods are essential to violence reduction. Safe public spaces, community-based programs, and economic development create the conditions for residents to thrive and youth to succeed. ACT for Cincy **prioritizes investments in local organizations that lead grassroots efforts to revitalize neighborhoods and reduce violence as well as best police practices rooted in problem solving** and best practices for Community Problem Oriented Policing (CPOP).

### Key Initiatives for Thriving Neighborhoods:

#### 1. Targeted Community Investments



#### Human Services Violence Prevention Fund

The Office of Human Services funds a variety of initiatives to reduce youth gun violence, with a focus on addressing the issue's numerous root causes. Many of these projects support children and young adults by meeting basic needs and offering productive alternatives to violence, including after-school activities, counseling, tutoring, and hot meals (Seven Hills Neighborhood Houses); stipends to learn home repair skills (Madisonville Mission Ministries); and more.

A complete list of funded programs can be found in the appendix of this blueprint.



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## Boots on the Ground Fund

Boots on the Ground, administered in partnership with Greater Cincinnati Foundation (GCF) and Interact for Health, strengthens the capacity of small, community-based organizations with a programming focus on housing, food and healthcare access, gun violence prevention, workforce and youth development, and substance use services. These small grants (no more than \$25,000) are intended to support organizations with small operations but big impact—many of whom easily fall through the cracks of more ambitious grantmaking.

The awardees for the 2024-2025 grant cycle are listed in the appendix according to focus category.

## Safe & Clean Fund

The Safe and Clean Neighborhood Fund is designed to support and encourage community-based and community-initiated efforts to improve neighborhood safety, eliminate blight, and increase livability through local-level problem solving approaches and projects. There is a priority focus on projects located in Cincinnati's top ten neighborhoods experiencing gun violence. The fund is managed on behalf of the City by Keep Cincinnati Beautiful (KCB).

In 2024, the city invested \$500,000 through three award cycles (in January, May, and September). Complete lists of awardees for each cycle, including project descriptions, are available in the [February](#), [June](#), and [October](#) FYI memos announcing the awards.



## 2. Community Problem Oriented Policing & SARA Problem Solving Projects with Cincinnati Police & the City Manager's Office

**The SARA model** (Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment) is a structured, data-driven approach to problem-solving used by police, the City Manager's Office, and community partners to address persistent public safety issues. This model encourages law enforcement to go beyond simply reacting to individual incidents, instead focusing on the underlying conditions and patterns that contribute to recurring problems, such as gun violence.

**CPD's Crime Analysis and Problem Solving (CAPS) Unit** is an auxiliary civilian unit that provides data collection and analytic support for CPD patrol, investigative, and community units. They assist CPOP teams in each step, advising on data-related aspects. In addition, they assist city and community partners as needed.

The CAPS Unit, in partnership with District 1, has created a CPOP refresher training. The training will kick off a revival of CPOP with the department. After it is piloted internally, CPD will extend the training series to other city departments and neighborhood/community councils, taught by previously trained CPD folks. The goal is to create more lasting CPOP teams embedded within each community.

### ASSESSMENT

evaluate the effectiveness of the response

### SCANNING

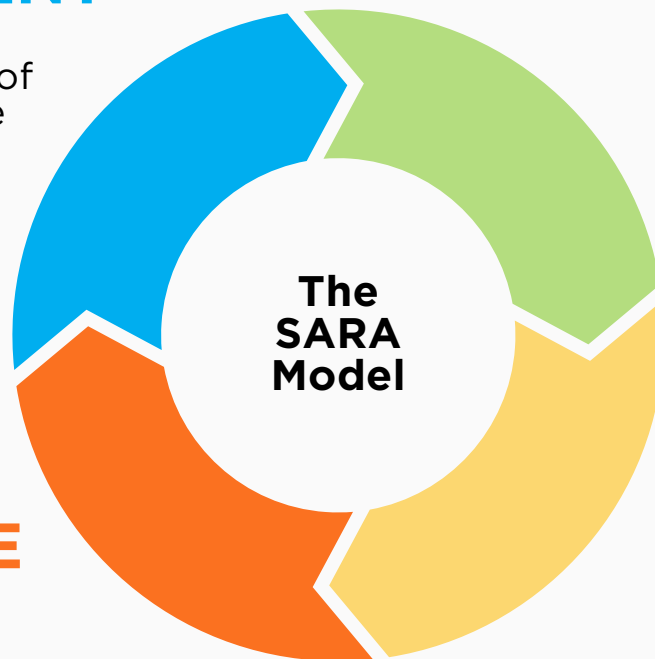
identify & prioritize the problem

### RESPONSE

identify & select interventions, develop & implement an action plan

### ANALYSIS

use relevant data to pinpoint root causes of the problem





**The SARA model is collaborative, involving residents, businesses, and community organizations in the process to develop sustainable solutions.** It is a core component of Community Problem-Oriented Policing (CPOP), emphasizing prevention, strategic responses, and continuous evaluation.

- **Main Street Working Group:** The Main Street Working Group is a problem-solving team by the City of Cincinnati to address violence and criminal activity in the City's Main Street Entertainment District following a mass shooting in August 2022. Focusing on non-police interventions, the Task Force implemented collaborative strategies to enhance public safety, engage the community, and promote economic development. Key projects include the activation of Woodward Street—transforming it into a pedestrian-friendly area with new lighting, signage, crosswalks, and public art to increase community presence—and the Main Street Pop-Up Program, which offers grants to fill vacant storefronts with local businesses. This placemaking approach fosters community cohesion and vitality, creating safer, more active public spaces that are welcoming and accessible for all. The Working Group's efforts have already led to a 79-point reduction in the violence score within the district, a significant achievement demonstrating the impact of community-driven interventions.



- **Collaborative Agreement Community Care Initiative:** City consultant Mrs. Iris Roley has played an instrumental role in fostering safety and reducing youth-related disorder at Cincinnati's Government Square transit center. Leveraging her extensive experience in community engagement and conflict resolution, Roley has led a dedicated team of volunteers in a proactive approach to public safety, focusing on outreach, relationship-building, and strategic problem-solving. Under her guidance, volunteers have become a visible and approachable presence downtown, providing support, resources, and positive reinforcement to youth and community members alike. This hands-on approach encourages constructive behavior among youth and deters violence, contributing to a safer and more welcoming environment at the transit center. Mrs. Roley's work is grounded in a collaborative, community-driven philosophy that emphasizes respect and understanding of the unique challenges facing young people in urban spaces. By aligning with city departments, local organizations, and residents, she has built a network of support around Government Square that actively addresses issues before they escalate. Through targeted interventions, mentorship, and a strong commitment to inclusive community engagement, Roley and her team of volunteers have developed a sustainable model of violence prevention and youth safety that serves as a foundation for future efforts across Cincinnati.

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Internally, Cincinnati Police Department creates CPOP projects for unique problems that each District faces. Most focus on violent crime hot spots, streets or facilities or factors contributing to gun violence (like reducing firearms theft).

- **District 1** includes two of the City's most chronically violent neighborhoods (West End and OTR). Many of their projects are aimed at changing the dynamic of violent crime hot spots. For instance, in May 2024 District 1, PIVOT, and the CMO made roadway and lighting improvements and installed temporary road barriers to block portions of Republic Street near Green St, which operated like a small alley way. The road barriers stopped through-traffic that aided an open-air drug market, caused parking/traffic concerns for residents, and had disproportionate number of shootings. During the closure period, there was a reduction in weapon-related calls for service and no change in shootings. The barriers were removed and CPD continues to track the patterns to assess the overall impact of the road closure.
- **District 2**, on the other hand, largely faces property and quality of life crime problems, with the exception of a few neighborhoods. However, D2 leadership recognized a disproportionate number of firearms were being stolen from vehicles. After careful analysis, they found these were occurring in large garages or surface lots, particularly around hotels and motels. D2 developed the CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) tool to assess vulnerabilities of large parking facilities, visited each large parking facility, and gave recommendations to the owners and management. As of December 2024, the CPOP project is ongoing and has yet to be assessed.
- After the City redrew its police district map and reduced the number of districts from five to four, **District 3** absorbed Camp Washington. Within the first few months, D3 leadership met with stakeholders to assess their biggest concerns. They heard a unanimous response, a problematic bar/club on Colerain Avenue that was associated with violent crime, drug sales, gambling, and after-hour drinking among other disorder. D3's NLU attempted to meet with bar ownership to make improvements to operations and management style, physical design and layout, and guardianship of the place and patrons. Without cooperation, D3's NLU and investigative unit worked with the City's law and health departments and community stakeholders to object to the facility's liquor license, which eventually was removed and led to the facility's closure. There have only been 4 total calls in the evening hours in the 3 months following its closure, which was the average number of calls per month in the year leading up to its closure.



### 3. Cincinnati Police Department's Intelligence Sharing

In the same problem-solving vein, **CPD monitors ongoing statistics, trends and patterns on a weekly basis.** Every Monday, the CAPS Unit sends a packet of crime statistics to each patrol district, including analysis for every major violent and property crime type as well as traffic crashes. These note any major spikes or concentrations occurring in the last 28 days. Commanders review these weekly with district command staff to prioritize and adjust patrol, investigative or Neighborhood Liaison Unit (NLU) activities where needed.

District commanders also report on these trends bi-weekly in a Thursday CompStat-style meeting. Commanders brief senior command staff and other district commanders on chronic crime problems, spikes, and community concerns. They discuss investigative and/or CPOP strategies being used to address the patterns and often involve other auxiliary units (such as CGIC, PIVOT, or other district investigative units) when extra assistance is needed.



## 4. Placemaking through Investments in Development

The City of Cincinnati is committed to addressing gun violence through innovative, place-based investments that prioritize safety, revitalization, and equitable community development. Placemaking efforts have focused on transforming areas of persistent violence into spaces of opportunity, fostering community engagement, and improving quality of life. Four key projects illustrate this approach:

### **Acquisition and Demolition of Amir Mini Mart**

The Amir Mini Mart, located at 549 Findlay Street in the West End, had been a persistent source of violence for years. Since 2018, the area within 150 feet of the property witnessed 11 shooting victims and 22 violent incidents, with a sharp increase in incidents between 2023 and 2024. This hotspot for violence was identified as the top location in the West End contributing to gun-related incidents during the City's Place-Based Investigations of Violent Offender Territories (PIVOT) initiative.

In a landmark collaboration between the Hamilton County Land Bank, the City of Cincinnati, and PIVOT partners, the property was acquired, and the mini-mart was demolished. This intervention not only disrupted the cycle of violence in the area but also laid the groundwork for community-driven redevelopment. The City granted West End-based BOC Development preferred rights to reimagine the site in partnership with local developers. Community engagement remains central to shaping the future of this location, with a focus on addressing the neighborhood's urgent need for fresh food access while ensuring the space benefits residents.

### **Investments in the Findlay Rec Center (OTR Rec HUB) and Grant Park**

The OTR HUB, now envisioned as the Findlay Recreation Center, and the nearby Grant Park are set to undergo transformative redevelopment. In partnership with 3CDC, the City has allocated significant resources to create a vibrant, inclusive space for recreation, learning, and community building. These improvements aim to provide safe, accessible environments where residents—particularly youth—can thrive, reducing the likelihood of engagement in violent activity. Plans include upgraded facilities, enhanced programming, and partnerships with local organizations to foster positive social connections and mentorship opportunities.





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### **Expansion of Ziegler Park and Main Street Revitalization**

The redesign of Woodward Street to expand Ziegler Park exemplifies how targeted investments in public spaces can deter violence and foster community cohesion. By creating larger, more welcoming green spaces, the City has encouraged greater community use and ownership of these areas, decreasing opportunities for violent activity.

Additionally, the Main Street Pop-Up Shop Program has supported economic revitalization by providing local entrepreneurs with affordable, short-term retail opportunities. This program enhances the vibrancy of the neighborhood, driving foot traffic and fostering a sense of safety through increased visibility and engagement.

### **Commitment to PIVOT Strategies and Problem-Solving Projects**

The City remains dedicated to sustaining and expanding the PIVOT initiative, which uses data-driven methods to identify and address hotspots of violence. Investments in problem-solving projects that emerge from PIVOT are ongoing, ensuring that efforts to combat violence are adaptable and responsive to community needs. This commitment includes addressing underlying social determinants of violence, such as housing instability, unemployment, and lack of access to recreational spaces or support services.

Through strategic investments like these, the City of Cincinnati is demonstrating the power of placemaking as a tool for gun violence reduction. By transforming high-risk areas into spaces that foster community engagement and opportunity, these efforts contribute to creating safer spaces.



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## Pillar 2: Reduced Accessibility of Firearms to Youth

Gun violence among youth poses a significant threat to community safety. ACT for Cincy takes a **comprehensive approach to reducing the accessibility of firearms** to youth by targeting illegal gun trafficking and increasing education on gun safety.

### Key Firearm Reduction Strategies:

#### 1. Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC)

**CGIC will continue to use forensic technology** to trace the origins of recovered shell casings and firearms used in crimes, identify trafficking patterns, and coordinate with federal and local agencies to disrupt illegal gun flows. The partnership allows all agencies to compare recovered evidence in Cincinnati with data supported and collected by Federal partners, potentially leveraging dormant evidence across the region and country.

CGIC also offers free support and its resources to other police agencies in the Greater Cincinnati area. Other agencies or law enforcement bodies are trained by CGIC staff to process their own recovered firearms, examine shell casings (recovered or test fired), and use the investigative shell casing database. This has been used by agencies in Hamilton County, those in surrounding counties, and in Kentucky. This has improved surrounding agencies' ability to solve and connect gun crimes and encourages interagency investigations.

Because of the increased demand, CGIC has begun training and providing district headquarters with their own firearms testing area and fingerprint fumigators. District 3 investigators, for example, can process their own evidence, while still entering information into the shared workspace for other partners to use. This has scaled tools originally tested at CGIC and improved time taken for evidence to be processed.

The CGIC investigative team focuses on in-depth gun and drug investigations, often assisting District investigators in cases that stretch across districts; nearly 89% of their 2023 arrests included felony charges. In addition, they assist in major investigations involving stolen or used firearms. For instance, in 2023, 43% of CGIC arrests recovered at least one firearm.



## 2. Safe Firearm Storage and Responsible Gun Ownership

**The City recognizes that promoting safe firearm storage and responsible gun ownership is essential to reducing accidental shootings, youth access to firearms, and gun-related injuries.** The City will continue to partner with community organizations, healthcare providers, and advocacy groups to launch a comprehensive public awareness campaign. The city will actively seek out new partners to collaborate with. This initiative will provide education and resources for residents, focusing on the importance of secure gun storage, proper handling, and the responsibilities that come with firearm ownership.

Efforts will include training workshops and distribution events, where residents can receive free gun locks and educational materials. These events will also offer demonstrations and one-on-one consultations to ensure gun owners understand how to properly store firearms to prevent unauthorized access—especially by children and teens. The program will engage schools, community centers, and local businesses to disseminate safety information broadly and encourage safe practices at home.

The City will also continue to collaborate with local hospitals to offer free gun locks and has launched a voluntary firearm surrender program for any gun owners, including individuals in crisis, who are looking for a temporary out-of-home storage option.

The City seeks to foster a culture of responsible gun ownership, empowering residents to take proactive steps to keep their households and communities safe. The goal is to reduce firearm-related accidents and prevent unauthorized access, especially among youth, contributing to a safer Cincinnati for all.

In the U.S., kids were involved in

# 400+

## *unintentional shooting incidents in 2023*

Statistic from Everytown for Gun Safety



### 3. State and Federal Lobbying Strategy

**The City recognizes that meaningful violence reduction requires more than local interventions—it also demands advocacy for state and federal policy changes.** Ohio’s open carry laws and limited firearm regulations present significant challenges, as the state legislature offers little support for local gun control efforts. Despite these obstacles, the City remains committed to lobbying state and federal partners to pursue evidence-based policies aimed at reducing gun violence and improving public safety.

The city will engage with federal lawmakers and partners to push for greater funding for violence prevention programs. At the state level, Cincinnati continues to advocate for greater local control, while collaborating with peer cities across Ohio to strengthen collective efforts. The City’s strategy focuses on building coalitions with national partners to support legislation that restricts youth access to firearms, promotes safe storage laws, and provides funding for public health initiatives targeting gun violence.

By partnering with advocacy organizations and national networks, Cincinnati aims to elevate the urgency of local safety needs and highlight the public health implications of unchecked firearm access. While the path to legislative change may be challenging, the city remains committed to engaging policymakers to align state and federal laws with Cincinnati’s mission to create thriving, safe communities.





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## 4. Local Model Laws and Policies

The City of Cincinnati has demonstrated bold leadership in advancing local model laws and policies to reduce gun violence, even in the face of legal and political challenges.

### **Domestic Violence Firearms Possession Ordinance**

Cincinnati City Council passed an ordinance prohibiting individuals convicted of domestic violence offenses from possessing firearms. This policy reflects a commitment to protecting survivors and preventing future violence, recognizing the strong correlation between domestic violence and gun-related fatalities.

### **Gun Safe Storage Ordinance**

Cincinnati City Council passed a safe storage ordinance prohibiting child endangerment due to unsafe firearm storage. The ordinance aimed to reduce accidental shootings, gun thefts, and misuse by ensuring firearms were properly secured.

Despite its clear public safety intent, the ordinance was challenged in court and ultimately overturned. The legal setback highlights the ongoing challenges faced by municipalities attempting to implement common-sense gun safety measures within the constraints of state preemption laws.

### **Challenging State Preemption Laws**

The City has also taken a proactive stance against the State of Ohio's revised code provision that preempts local regulation of firearms. Cincinnati pursued a legal challenge, asserting that municipalities must have the authority to address gun violence through tailored local policies. While the legal landscape remains complex, this effort underscores Cincinnati's commitment to prioritizing public safety and a reduction of harm to children in our community.



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# Pillar 3: Improved Wellbeing

20

Cincinnati recognizes that **violence prevention is deeply tied to mental health, trauma support, and access to essential services**. ACT for Cincy emphasizes holistic well-being by connecting individuals and families with mental health care, housing stability, and social services that reduce stress and build resilience.

## Key Improved Wellbeing Strategies:

### 1. Hope & Shield Network (*Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program*)

The Hope and Shield Network, led by UC Health and Cincinnati Children's Hospital, funded by the City of Cincinnati, **will deliver a comprehensive, evidence-based response to the needs of people who have experienced gun violence**. Recognizing that recovery from gun-related trauma extends far beyond the initial medical treatment, the Hope and Shield Network is being built to provide wraparound services to victims and their families for a full 12 months following injury. This program ensures that survivors receive the necessary care, resources, and support to break cycles of violence and reduce the risk of reinjury.

The Hope and Shield Network will offer a holistic care model that addresses not only the physical aspects of recovery but also the mental, emotional, and social challenges that victims often face. Key services include:

- **Mental health care and trauma-informed counseling:** Survivors are connected with licensed therapists, counselors, and trauma specialists to address post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and other mental health needs.
- **Case management and peer support:** Each participant receives individualized case management, with a focus on navigating community resources. Peer support professionals, many with lived experience, serve as mentors and advocates, fostering trust and engagement with the program.
- **Housing stability assistance:** Recognizing that housing insecurity can contribute to re-engagement with violence, the Hope and Shield Network works with partner organizations to address emergency and long-term housing solutions for victims and their families, helping them find safe environments to heal and thrive.



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- **Educational and employment resources:** Participants are connected with job training programs, educational support, and financial literacy resources to promote long-term economic stability and independence.
  - **Family and community engagement:** The Hope and Shield Network recognizes the importance of family involvement in recovery. Through family counseling and engagement programs, the initiative aims to rebuild and strengthen relationships that may have been disrupted by trauma.
  - **Preventing retaliatory violence:** Program staff work with victims, families, and community partners to de-escalate conflicts and prevent retaliatory violence, helping break cycles of harm.

By providing these critical services across multiple domains, the Hope and Shield Network will offer survivors a pathway to healing, empowerment, and stability. The program will also seek to strengthen community resilience by reducing the likelihood of participants returning to violence and fostering safer neighborhoods. The collaboration between UC Health, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, and community-based organizations ensures that survivors are not left to navigate recovery alone. Instead, they are embraced by a network of care and support—empowering them to reclaim their lives, find hope beyond the trauma, and contribute to a safer Cincinnati.



## 2. DVERT™: Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team

DVERT provides **on-call 24-hour crisis support for survivors of domestic violence**, including safety planning and access to services to prevent further trauma. DVERT advocates are specially trained to connect survivors of domestic violence with resources and create a safety plan for those not ready to leave a relationship. CPD notifies DVERT when offenses meet certain criteria making the victim (or relationship) high-risk. In addition, investigators can refer cases after an incident occurs if they see benefit to the victim throughout the course of their case work. While DVERT advocates cannot provide transportation themselves, they do work with CPD to obtain any transportation needs. On average, DVERT responds to approximately 500 calls per year, averaging 99 minutes with victims.

## 3. Cincinnati Citizens Respect Our Witnesses (CCROW) and Witness Support

The CCROW witness support program, led by Karen Rumsey, provides a **variety of services including court-related services, social services, and referrals to counseling services** designed to meet the needs of witnesses and their loved ones. The specific key strategies of the CCROW program are: (1) To work in collaboration with community residents, businesses, and identified stakeholders to improve victim and witness support and cooperation; (2) To deliver in-depth training and technical assistance to communities wishing to implement trauma-informed, victim/witness centered comprehensive strategies to combat victim/witness intimidation; (3) To have an impact in lowering homicide rates and rates of unsolved homicides.





## 4. Trauma Informed Care Training at Cincinnati Recreation Centers

The Cincinnati Recreation Centers are **adopting a trauma-informed approach to better support children, families, and staff affected by trauma.** As part of this strategy, Site Administrators and Coordinators (SACs and CCDs) will undergo training in trauma-informed practices and facilitation techniques to enhance their understanding and response to trauma. These leaders have trained full-time staff in fall 2024, ensuring a foundational level of trauma awareness across all staff members.

To build resilience and create a supportive environment, trauma-informed practices and policies will be implemented at all recreation centers. In spring 2025, workgroups will be established within each center to lead the change, fostering a community where individuals impacted by trauma can access support and resources that prioritize their well-being. This shift aims to create safer, more empathetic spaces, addressing trauma's effects on youth and families and strengthening the overall community fabric.



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# Pillar 4: Improved Youth Support

24

**Supporting youth through mentorship, education, and skill development is critical to preventing violence.** ACT for Cincy invests in programs that help young people succeed in school, find positive outlets for creativity, and access mentorship opportunities to navigate life's challenges without resorting to violence.

## Key Improved Youth Support Strategies:

### 1. After-School and Enrichment Programs

- **Families Forward Learning Grove** engages 469 students with activities like Black Boys in Tech and Finding My Sparkle to inspire learning and self-expression.
- **Price Hill Will** offers free music education to youth, fostering creativity while building discipline and teamwork.

### 2. Mentorship and Life Skills Development

- **Found Village's Journey2Independence Program** provides intensive mentorship for youth involved in multiple county systems, guiding them toward independence and stability.
- **SuperSeeds Ambassadors Program** supports teens who have had contact with the juvenile justice system, providing pathways away from violence through positive engagement.

### 3. Youth Participation in Neighborhood Safety Efforts

- **Lower Price Hill Violence Prevention Collaborative** empowers youth through participatory action research, involving them in designing solutions for safer neighborhoods.



## 4. Enhanced City of Cincinnati Recreation Commission Programming

The Cincinnati Recreation Commission's Rec @ Nite program is a flagship initiative designed to **provide teens with a safe, welcoming, and engaging space during the summer months**. This program focuses on fostering community connections and offering teens a variety of activities to enjoy, encouraging positive social interactions and personal development. Rec @ Nite features events such as silent disco nights, DJ sets, art creation workshops, and barbers and nail techs providing on-site services. For athletic teens, the program offers sports leagues and open swim nights to promote health and wellness. These events create vibrant, positive environments for teens to spend their evenings while reducing opportunities for negative or unsafe activities. By prioritizing inclusion and fun, Rec @ Nite ensures that Cincinnati's youth have opportunities to thrive socially and emotionally in a supportive atmosphere.

In 2024, Rec @ Nite served hundreds of Cincinnati youth, and brought together a dynamic list of partner organizations in support of safe and fun nighttime spaces for our city's teenagers. The CRC team will seek to continue to scale and grow its Rec @ Nite program offerings in 2025.



## 5. Career Pathways Initiative

Launched in January 2023, the Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) is **a comprehensive program aimed at empowering Cincinnati youth aged 14-24 by connecting them with meaningful career opportunities within the City of Cincinnati.** By partnering with local high schools, colleges, workforce development organizations, and advisory councils, CPI positions the city as a premier employer while cultivating a skilled and inclusive talent pipeline. Through initiatives like the “Career Pathways Overview of the City Experienceship,” students gain firsthand exposure to City operations, meet leaders, and explore diverse career paths. CPI’s mission is to provide young people with the resources and opportunities to build successful futures.

In its first two years, CPI has formed partnerships with 53 high schools, 14 colleges, and 13 workforce organizations, facilitating events such as career fairs, school visits, and job fairs that reached more than 30,000 people. Notable accomplishments include hiring young people through Job Corps, creating pipelines for Automotive Mechanic and Municipal Worker positions, and ensuring staffing for key roles such as lifeguards at city pools. The initiative has also supported second-chance applicants, helping them transition into meaningful, permanent roles within City departments. Programs like the Youth to Work summer employment program and partnerships with organizations such as Groundwork Ohio River Valley have provided additional pathways for youth to gain work experience, financial literacy, and mentorship.

CPI has expanded its outreach by establishing new partnerships with high schools and strengthening relationships with education and business advisory councils. These efforts include securing grants like the Summer Jobs Connect Grant, which enabled the employment of hundreds of youth while providing financial literacy training. Furthermore, CPI is addressing systemic challenges like gun violence by recommending employment-focused strategies that align with the Cincinnati Public School District’s “Three E’s” mission: Enroll, Enlist, or Employ. By preparing students with critical skills and resources, CPI not only supports their immediate career aspirations but also builds a stronger, more resilient workforce for Cincinnati’s future.





## 6. Systems Partner Collaboration

In partnership with the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Fisher Center for Child Health Equity and the Hamilton County Juvenile Court, the City of Cincinnati has **prioritized systems-level collaboration to address the root causes of youth violence**. Regular Systems Partner Meetings bring together key stakeholders from health, justice, and community sectors to create coordinated strategies to reduce gun violence and its impact on Cincinnati's youth.

These meetings focus on sharing data, identifying intervention points, and aligning resources to create pathways for youth to escape cycles of trauma and violence. This collaboration seeks to ensure a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to addressing the systemic challenges contributing to harm to youth in the community, including gun violence.



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# Pillar 5: Evidence-based Policing Innovations

Innovative law enforcement strategies are essential for reducing violent crime. ACT for Cincy emphasizes **data-driven, community-based policing strategies** that build trust and reduce violence at its source.

## Key Policing Innovation Strategies:

### 1. Community Problem-Oriented Policing (CPOP) and SARA Problem Solving Strategies

In addition to large-scale collaborative CPOP projects, **CPD patrol districts often problem-solve localized crime and quality of life problems.** This may be things like a week spike in incidents of breaking and entering at a storage unit or an observed increase in disorder in front of a senior center. CPD often acquires these “problems” from community outreach or meetings and address contributing factors identified in the SARA process.

- **District 1** identified a hot spot for drug-dealing, drug use, and general disorder in front of the Over-The-Rhine Senior Center. Moving through the SARA process, D1 officers in the Neighborhood Liaison Unit (NLU) identified that the main contributing factor was a ledge being used for loitering and hiding contraband from street view. The NLU officers worked with the Senior Center staff to fix flowerpots to the ledge, repurposing the space for beautification. This also encouraged senior center staff to occasionally visit the ledge and water the flowers, providing guardianship for the area.
- During community meetings, **District 4** decided to address a multi-family apartment that had a variety of disorder and sporadic criminal incidents. While the building had one owner, it was sub-leased to multiple tenants (including YWCA) and had a high resident turnover. D4 NLU discovered the apartment’s owner was largely absent, which led to a physical decay of the property, criminal uses of the space (including prostitution and drug sales/use), and a buildup of health and building violations and trash. Clean-up and repairs were made, lighting fixed, and the NLU successfully engaged the property owner. In addition, D4 also engaged their violent crime squad who identified and apprehended a group of people who were using the building to traffic drugs and firearms. Disorder at the property peaked in May 2023, averaging 7-11 calls for service per month. In the 5 months after the intervention, the property averaged 1-3 calls per month.



## 2. Place Based Investigations of Violent Offender Territories (PIVOT)

Place Based Investigations of Violent Offender Territories (PIVOT) targets **micro-locations that are chronically violent**, using problem-solving approaches to disrupt longstanding networks that facilitate violence. This approach ensures that violence is reduced **not only through arrests but also by addressing environmental conditions** and problem properties that allow crime to persist.

PIVOT is currently operating in two project areas: one centering at Linn & Findlay (West End) and Vine & Elder (North Over-The-Rhine). These areas have a handful of factors contributing to its chronic violence, requiring different degrees and types of engagement. The PIVOT team monitors factors and networked and chronic locations inside each spot.

For instance, in the North OTR Zone, street barriers were placed to disrupt open-air Street Markets capitalizing on traffic patterns.

In the West End Zone, the Amir Mini Market, a location endemic for shooting crimes, was acquired with City support and demolished. Since the demolition and at the time of publication, there have been no new reported incidents and half as many calls for service in the immediate area.

Historically, the PIVOT Zones identified (11 in total) are areas that have been chronically violent, often with systemic, environmental, social, and many other factors contributing to decades of violence. Work began in the two active PIVOT Zones in 2022, including North Over-the-Rhine and the West End. While still facing violence, the first year of active intervention (2022) resulted in 15 fewer shooting victims, fewer shots fired, decrease in violent crime, and the decreases were more substantial than seen city-wide.



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### 3. Focused Investigations

CGIC uses forensic tools like the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) to advance the City's mission of preventing gun related violence. Through NIBIN, **analysts collect and compare digital scans of firearms and cartridge casings from crime scenes nationwide, generating "leads" that help law enforcement link shootings and firearms-related incidents** across various jurisdictions. These connections enable officers to identify patterns and sources of violence, strengthening interagency collaboration and enhancing efforts to address firearm crime holistically. Using these technologies, Cincinnati's CGIC traces crime guns, investigates patterns, and collaborates with federal partners to disrupt firearm trafficking networks. This data-driven approach ensures faster investigations and prevents the flow of illegal guns into Cincinnati neighborhoods.

ShotSpotter is a gun fire detection software; it uses sensors placed throughout neighborhoods to recognize the sound of gunfire and triangulate the precise location of its discharge. Approximately, 20% of Cincinnati is covered by ShotSpotter sensors, most of which were areas strategically chosen using shooting data. When a gun is fired, an alert is created and communicated to Emergency Communications Center (ECC), who then dispatches officers as a priority call. For every alert, CPD officers search for a crime scene, any shell casings (the software listens for the number of shots fired and therefore, number of shell casings expected) in the area, other evidence, and may canvas the homes nearby for any witnesses. Firearms create unique markings on shell casings after a bullet is fired, essentially creating a fingerprint for a bullet. CGIC leverages this by processing every shell casing and/or firearm collected, including all evidence found at a ShotSpotter alert. Regardless of whether an alert resulted in a victim, the evidence collected can generate leads for past, present, or current cases by linking the casing's unique marking to other evidence.

Cincinnati Police frequently uses camera footage to aid criminal and traffic investigations. The city has recently acquired Fusus, a software platform that integrates cameras from various sources. The public can choose to register their owned and operated cameras at varying degrees of access. This can range from no access but notification of camera location, access only when requested, or live-unrestricted access. There are criticisms to expanding surveillance for government use; however, the adoption of vehicle-mounted and body-worn cameras has shown additional video footage can eliminate suspects as much as it can add leads to a case. In fact, adding one more perspective to a confusing and chaotic situation can be the difference in charging or exonerating someone.



# Governance & Accountability

ACT for Cincy is guided by a governance structure that promotes **transparency, accountability, and collaboration.**



**Violence Reduction Manager** – Office of the City Manager. This role serves as the City of Cincinnati’s Violence Reduction Program Manager. In this role, the manager provides oversight responsibility for daily management, coordination, and continuous improvement of the City’s internal initiatives related to non-law enforcement violence reduction work.



**Chief of Police** – Cincinnati Police Department. Teresa Theetge currently serves as the City of Cincinnati’s 16th Police Chief. As the City’s Chief law enforcement officer, Chief Theetge and her team oversee and implement all policing related strategies of the ACT for Cincy plan.



## **Violence Reduction Steering Committee:**

- City Manager Sheryl M.M. Long
- Assistant City Manager Virginia Tallent
- Gabriel Fletcher, Violence Reduction Manager, Office of the City Manager
- Teresa Theetge, Chief of Police
- Emily Woerner, City Solicitor
- Deanna White, Director of Human Services, Office of the City Manager
- Iris Roley, Consultant to the City Manager for Collaborative Agreement Sustainability



## **Cincinnati Council Public Safety & Governance Committee**



**City Manager’s Youth Advisory Group (“Y-MAG”)** - A group of young adults selected to help shape strategies and provide feedback to the City Manager to ensure the city’s public safety work and violence reduction strategies align with their needs.



**Office of Performance and Data Analytics (OPDA)** – Data analytics and evaluation team, nested in the City Manager’s Office. OPDA manages and hosts data dashboards with live-connected city data, including crime, disorder, police oversight, and those coming from other city departments

# Measuring Success: Data-Driven Outcomes

ACT for Cincy is committed to continuous evaluation to measure progress and ensure accountability. Key performance indicators include:

**5-10%**  
*reduction*

in gun-related injuries  
within three years

**75%**  
*utilization rate*

of mental health and community-based  
services by youth and families

**Increased**  
*participation*

in after-school and  
mentorship programs,  
with a **goal of engaging**  
**4,000 students annually**

**Improved trust**  
*between residents &*  
*law enforcement*

through CPOP community partnerships  
as measured by qualitative surveys

**Quarterly**  
*public*  
*dashboards*

to report progress and  
adjust strategies as needed



# Conclusion



ACT for Cincy is a call to action for all residents, partners, and organizations to work together toward a safer, stronger Cincinnati free of gun violence. Through strategic investments in **thriving neighborhoods, improved well-being, improved youth support, and innovative policing strategies**, we can build a future where every resident feels safe and empowered to thrive.

By working together, we will reduce violence, empower youth, and transform Cincinnati's neighborhoods. Let's ACT for Cincy—Achieving Change Together—and build the vibrant, safe future our city deserves.

## Acknowledgements

We extend our gratitude to the many partners whose efforts and dedication have laid the foundation for this blueprint:

- **Dr. Jillian Desmond**, CAPS Unit, City of Cincinnati Police Department
- **Iris Roley**
- **Dr. Meera Kotagal**, Cincinnati Children's Hospital
- **Cincinnati Black United Front (CBUF)**
- **Michael Fisher Center for Child Health Equity**
- **Cornerstone Renter's Equity**
- **Wesley Chapel Mission Center**
- **UC Health**
- **Saturday Hoops**
- **Brothas Inc.**
- **SORTA/Metro**
- **3CDC**
- **Keep Cincinnati Beautiful**
- **Corporation for Findlay Market**
- **Over the Rhine Community Council**
- **Human Services Advisory Committee**
- **United Way of Greater Cincinnati**
- **Hamilton County Juvenile Court**
- **Taft High School**
- **Cincinnati Public Schools Principals**

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# Human Services Violence Prevention Fund

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## Adopt A Class Foundation

**\$80k**

- ↘ Adopt A Class connects businesses, government, and civic partners with students from underserved communities. By pairing teams with individual classrooms, our adult mentors provide students exposure to a breadth of life and career experiences to increase their knowledge of career opportunities and expand their horizons with clearer self-vision.
- 

## Beech Acres Parenting Center

**\$80k**

- ↘ Our approach incorporates the key elements that enable adults to develop safe, stable, nurturing relationships with children, foundational to children's ability to thrive. Grounded in the science of Positive Psychology and Social Cognitive Theory, and developed through the lens of trauma informed care, Natural Strength Parenting™ serves as the catalyst for positive change.
- 

## Boys & Girls Club of Greater Cincinnati

**\$60k**

- ↘ Our Club doors are open to Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky's youth, ages 5-18, who are invited in to enrich their lives after-school and during the summer at our 7 locations with exceptional staff and volunteers, high-quality services and innovative programs, all at no cost.
- 

## Children's Law Center

**\$62.1k**

- ↘ Children's Law Center, Inc. (CLC) is a nonprofit legal service center that protects the rights of children and youth — so they can grow up in safe, healthy ways. We achieve our mission through direct legal assistance, policy reform, community education, and information & referral.



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## FY 24-25 Funded Organizations

# Human Services Violence Prevention Fund

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### Cincinnati Black Theatre Company

**\$70k**

- ↘ The mission of the Cincinnati Black Theatre Company is to keep alive the spirit of Black Theatre by offering top-notch theatrical productions, performance and employment opportunities, children's theatre, educational programs and community outreach in all aspects of theatre arts. CBTC is committed to increasing literacy, promoting diversity and multiculturalism, pursuing community outreach and collaborations, and providing access to the arts.
- 

### Cincinnati Children's Medical Center

**\$67.8k**

- ↘ Cincinnati Children's is a nonprofit, comprehensive pediatric health system. As the leader in research and education, Cincinnati Children's is consistently ranked as one of America's best children's hospitals by U.S. News & World Report and is one of the top recipients of pediatric research grants from the National Institutes of Health.
- 

### Cincinnati Urban Promise

**\$66k**

- ↘ Cincinnati Urban Promise, Inc. seeks to create holistic change in the lives of youth and their families by meeting their physical, emotional, academic and spiritual needs through a Christ-centered approach to education, empowerment, and loving relationships.
- 

### FamiliesFORWARD / Learning Grove

**\$85k**

- ↘ Learning Grove develops and supports innovative quality learning experiences that empower children, youth, and families across diverse communities.
- 

### Found Village

**\$30k**

- ↘ Many teens face systemic gaps that fail to meet their holistic needs, leading to frustration, distrust, and cycles of trauma and dysfunction. Found Village steps in to support these youth and their families, providing the guidance and resources necessary to navigate and complement existing systems. By fostering stable relationships and teaching practical life skills, Found Village empowers teens to overcome systemic inequities and build meaningful, productive futures.

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## FY 24-25 Funded Organizations

# Human Services Violence Prevention Fund

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### Guiding Light Mentoring

**\$70k**

- ↘ Founded in 2014, Guiding Light Mentoring empowers youth ages 8-18 in Greater Cincinnati by providing positive role models, teaching relationship skills, and fostering moral character. With a mission to equip young people for leadership and lasting impact, the organization envisions a community where every youth embraces their potential and overcomes challenges. Through a holistic approach and collaboration with community partners, parents, and youth, Guiding Light helps young people achieve brighter futures.

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### Mentoring Youth Minds

**\$25k**

- ↘ Mentoring Youth Minds provides holistic support for African American students in grades 3 to 12, including individualized academic instruction, behavior and trauma therapy, support mentorship and skills development.

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### Price Hill Will

**\$57.1k**

- ↘ Founded in 2004, Price Hill Will is a nonprofit dedicated to improving the quality of life in East, West, and Lower Price Hill through equitable, asset-based community development. The organization connects residents, particularly marginalized groups, to resources, programs, and leadership opportunities that foster engagement and empowerment.

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### Santa Maria Community Services

**\$90k**

- ↘ Santa Maria Community Services' Youth Development Program supports Lower Price Hill youth by fostering life skills, character building, and healthy recreation. Through school-based social-emotional groups, academic assistance, and after-school activities at the Joe Williams Family Center, the program offers mentorship, safe spaces, and resources for personal growth and academic success.
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## FY 24-25 Funded Organizations

# Human Services Violence Prevention Fund

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### Seven Hills Neighborhood Houses

**\$127k**

- ↘ Since 1961, Seven Hills Neighborhood Houses has served Cincinnati's West End as a vital social services resource and community hub, supporting 2,500-3,000 at-risk residents annually. Located in one of the city's most socio-economically challenged neighborhoods, the organization is committed to improving quality of life and fostering health and prosperity for all.
- 

### SuperSeeds

**\$90k**

- ↘ SuperSeeds provides a 2-Day Transformation Camp for youth between the ages of 13-17. The camp addresses youth behavior and violence utilizing a Restorative and Transformative approach. Youth take a tour to explore the real-life consequences of behavior and how behaviors feed systems.
- 

### Sweet Sistah Splash

**\$34.2k**

- ↘ Sweet Sistah Splash - Culture & Wellness Center empowers women, children, and men, particularly women of color, through programs and workshops focused on cultural enrichment, entrepreneurship, and holistic wellness. Dedicated to improving lives, the organization serves as a hub for resources, education, and community involvement.
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### Talbert House

**\$80k**

- ↘ Talbert House helps thousands of men, women, children & families throughout Southwest Ohio overcome adversity to live healthy & productive lives.
- 

### Urban League of Greater Cincinnati

**\$100k**

- ↘ The Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio (ULGSO) is at the forefront of addressing Cincinnati youth's unique challenges through innovative and impactful programming. They are here to provide youth with skills and tools based on needs we know are crucial for our community.

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## FY 24-25 Funded Organizations

# Human Services Violence Prevention Fund

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### Wesley Chapel Mission Center **\$72k** (2 programs)

- ↘ Wesley Chapel Mission Center, established in 2003, provides after-school programs for children in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine neighborhood. Building on the legacy of a community-focused church founded in 1802, the center is dedicated to serving local families through education and supportive services.
- 

### WhitneyStrong **\$46k**

- ↘ The WhitneyStrong Organization is dedicated to reducing gun violence through a variety of efforts, including educational programming. The Save a Life program is focused on firearm safety, including drive-thru gun lock giveaways, suicide prevention, and Stop the Bleed trauma training.
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### Women Helping Women **\$75k**

- ↘ Women Helping Women provides support, advocacy, and resources to survivors of gender-based violence.
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### Young CEO Programs **\$35k**

- ↘ Young CEO Program strives to provide every student in the greater Cincinnati area, ages 10 – 21 years old, access to participate in learning how to become Young CEO's in their own life.
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### YWCA Greater Cincinnati **\$90k**

- ↘ Since the 1970s, YWCA Greater Cincinnati has provided services to victims of intimate partner violence and their children. Our organization strives to build a coordinated community effort to provide the most comprehensive approach to prevention and intervention of intimate partner violence in the Greater Cincinnati area.

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, HEALTHY FOODS

### Beekman Community Market

**\$25k**

- ↘ The Beekman Community Market is a partnership with the Freestore Foodbank and the Ohio CAN program that offers fresh food for free and provides residents with an opportunity to sell their products. The Market is coordinated by Working in Neighborhoods.

### Childhood Food Solutions

**\$25k**

- ↘ Since 2007, Childhood Food Solutions has been delivering shelf-stable groceries to homes. Childhood Food Solutions (CFS) provides sacks of groceries to elementary school children. They provide these sacks right before late-month non-school days.

### Cincinnati Permaculture Institute

**\$20k**

- ↘ CPI's mission is to educate individuals and organizations on Permaculture in order to catalyze a resilient culture in the Cincinnati Bioregion. Leveraging symbiotic opportunities for practical regenerative results.

### Isaiah 55, Inc.

**\$25k**

- ↘ Isaiah 55's mission is to grow food to provide healthier options for the less fortunate. We grow healthy nutritious foods to feed the hungry by means of meal deliveries, food give aways, mobile food pantries and farmers markets. This grant supports the KANGGY Meals Program, providing free meals to families with children needing food assistance.



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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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### Health Resource Center of Cincinnati, Inc. **\$25k**

- ↘ The Health Resource Center of Cincinnati, Inc., also known as the HRC, is a nurse managed clinic providing affordable health care for low-income, indigent, and homeless adults and transitional youth with serious and chronic mental, emotional, behavioral, and/or substance use disorders.
- 

### iCan Health, Inc. **\$15k**

- ↘ iCan Health's goal is to empower you to reach your optimal state of health. They take a holistic approach focusing on the mind, body, and spirit. Their current initiative is diabetes with a focus on individuals with a diagnosis of Pre-Diabetes and Diabetes Type 2.
- 

### RefugeeConnect **\$25k**

- ↘ RefugeeConnect is dedicated to connecting refugees (people forced to flee their country to escape persecution, war, natural disaster) with resources to rebuild their lives as United States citizens. Funding from this grant cycle was given to the The Health Navigator program, which trains and certifies cultural leaders as Community Health Workers (CHWs) to support refugee families in navigating our complex healthcare system and to partner with healthcare providers to increase equitable access to healthcare services and resources.

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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## GUN VIOLENCE AND GANG PREVENTION

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### Arms Around Media

**\$25k**

- ↘ Arms Around Media works to strengthen the capacity for media-arts presentations, productions, programming, and training at the organization, led by or predominantly serving Black and Brown communities in the Cincinnati region. This grant supports their Empowering Voices Through Media youth program, impacting youth thru media by assisting them with telling their stories thru audio and video tools.
- 

### Brothas Inc Youth Initiative

**\$20k**

- ↘ Brothas Inc is a group of 30+ men and women each fostering friendships spanning over 40 years, from diverse backgrounds and education - all united by a shared commitment. The group shares their life experiences to forge relationships with at-risk youth by showing them love and providing safe, productive options to violence & the streets.
- 

### Cincinnati Black Theatre Company

**\$25k**

- ↘ Cincinnati Black Theatre Company's "Shoot with a Camera" project was created as a way for youth to express themselves in creative, productive ways while learning the fundamentals of video production.
- 

### Community Peace Builders Network

**\$15k**

- ↘ The Community Peace Builders Network is a group of community leaders committed to reducing gun violence. Its mission is to build equitable community partnerships using holistic, data-driven, and place-based strategies to address gun violence and break intergenerational cycles of violence and trauma through community violence intervention and prevention.

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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## GUN VIOLENCE AND GANG PREVENTION

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### Neighborhood Heroes 513

**\$25k**

- ↘ In response to the development of a Quality of Life plan for Avondale, Neighborhood Heroes 513 has sought to change the narrative for youth in the neighborhood by creating opportunities and providing support through an informal mentoring program.

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### Save Our Youth Kings and Queens

**\$25k**

- ↘ Save Our Youth Kings and Queens, founded by Mitch Morris, is a community outreach and education program dedicated to reaching people in Cincinnati's crime hotspots and offering mentorship, support, and programming. Their goal is to reduce violence on the streets of Cincinnati.

## HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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### Renting Partnerships

**\$25k**

- ↘ Renting Partnerships holds housing in trust for current and future residents. They act as stewards for each resident community by providing support and guidance in maintaining the property, assuring that all legal and financial responsibilities are fulfilled, and that management is efficient.



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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## MENTAL HEALTH, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, AND SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

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### Greater Cincinnati Resilience Coalition

**\$12k**

Joining Forces for Children (JFFC) is a regional initiative led by the Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, uniting over 50 organizations and 600 members across Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana to address child well-being. Its diverse membership includes schools, social services, medical providers, parenting support groups, and early childhood professionals working collaboratively to build community resilience.

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### OneCity for Recovery

**\$25k**

OneCity for Recovery is a unique non-profit created in response to the opioid epidemic and substance abuse disorder's community devastation. The Hopeline program assertively connects and builds relationships with clients battling substance use disorders in a way that greatly facilitates the entry of persons into treatment and ongoing recovery.

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### Preston Brown Foundation

**\$25k**

The Preston Brown Foundation, established in 2017, focuses on promoting health equity by equipping vulnerable youth with resources and experiences to support their mental, physical, and emotional well-being. Through partnerships with schools and organizations, the foundation integrates youth mental health programs that emphasize stress management, self-care, community connection, and normalizing mental health conversations.

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### Transformational Healing Place

**\$20k**

The Healing Center offers practical, social, and spiritual support to individuals and families.

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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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### African Professional Network-APNET

**\$15k**

- ↘ The APNET Summer Camp is a comprehensive program designed to empower high school students, college students, and young professionals. Through a series of workshops, sessions, and community events, participants will gain valuable skills, knowledge, and experiences to enhance their personal and professional development. The cost of the program is FREE.
- 

### Brick Gardens Foundation

**\$15k**

- ↘ Brick Gardens works to combat food insecurity by converting vacant land and buildings into urban farms and indoor vertical farm houses, providing fresh healthy produce to areas of Cincinnati considered food deserts.
- 

### Cincinnati Toolbank Training Center

**\$10k**

- ↘ The Training Center is a resource for the region to develop and implement programs that build a pipeline of skilled, diverse candidates for apprenticeships and careers in the construction industry. This will increase the number of independent adults throughout our region. This is transformative in two ways; it addresses the lack of access to skilled and high demand and well paying careers and it creates a LOCAL workforce to make improvements and repairs to the infrastructure and public spaces of our region.
- 

### Cincinnati Union Cooperative Initiative

**\$25k**

- ↘ Cincinnati Union Co-op Initiative (CUCI) is a non-profit that creates and supports a network of worker-owned cooperative businesses that sustain families and help create an economy that works for all, especially for historically disenfranchised communities.

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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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### Partnership for Innovation in Education **\$20k**

- ↘ The Partnership for Innovation in Education develops transformational educational tools preparing the 21st century workforce for success in the global marketplace. PIE's programming prepares underserved youth for advanced manufacturing, electric vehicle, and aerospace jobs.
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### Robert O'Neal Multicultural Arts Center **\$25k**

- ↘ The ROMAC Artrepreneur Program empowers young artists and creatives aged 13 to 21 by transforming their artistic talents into sustainable careers while addressing racial and social disparities. Focused on the "business side of art," it equips participants with skills in marketing, technology, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship to drive economic mobility and social equity.
- 

### Visionaries + Voices **\$10k**

- ↘ Established in 2003, Visionaries + Voices is a non-profit organization that provides creative, professional, and educational opportunities to more than 125 visual artists with disabilities. Artists working at V+V actively contribute to the greater arts community through creative, educational, and strategic partnerships with local and regional artists, schools, and business leaders. Collectively, we are growing a more inclusive arts community in Greater Cincinnati.
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### We Shall Overcome Foundation **\$25k**

- ↘ The primary objective of the We Shall Overcome Foundation is to provide food, water, clothing, hygiene products, medical care, knowledge, advocacy and education to people in need.



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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

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### Artsville Corporation

**\$15k**

- ↘ Artsville is a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering personal growth and self-expression through visual, literary, healing, and performing arts. It provides a supportive space for artists of all levels to explore their creativity and bring the arts to life.
- 

### BYE Institute

**\$25k**

- ↘ At BYE Institute our mission is to empower Black, Brown, and underserved youth and their families by providing an avenue for training and resources. Funding from Boots on the Ground went to support the Empact Fellowship, a selective leadership development program that provides training, mentorship, and resources to young changemakers of color who are committed to creating positive social change.
- 

### Council on Child Abuse

**\$25k**

- ↘ The Council on Child Abuse (COCA) provides educational and public awareness programs to prevent and stop child abuse and bullying where children live, learn and play.
- 

### Elementz

**\$25k**

- ↘ Elementz is Cincinnati's premier Hip Hop Cultural Art Center. Founded in 2002 as a direct response to the killing of Timothy Thomas, a young black man, and the social unrest in Over-the-Rhine that followed, Elementz was created to give voice to young people in the urban core and to disrupt the status quo, encouraging positive change in the community through civic engagement.

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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

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### Everybody is LITT Academy

**\$20k**

- ↳ Everybody is LITT (Learning Intentionally to Transform) Academy is a nonprofit that provides literacy tutoring to students in grades K-12.
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### Fully Loaded Dance Studio

**\$10k**

- ↳ Fully Loaded Dance Studio is a regional destination for all things Hip Hop. With classes for ages 4 to adults, they proudly serve people of all cultures, backgrounds, and abilities including participants with special needs. Their professional instructors are eager to share their dance expertise with anyone ready to learn.
- 

### Inner City Youth Opportunities

**\$15.6k**

- ↳ Inner City Youth Opportunities (ICYO), founded in 1993 by Jeanne and Philip Bell, is a Cincinnati-based nonprofit dedicated to supporting low-income children facing family challenges and academic struggles. Through programs that build self-esteem, teach life skills, and foster trusting relationships, ICYO helps youth resist negative influences, set goals, and stay on track to graduate high school. Guided by The Search Institute's "40 Developmental Assets" model, ICYO emphasizes academic success, leadership, accountability, and mentoring to promote positive human development.

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

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### Lincoln Heights Outreach

**\$25k**

- ↘ Lincoln Heights Outreach is committed to moving families towards self-sufficiency through our advocacy and outreach programs that cover a range of educational, human, and social services. The organization's Youth Enrichment Program works to increase the learning potential for children in low socioeconomic communities by providing activities to strengthen and enhance academic achievement, specifically in reading, STEAM-related areas, and social skills and promote social and emotional well-being.
- 

### My Brother's Keeper Cincinnati

**\$15k**

- ↘ My Brother's Keeper Cincinnati works to eliminate social, economic, mental, and educational barriers for boys and young men of color aged 5-21 by addressing the intergenerational effects of adversity in their communities. Through partnerships with local schools, the program combines knowledge delivery, trust-building, and experiential learning to teach financial literacy while offering participants opportunities to earn financial incentives.
- 

### Serving Older Adults through Changing Times

**\$25k**

- ↘ SOATCT's Wisdom Behind The Walls program addresses the isolation and loneliness many seniors face by reconnecting them with family and the broader community. Through partnerships with community organizations, this program fosters engagement, enriches the quality of life for older adults in organized facilities, and encourages meaningful services and activities for seniors.



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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

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### Sister Accord Foundation

**\$10k**

- ↘ The Sister Accord® is a movement that is changing how girls & women treat, support, and interact with each other. The organization's Leadership Development Tea Party is a celebration of empowered women, aimed at inspiring the next generation of women leaders in our community.
- 

### Super Seeds

**\$22k**

- ↘ Super Seeds vision is to serve as a catalyst for prevention and restoration empowering youth to become positive contributing members of our community disrupting the pipeline to prison. They provide a 2-Day Transformation Camp for youth between the ages of 13-17. The camp addresses youth behavior and violence utilizing a Restorative and Transformative approach. Youth take a tour to explore the real-life consequences of behavior and how behaviors feed systems.
- 

### Serving Older Adults through Changing Times **\$25k**

- ↘ The Cincinnati Young Entrepreneurs Program, spearheaded by Sweet Sistah Splash, provides dynamic entrepreneurship education, mentorship, and leadership development for youth aged 7-19. By addressing the systemic challenges that disproportionately affect underserved communities, the program fosters economic stability, cultivates business acumen, and promotes leadership skills while reducing youth violence and encouraging healthy social behaviors.

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2024-25 Grant Cycle Funded Organizations

# Boots on the Ground Fund

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

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### The Gaskins Foundation

**\$20k**



The Gaskins Foundation is a nonprofit dedicated to empowering underrepresented youth by providing resources to support their academic and creative growth. Through comprehensive programs, it helps young people develop essential skills to build brighter futures.

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### Village of Woodlawn Parks and Recreation Center

**\$10k**



The Village of Woodlawn Recreation Center is committed to providing diverse, athletic, community-driven programs, and services with the hope of enriching the lives of our visitors. Funding went to the Woodlawn Summer Development Program “Ujana Unidos” (Youth United).