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June 26, 2012

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL GANG VIOLENCE REDUCTION INITIATIVE (ALL AFFECTED) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

A recommendation from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to continue the authority of the CEO to execute agreements with non-County partners in order to implement provisions of the Gang Strategy. No additional funds are being requested.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Continue the authority of the CEO to execute agreements with non-County partners in order to implement provisions of the Gang Strategy through June 30, 2014.

2. Request the Sheriff's Department continue coordinating and implementing regional and multi-jurisdictional suppression strategies in Los Angeles County.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On April 6, 2010, the Board instructed the CEO to implement a set of recommendations to address gang violence. Specifically, the CEO was directed to develop strategies that sought to: 1) prevent individuals and families from becoming involved in gang and/or delinquent activity; 2) intervene in the lives of individuals and families who have had contact with gangs or the justice system, and provide sufficient services and resources

to redirect them on a path towards self-sufficiency and mainstream integration; and 3) to more strategically collaborate with law enforcement to proactively target violence and identify individuals and families who may need and desire assistance. These overarching goals were to be implemented through community and individual level interventions that would also inform both current and proposed policy development and decisions.

The Board received a status report on December 15, 2010, which provided an update on progress made towards implementing the Gang Strategy; and, on August 11, 2011, the Board granted a one-year extension to implement the following:

- Ensure that reentry services funded through the Second Chance Grant intended to effectively transition youth from incarceration back into the community were fully utilized and that protocols to replicate and scale reentry and transition efforts countywide were developed;

- Ensure the formation of comprehensive juvenile and adult reentry bodies was finalized and that both bodies address operational and policy issues impacting reentry;

- Ensure that a sustainable funding infrastructure for Parks After Dark was secured and a plan for expansion was developed; and

- Ensure collaborative suppression efforts between law enforcement agencies throughout the County continue to be aligned with prevention, intervention and re-entry efforts.

This letter addresses the results of the one-year extension and provides the Board with a rationale for the CEO's continued efforts to address gang violence and delinquency issues.

BACKGROUND

In 2009, the CEO led a data-driven, multi-dimensional planning process to formulate a strategy for addressing gangs and violence, and increase the successful community reentry/reintegration of high-risk/high-need and gang-involved juvenile and adult offenders. A diverse group of County and community stakeholders participated in various planning meetings and work groups to define priorities and develop a comprehensive strategy for reducing gang involvement and violence.

This resulting Gang Strategy relies heavily on the belief that the County maintains a consistent, but often uncoordinated, relationship with both individuals and communities

most impacted by gangs and violence. While these communities often receive large quantities of County resources, the resources are siloed and disconnected from each other.

The Gang Strategy has focused on coordinating efforts in the four demonstration sites (Florence Firestone, Harbor Gateway, Monrovia Duarte and Pacoima) at both the community and individual level through prevention, intervention and suppression activities. Each site coordinator has worked to strengthen community networks, and actively engaged with existing local efforts addressing violence and gangs. Over the last year, each site coordinator has worked to ensure local sustainability so that efforts and relationships developed in each site are not lost with their departure. Similarly, the Los Angeles County Gang Violence Reduction Committee has worked to ensure that efforts such as the Parks After Dark Program, collaborative policing, and coordinated juvenile and adult reentry practices are sustained beyond this Initiative.

COMMUNITY LEVEL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In each demonstration area, strategies were implemented that reinforced our premise that community efforts to prevent, intervene and suppress gangs and violence collectively impact the entrenched nature of gangs and the normative tolerance to violence that pervades these communities. These types of efforts are critical in shifting the collective community view of violence and their responsibility in addressing violence and related issues. Over the last year, the focus has been on enhancing local community autonomy and County departmental leadership in the continuation and expansion of key actions.

Community Efforts

Tattoo Removal Services

In partnership with the departments of Mental Health and Sheriff, the City of Los Angeles, and community health partners, the CEO has implemented a project that will expand the tattoo removal services available to ex-offenders and former gang members in Los Angeles County. Conspicuous tattoos are a potential safety concern that may identify the individual with a particular gang and/or be a significant barrier to employment or social integration. This project allows incarcerated individuals to begin free tattoo removal treatments while still in custody and continue those treatments with community partners once they are released. It will also increase the availability of tattoo removal services to disparate parts of the County where it is not normally available. This partnership will add four additional sites (Watts/South Los Angeles, County Jail, Pacoima, Rampart/Westlake) in Los Angeles County and serve approximately 1,000 individuals annually. This effort was made possible as a result of a Mental Health Service Act (MHSA) grant the CEO received to assist with the Gang Strategy.

Parks After Dark (PAD)

PAD was developed to provide youth with productive activities in their communities to decrease the likelihood of their participation in at-risk, gang-related behavior. Initially implemented in three County parks (Pamela, Watkins and Roosevelt), PAD has assisted in strengthening community cohesion by increasing the use of the parks as social and community resources, and enabling residents to envision their communities and neighbors as robust and empowered. A comparison of gang-related crime from 2010 and 2011 in and around PAD communities indicated a marked decrease (Pamela – 0 gang-related crimes, Watkins – 33% decrease, Roosevelt 66.67% decrease). PAD was the recipient of a California State Association of Counties (CSAC) 2011 CSAC Challenge Award for Merit.

PAD was also the recipient of a $1,250,000 grant from the Center for Disease Control. This five-year grant will allow PAD to continue at the three existing parks and expand to two additional parks (City Terrace and Jesse Owens), as well as adding limited versions of PAD in Athens and Loma Alta parks. Additionally, community outreach workers will be included in the PAD effort. These workers will assist in marketing programming to members of the communities who may be more reluctant to participate as a result of past gang affiliations or criminal records. The County Parks and Recreation Department remains the lead on this effort.

Florence Firestone Neighborhood Effort

With assistance from the Florence Firestone Site Coordinator and in collaboration with the Florence Firestone Community Leaders, the Los Angeles Education Partnership (LAEP) has assisted schools in the Florence Firestone area become centers of community life. Facilitating monthly exchanges, LAEP has created a forum for parents, concerned citizens, and educators to gather and develop strategies aimed at increasing parental participation in the educational process, and the use of schools as community resources. Collaborative meetings are held at Edison Middle School and Fremont High School, and ongoing resources, such as health fairs, parent center food banks, and "Lunch with Law Enforcement Officers," have been created and sustained.

The tutoring center in the Jerry Ortiz Memorial Boxing Center was renovated and stocked with new reading materials to service youth who frequent the center for boxing classes. Since the reopening, approximately 25 youth each day are receiving tutoring resources at the center. The opening of the center also coincided with the closure of the Florence Library for renovations. Administered by the Sheriff's Department, with assistance from the County Library, the new center has become a popular alternative for at-risk youth in the area.

Harbor Gateway Neighborhood Effort

With assistance from the Harbor Gateway Site Coordinator, the Harbor Gateway South Park Inc. (HGSP) group was created by community residents to bring additional green spaces to the community. In less than one year, the HGSP has been able to:

- ✓ Obtain its 501(c)3 federal tax-exempt status
- ✓ Locate land in the Harbor-Gateway for possible conversion to parkland
- ✓ Partner with the City of Los Angeles Council District 15 Office and City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department to identify sufficient Quimby funds to purchase land

The Carson Sheriff's Gang Diversion Team Program (GDT) has provided assistance to at-risk youth in the Carson area for years. With assistance from the Harbor-Gateway Site Coordinator, the GDT was able to:

- ✓ Expand the service reach of the GDT to the Harbor-Gateway area
- ✓ Link GDT to staff at Narbonne High School who work closely with at-risk youth (PSA counselors, school principal, school deans)
- ✓ Provide GDT Deputy with access to Probation Harbor Area Office to increase referrals of at-risk youth to prevention-related services
- ✓ Assist in the expansion of GDT program to other Sheriff stations

Pacoima Neighborhood Effort

With assistance from the Pacoima Site Coordinator and in partnership with the City of Los Angeles Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD), the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) placed staff (Eligibility Worker) at the El Nido Family Resource Center in Pacoima for a full day each week. El Nido services youth in Pacoima who have been identified as at greater risk for gang involvement. The addition of this staff person has provided at-risk families with information regarding benefit eligibility and application processing. Over 100 families have been screened for benefits and services as a result of this effort.

The Pacoima Site Coordinator played a critical role in planning the Pacoima "Second Chance Job and Resource Fair" held September 2011. The event, led by the Northeast Work Source Center, offered individuals with criminal background employment and resource opportunities. More than 1,100 participants attended this event. In addition, the work source center committed to exploring opportunities to increase "soft" skill training amongst probationers and parolees in locations more amenable to them.

Monrovia-Duarte Neighborhood Effort

With assistance from the Monrovia-Duarte Site Coordinator, the Santa Anita YMCA has taken the lead in coordinating reentry efforts in the Monrovia-Duarte area, as well as increasing its services to system-involved youth and adults. In the wake of Assembly Bill (AB) 109 and the cyclical issues of gang violence spurred on by parole releases, faith-based agencies, law enforcement, community stakeholders, and local officials have partnered together to collaboratively address reentry issues in the Monrovia-Duarte area. Their work has increased the distribution of public safety information to residents and provided a necessary vehicle to combat rumor control. Recently, the area saw a slight increase in violence for which the partners were quickly able to mobilize against. This effort is indicative of their commitment to sustained community violence reduction.

Monrovia Arcadia Duarte (MAD) Town Council has seen a significant increase in participation and membership. These increases have produced definitive recommendations for the Fifth Supervisorial District regarding community naming and the communities' position on business-uses, including, for example, the location of a medicinal marijuana business.

Suppression Efforts

The Sheriff's effort to reduce gang crime in the four demonstration sites has shown positive results. Greater engagement with community members and collaboration with other police agencies has resulted in decreased crime in these areas.

Part 1 Crime is down 5.17 percent in all Sheriff patrolled areas and down 5.8 percent in areas patrolled by the Los Angeles Police Department, from 2010 to 2011. Collectively across all four demonstration sites, Part 1 Crime is down 2.1 percent over the same one-year period.

Gang-related Crime in Florence Firestone is down 26.9 percent, while also showing a slight increase in Part 1 Crimes of 3.1 percent, between 2010 and 2011. Harbor Gateway saw a 0.6 percent reduction in Part 1 Crime for 2011, with a 45.8 percent reduction in gang-related crime, from 59 incidences to 32, over the last year. Monrovia Duarte saw a 7.7 percent reduction in Part 1 Crime, and a 46.5 percent decrease in gang-related crime from 43 incidences to 23, over the last year. Pacoima also saw a 9.3 percent reduction in Part 1 Crime along with a 0.6 percent reduction in gang-related crime, from 155 incidences to 154, during the last year.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In partnership with the Departments of Probation, Mental Health (DMH), DPSS and the County Office of Education (LACOE), the CEO has administered a federal grant developed for transitioning Probation youth from camps back into their respective communities. This project, the Probation Youth Community Transition Project (PYCTP), sought to identify gang-involved, high-risk youth and provide additional services to both the youth and their families within four demonstration site area: Florence-Firestone, Pacoima, Harbor-Gateway and Monrovia-Duarte. PYCTP also sought to identify countywide issues adversely affecting reentry for these youth and develop solutions to them.

While the youth still resided in camp, a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) led by each Site Coordinator and comprised of representatives from the departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Probation, DPSS, DMH, LACOE, community providers and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), reviewed and coordinated the delivery of County and partner services to the youth and their families. This process provided an opportunity to determine what County and partner services the family might benefit from, and to coordinate the delivery of those services with the family. Monthly updates allowed the MDT to assess the services being delivered and confer with partners about changes to the families' circumstances.

To date, 94 youth have participated in the PYCTP. We anticipate exceeding our minimum grant requirement of 100 youth by an additional 50 youth prior to the end of the grant period in September 2012. Our data indicates that:

- 86 percent of cases received or are receiving Functional Family Therapy (FFT) treatments/High-Risk High Need (HRHN) In-Home Services;
- In thirty cases (32 percent), primary caregivers participated in parental skill-building services;
- Of the twenty-six cases where family members were determined as needing mental health services, 25 (97 percent) received treatment services, were referred to treatment services, or were pending service identification; and one (3 percent) family declined services;
- Of forty-nine youth released from camp during the school year, twenty-one youth (43 percent) were enrolled within 3 business days of release, twenty-two (45 percent) were enrolled with 15 business days largely due to missed appointments and school delays; and 6 (12 percent) remained un-enrolled beyond 15 days largely due to refusal of youth to attend; and
- 74 percent of participating youth have not received a new sustained criminal petition.

COUNTYWIDE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

The delivery of services to youth and families, as well as the identification of systemic issues, has clarified and highlighted practices that should become a part of the County's juvenile reentry strategy. There is general consensus around:

- The need for greater communication and cooperation between camp and aftercare probation staff to assist each youth and their family with reentry transition.
- The importance of in-camp multi-disciplinary assessments as drivers of both the minor's progress in camp and aftercare case planning.
- The necessity of family engagement prior to the minor's release and its continuation once the minor is released.

As of December 2011, these practices have been integrated into the reentry plans of all minors leaving Probation camp. Adherence to these practices – increased camp and aftercare communication, countywide use of camp multi-disciplinary assessments and increased family engagement – are being monitored by the newly formed Los Angeles County Juvenile Reentry Council to ensure case planning practices are consistently provided to all youth and families.

Los Angeles County Juvenile Reentry Council

Under the leadership of Superior Court Supervising Judge for Delinquency, Donna Groman, the Los Angeles County Juvenile Reentry Council (LACJRC) was formed in November 2011 to assist relevant County departments with juvenile reentry planning and programming, inform the policy decisions of those County departments, and identify and resolve systemic barriers related to reentry. While the LACJRC does not have the authority to direct departments to implement policy or reallocate funding, it was developed with the intent of informing policy development by ensuring that departmental policy makers receive ongoing feedback, and recommendations from the reentry community. Meeting quarterly, the LACJRC has:

- Begun collecting data on the youth's stay in camp, parent participation in youth's case planning, mental health needs, and educational needs and resources. This information is being collected for every youth ordered to camp.
- Developed a protocol that provides a certified copy of the birth certificate for every minor leaving camp that no longer possesses a copy. This process was implemented in February 2012.

- Revised the content and format of the Camp Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting Form, which provides a detailed history of the youth's camp stay, progress and plans for transition. The new form was implemented in all camps in December 2011.
- Met with all County school districts, in April 2012, to discuss school enrollment of incarcerated youth and the creation of school district reentry protocols that will provide district wide instructions on enrolling probation youth.

The LACJRC includes both public and private juvenile reentry stakeholders and will continue to respond to the needs of the relevant County departments and partner agencies.

Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership

The Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership (LARRP) has worked to provide a forum for community stakeholders to collaborate and inform policies related to adult reentry. Over the last year, LARRP has worked with both the Community Corrections Partnership and the Public Safety Realignment Team to ensure that the voice of community stakeholders was prominently involved and considered as the County implemented AB109.

LARRP remains a network of organizations and individuals across Los Angeles County that seeks to build an effective public-private partnership and network to:

- Coordinate the implementation of evidence-based leading practices in reentry service delivery;
- Serve as a regional voice for community & faith-based organizations in policy and funding decisions;
- Advocate for administrative and legislative policies that reduce recidivism, improve public safety, and decrease incarceration levels;
- Provide support for the current and emerging regional/community reentry coalitions; and
- Serve as an information exchange between public and community partners.

Through general committee meetings and permanent subcommittees, LARRP has facilitated the following:

- Sponsored a capacity-building workshop for community providers in South Los Angeles with the goal of educating providers on County contracting practices;

- Sponsored an educational workshop for community providers in the Pomona area on how to access health services for the formerly incarcerated through Healthy Way Los Angeles;
- Facilitated a Probation Department forum for community providers on AB109 processes; and
- Planned three workshops to increase the ability of community providers to enhance agency infrastructure, develop evaluation and outcome data, and use evidence-based reentry practices in the delivery of client services. These workshops will be held in Pacoima, South Los Angeles, and East Los Angeles in the month of June.

Next Steps

In each of the four demonstration sites, we have seen evidence of increased community cohesion, greater activism on the part of community residents, increased engagement between law enforcement and community members, and greater responsivity by the juvenile reentry community to better transition youth. During the next six months and continuing thereon, the following actions will occur:

- Probation staff loaned to the CEO's office (Site Coordinators) will return to their department and continue to train and mentor aftercare probation officers.
- The Los Angeles County Juvenile Reentry Council will continue to monitor juvenile reentry efforts and provide recommendations to those departments primarily responsible for juvenile reentry.
- The Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership will continue to work with reentry organizations to increase their capacity to service individuals on probation and parole.
- The CEO will continue to seek out funding opportunities that target at-risk and potentially gang-involved youth in hopes of increasing federal, state and philanthropic funding coming to Los Angeles County.

The Federal Second Chance Grant will terminate in September 2012. Based on the success of this effort in the demonstration sites, Probation will continue to enhance its engagement process with youth and families by employing the returning site coordinators to train and coach all aftercare staff. The use of the site coordinators will ensure that aftercare probation deputies continue to engage with youth in camps, with the families of those youth, and that these practices become institutionalized within the department.

Similarly, the Los Angeles County Juvenile Reentry Council and the Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership will assume responsibility for the efforts developed and implemented by the Los Angeles Regional Gang Violence Reduction Committee (Gang

Committee). The Gang Committee was created to institutionalize the development and oversight of countywide efforts that impact gangs and violence. It has overseen efforts in the four demonstration sites, provided oversight for the Federal Second Chance Grant, and has facilitated the emergence of these two reentry bodies, where policy recommendation and implementation, as well as operational activities are now occurring. These two bodies are now primed to lead the continued exploration of opportunities to decrease levels of violence in communities throughout Los Angeles County by better coordinating and facilitating the delivery of services to individuals reentering communities after incarceration. The CEO will continue to explore the role of the Gang Committee, and the development of prevention efforts to reduce gang involvement where possible. The closure of the Informal Juvenile Traffic Courts (July 2012) provides an opportunity for the County to develop delinquency prevention efforts aimed at significantly reducing initial contact with the juvenile justice system.

Additionally, we will continue to monitor gang violence and violence reduction efforts throughout the County and report our findings to the Board quarterly.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The requested Board actions are consistent with the Countywide Strategic Plan Goals as follows: Goal 1 – Operational Effectiveness: Maximize the effectiveness of processes, structure, and operations to support timely delivery of customer-oriented and efficient public services; Goal 2 – Fiscal Sustainability: Strengthen and enhance the County's capacity to sustain essential County services through proactive and prudent fiscal policies and stewardship; and Goal 3 – Integrated Services Delivery: Maximize opportunities to measurably improve client and community outcomes and leverage resources through the continuous integration of health, community, and public safety services.

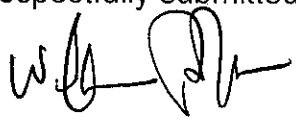
FISCAL IMPACT

The Board appropriated $1,051,000 to fund components of the Gang Strategy in 2009. Last year, we requested authority to carry over approximately $226,000 of the remaining funds. During this current year, we have expended an additional $206,000, leaving $20,000. We would again request authority to carry over that amount to continue gang-related programming efforts throughout the County. Federal and state grant funds have been obtained and will continue to be sought to leverage County funds for developing similar programs and efforts. There are no additional funds being requested.

CONCLUSION

Gang violence in Los Angeles County has not been eradicated. but the collective prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts in the four demonstration sites have begun to affect the landscape of those communities. These affects will continue to be sustained by local community efforts and by the expansion of programs such as Parks After Dark, and continued community-oriented policing. The collaborative efforts of DMH, Probation, and LACOE in developing a stronger camp-to-community reentry model will ensure that comprehensive case planning and aftercare are provided to every youth leaving a probation camp. The results from the Second Chance Grant juvenile reentry efforts, where 74 percent of youth have not recidivated, are further evidence that proactive case planning and aftercare are critical to successful reentry. Significant work remains to increase the educational and employment opportunities for these youth and families, and to increase the County's responsiveness to youth displaying at-risk behavior. As noted earlier, the closure of the Informal Juvenile Traffic Courts will provide an opportunity to better target youth and families prior to engagement with the juvenile justice system. Going forward, the continued authority of the CEO to enter into memorandums of understanding and other agreements will facilitate securing educational and employment services for system-involved youth and families, and assisting at-risk youth prior to their formal contact with the juvenile justice system.

Respectfully submitted,



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