



Memorandum

TO: ALL CHILDREN ACHIEVE
COMMITTEE

FROM: Sara L. Hensley
Chief Robert Davis

**SUBJECT: MAYOR'S GANG PREVENTION
TASK FORCE 2005-2007
STATUS REPORT**

DATE: 10-27-05

Approved

Date

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the following update and progress report on the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force and its 2005-2007 Status Report.

BACKGROUND

The San José City Council approved *Reclaiming Our Youth*, the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF) Strategic Work Plan 2005-2007 on April 5, 2005. The plan includes new core values, vision, and mission statements that focus on promoting safe and healthy youth, and reconnecting them to their families, schools, communities, and futures. The plan highlights five strategic goals that advance these core values, vision, and mission. The plan also commits to providing youth with positive alternatives to gang involvement and criminal activity. Attachment A shows a synopsis of the work plan.

ANALYSIS

Work Plan Accomplishments to Date

Goal # 1 – Develop and implement an “asset-based” service delivery system aimed at connecting, coordinating, and leveraging intervention resources.

- During the current San José Bringing Everyone's Strengths Together (B.E.S.T.) Program funding cycle (Cycle 14), B.E.S.T.-funded agencies provided services to a total of 4,587 youth customers. These youth customers, half of whom are either hard-core gang members or gang supporters, have received a variety of services including adjudicated youth services, gang intervention services, substance abuse and addiction, domestic violence, and life skills.

- Since January 2005, PRNS has convened monthly meetings of the MGPTF Technical Team. The Technical Team, which is responsible for implementing the policies of the MGPTF Policy Team, is comprised of PRNS staff, City-funded community-based organizations, faith-based partners, parent groups, schools, San José Police Department, Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) staff, and private businesses.
- The MGPTF coordinates services by police division throughout the entire City. Each of the four divisions – Foothill, Western, Southern, and Central – has a PRNS staff person who shares leadership of that division with the police captain who oversees that division. Division members use these meetings to exchange information on their organizations, publicize community events, and allocate division resources to respond to gang incidents.

Goal #2 - Create and implement a standard, Citywide Crisis Response Protocol aimed at keeping schools, community centers, and neighborhoods safe.

- PRNS has identified the division lead staff as the points of contact for responding and bringing resources to incidents of gang and/or youth violence in the community.
- In June 2005, the MGPTF applied for a \$246,661 federal grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). This grant will provide funds for gang awareness trainings, staff attendance at gang conferences, audio/visual equipment for MGPTF school/community presentations, and a Safety Consultant. In September 2005, OJJDP approved our grant application.

Goal #3 - Develop and implement a comprehensive capacity-building strategy aimed at equipping Task Force members with the skills and resources necessary to re-direct Youth.

- The MGPTF, in coordination with California Youth Outreach (CYO), presented two separate series of "Introduction to Gangs in San José" trainings to over 500 community partners serving San José youth. CYO conducted three Level 1 introductory sessions in March and April 2005, and due to popular demand, added a fourth session in June 2005. CYO conducted four Level 2 advanced sessions in July and August 2005. Attendees learned why youth join gangs, what gangs exist in San José, what are their respective backgrounds and histories, and what strategies youth-serving organizations can implement to work with gang youth.
- In August, the MGPTF, in coordination with the Girl Scouts of Santa Clara County, provided training on how best to work with girls who join gangs.

Goal #4 - Create an education and awareness campaign regarding the risk factors affecting youth and the resources available to them.

- Since the beginning of the year, the local media have focused a lot of attention on the local gang situation, as well as the efforts of the MGPTF to combat it:
 - March 28, 2005, Mercury News/The Valley: "Gangsta Gear a Click Away"
 - March 30, 2005, Mercury News/The Valley: "San José Stores asked to end Gang-Attire Sales"

- March 31, 2005, Mercury News/Editorials: “Cracking Down on Gang Symbols, Tell these Retailers to Stop Selling Danger”
 - April 1, 2005, Mercury News/Local News: “Gangs blamed for Crime Surge”
 - April 5, 2005, Mercury News/The Valley: “Anti-Gang Plan goes to Council”
 - April 6, 2005, Mercury News/Editorials: “Helping At-Risk High School Students, Mayor offers the Right Two Cents”
 - April 8, 2005, Mercury News/Local News: “SJ. Gang Task Force, Safest big City ready to step up the battle”
 - April 10, 2005, The Sunday Pinnacle: “Community Answers Back”
 - April 17, 2005, Mercury News/Front Page: “Hope Lives On”
 - May 17, 2005, Mercury News/A&E Section: “Getting rid of Tattoos heals inner scars, offers Hope”
 - May 26, 2005, Mercury News/Front Page: “San José Sees Surge in Gang Violence”
 - May 26, 2005, Mercury News/Pg. 14A, Front Section: “Unwittingly, Chain Offered Shirt with Gang Symbols”
 - May 27, 2005, Mercury News/Front Page: “on His Turf”
 - August 29, 2005, Mercury News/Editorials: “Understanding Gangs”
 - August 31-September 6, 2005, Metro: “Color Bind”
 - October 17, 2005, Mercury News: “Parents Must Take the Lead to Keep Children Out of Gangs ”
- The MGPTF, in coordination with CYO, has hosted four gang awareness trainings for parents throughout San José. These trainings were geared toward providing parents and families with information on why youth join gangs, what is the scope of the gang problem in San José, and what resources are available for them and their children. The Mercury News and Channel 14 covered these trainings.
 - June 1, 2005 at Mexican American Community Services Agency, Inc.;
 - July 14, 2005 at Horton Youth Center;
 - June 25, 2005 at Franklin-McKinley School District Office; and
 - September 1, 2005 at San José High School
 - The MGPTF co-hosted and presented at State Senator Elaine Alquist’s Gang Intervention and Prevention Town Hall Meeting on October 20, 2005. The purpose of the event was to provide a forum for the community to voice its concerns, brainstorm best practices for assisting youth to leave the gang lifestyle, raise awareness about the root causes of gang activities, and offer information on available resources for gang youth and their families.
 - The MGPTF produced an inventory of available resources for gang-involved and disconnected youth, and has distributed this information to both the public and MGPTF members, to facilitate the coordination and provision of gang, youth, and family services.

Goal #5 - Integrate the City of San José’s MGPTF Intervention Strategy with local, state, and national initiatives.

- Currently the MGPTF has linked its services with the Greater San José Alternative Education Collaborative, the Santa Clara County Juvenile Detention Reform, the City of San José Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, National League of Cities, and the City's Weed and Seed Program.

The MGPTF is on track to meet its goals and objectives by July 2007.

Next Steps

The MGPTF will:

- Goal 1: Coordinate with Project Cornerstone to implement an asset-based curriculum into its gang intervention programs.
- Goal 2: Participate, in partnership with San José-area schools and other public organizations, in the November 9, 2005 Safety Summit and Emergency Management Training at City Hall. The training will provide an outline for the crisis response protocol the MGPTF is designing for incidents of gang or youth violence in schools and community centers, and strengthen the network of partners with whom the MGPTF must coordinate when responding to emergency situations.
- Goal 3: Conduct another series of gang awareness trainings for youth service providers, parents and families in 2006.
- Goal 4: Create and distribute a brochure detailing the names and addresses of organizations and partners providing gang intervention services.
- Goal 5: In partnership with the State of California Youth Authority, Santa Clara County Probation, and Superior Court of Santa Clara County, design a pre-release program, aimed at establishing relationships with San José-area youth in detention facilities prior to their release, and providing them information on MGPTF services.

COST IMPLICATIONS

There are no cost implications associated with this memorandum.

COORDINATION

This report was prepared in coordination with the San José Police Department and the City Attorney's Office.

SARA L. HENSLEY
Director of Parks, Recreation and
Neighborhood Services

ROBERT DAVIS
Police Chief