



# An Evidence-Based Approach to Violence Reduction

Office of the City Manager

January, 2019

Provide updates on violent crime data and violence prevention and reduction research and analysis

Provide Council with an opportunity to discuss short, medium, and long-term actions to address violence

## *Process*

- The cross-departmental team was established, leveraging the City Manager's Office, CMPD, I&T Center for Data Analytics, and our external partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies and Johns Hopkins University Center for Government Excellence (Gov Ex)



## *The Research Team*

- ✓ Reviewed our internal violence reduction efforts
- ✓ Researched programs from cities across the country
- ✓ Analyzed CMPD data and other publicly available citywide data
- ✓ Looked at existing violence prevention and reduction programs to explore how to integrate evidence into investment decisions



## *Related Efforts*

- At the same time, there are multiple strategies in progress, including County-led efforts to share information and practices around violence reduction
- Health Director, Gibbie Harris, provided a Community Violence Overview to the Board of County Commissioners defining violence as a public health concern and recommended the development of a community-wide comprehensive strategy to address all forms of violence



# DEFINING THE ISSUE

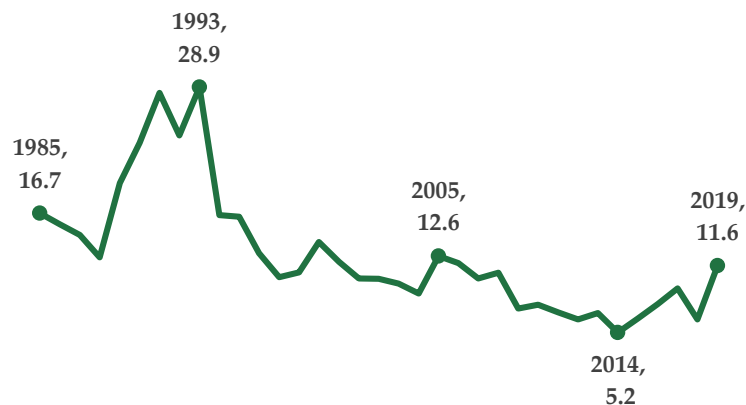
- **Violence takes many forms in our communities** and can affect residents across their life span, with widespread impacts to individuals, families and communities
- **Violence is recognized as a public health issue** resulting from exposure to numerous risk factors arising from contextual, biological, environmental, systemic, and social stressors
- **Violent trauma is a recurrent disease** – locally, 1 in 4 victims experience repeat victimization or death after violent trauma
- Current **approach to violence prevention and reduction is fragmented** and relies heavily on policing and the criminal justice system
- Timing is right for a **more integrated approach** that supports extensive **cross-sectoral collaboration** with an emphasis on violence prevention and interruption and a reliance on data and evidence

# DATA AND ANALYSIS

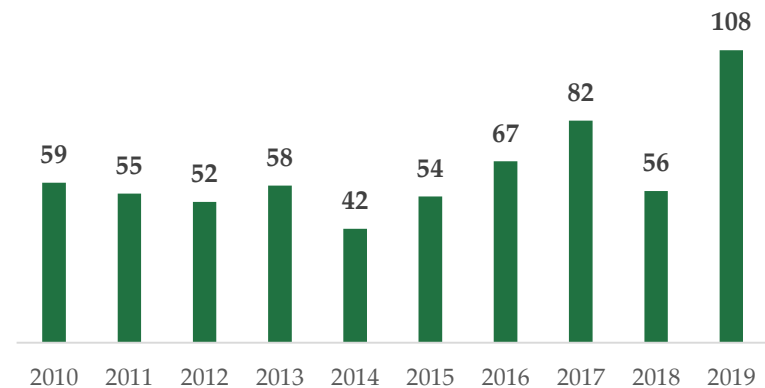
# Across the nation, many large cities have experienced an increase in homicides, including Charlotte in 2019

- Nationally, homicide is the 16th leading cause of death among U.S. adults and the **second leading cause for youth ages 10 to 24**
- Despite a **continued long-term decline in Charlotte's homicide** and violent crime rate since the 1990s, the number of **reported homicides in Charlotte spiked in 2019**
- Charlotte's incidence of **violent crime overall has remained relatively flat** over the last several years

Homicide Rate in Charlotte, 1985 to 2019



Homicides in Charlotte, 2010 to 2019



# In Charlotte, Homicide Victims were most often Male, Young Adults or Persons of Color

## By Gender

Nearly 3 out of 5 Victims killed were Male

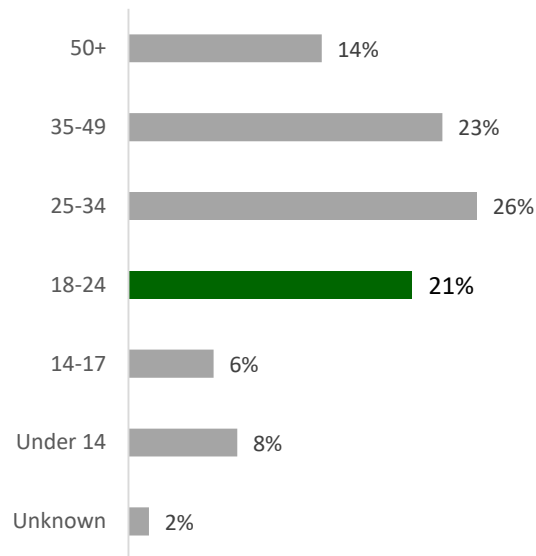
## By Circumstance

Over 25% of Homicide Incidents resulted from an Argument

Nearly 20% of Homicide Incidents were Domestic Violence-Related

## By Age

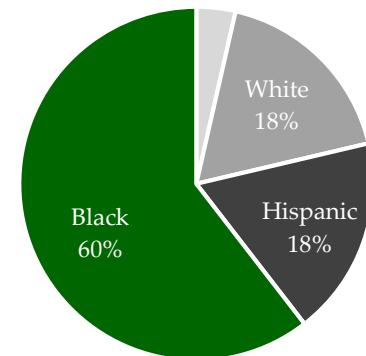
**Persons 18-24 comprise 21% of homicide victims**, despite being just 10% of the population



## By Race/Ethnicity

**3 out of 5 Victims killed were Black / African American**

Nearly 1 in 5 Victims killed were Hispanic / Latino



Source: CMPD Crime Analysis, 2017 to 2019 (as of 10/31/19)



# Data on homicide perpetrators is more limited, but clear patterns emerge

## By Gender

9 out of 10 homicide perpetrators were Male

## By Age

**Persons 18-24 comprise 41% of homicide perpetrators**, despite being **just 10%** of the population

## By Race/Ethnicity

Nearly 85% of perpetrators were Black / African American

## By Relationship

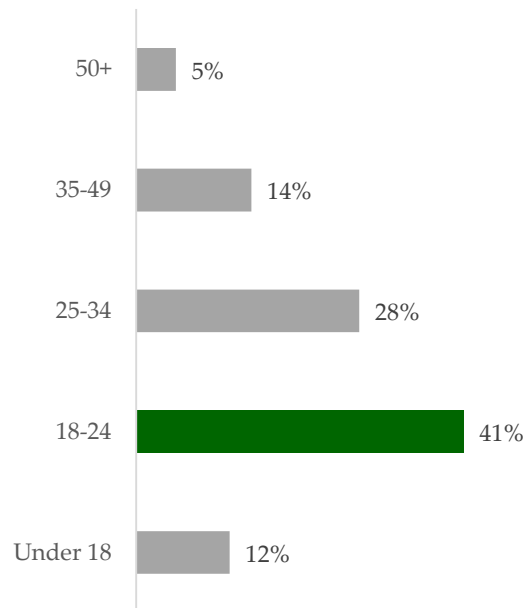
Most often, the homicide perpetrator was known to the victim

Only 1 in 10 homicide victims were killed by a stranger

## By Prior Circumstance

Over 26% of homicide perpetrators had prior local felony convictions

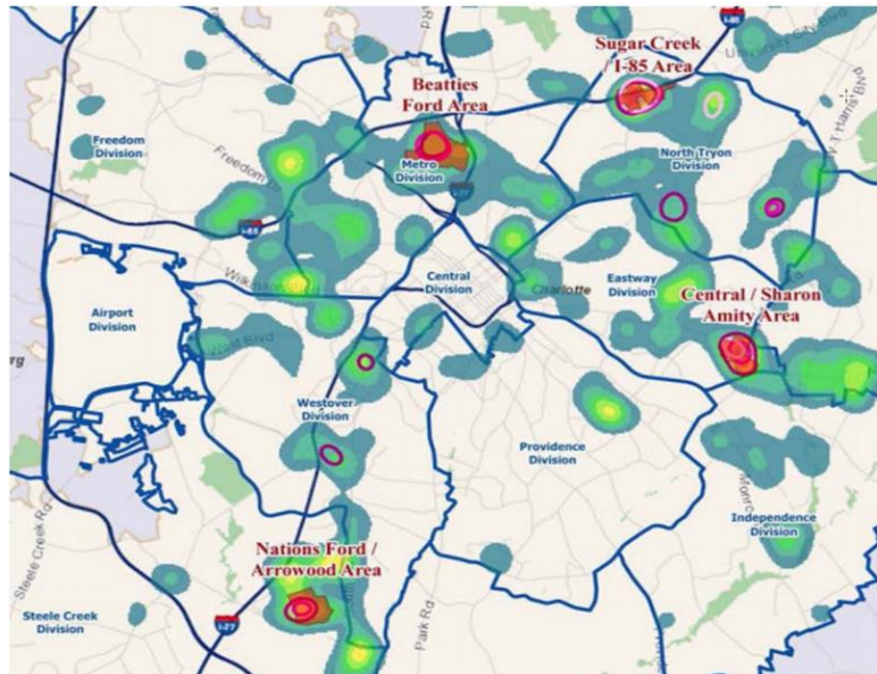
Nearly 41% had prior local felony charges



Source: CMPD Crime Analysis, 2016 to 2018

While all residents are impacted by the toll of violence in our community, some geographic areas face greater exposure and risk

- **Four priority areas have been identified** as durable hotspots of violent criminal incidents
- Overall, these **four areas comprise fewer than two square miles** of the CMPD jurisdiction and **account for approximately 8 percent of violent crime incidents**

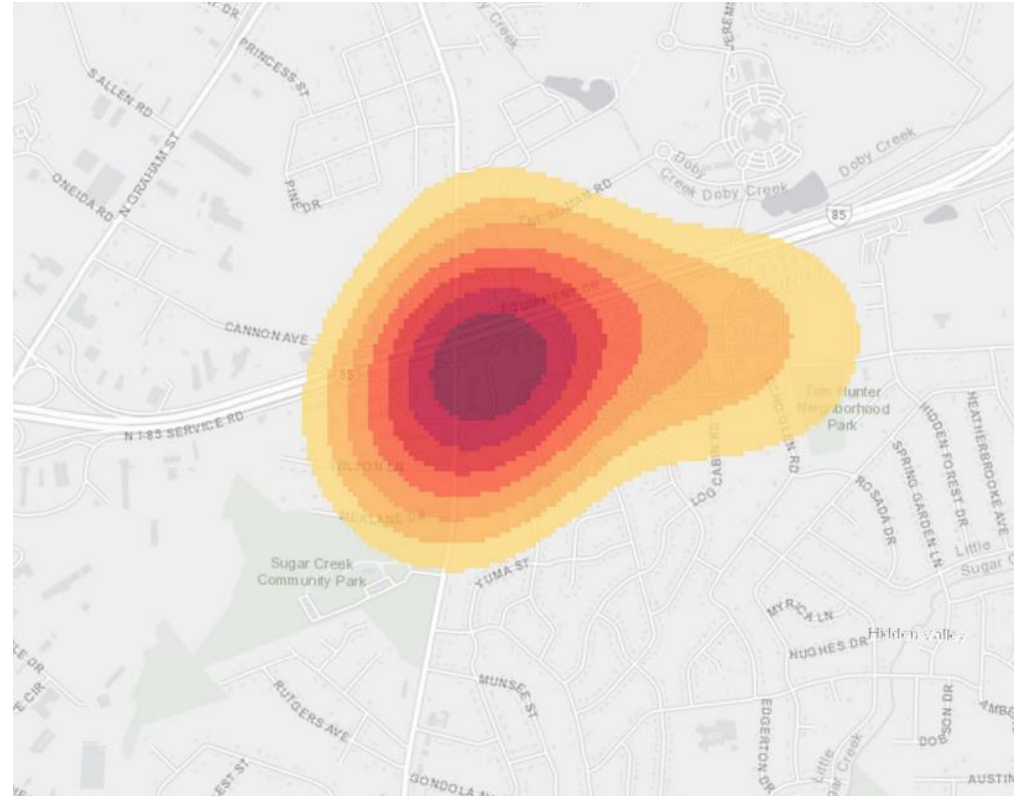




# PRIORITY AREA – I85/SUGAR CREEK

## Current conditions:

- Concentration of 13 low-budget, cash-only motels
- Lack of accountability for managers/ business owners
- Illegal drug activity (accessibility to interstate)
- Prostitution
- Large population of families and students experiencing housing instability
- Significant policing activity, including federal agents and state injunction

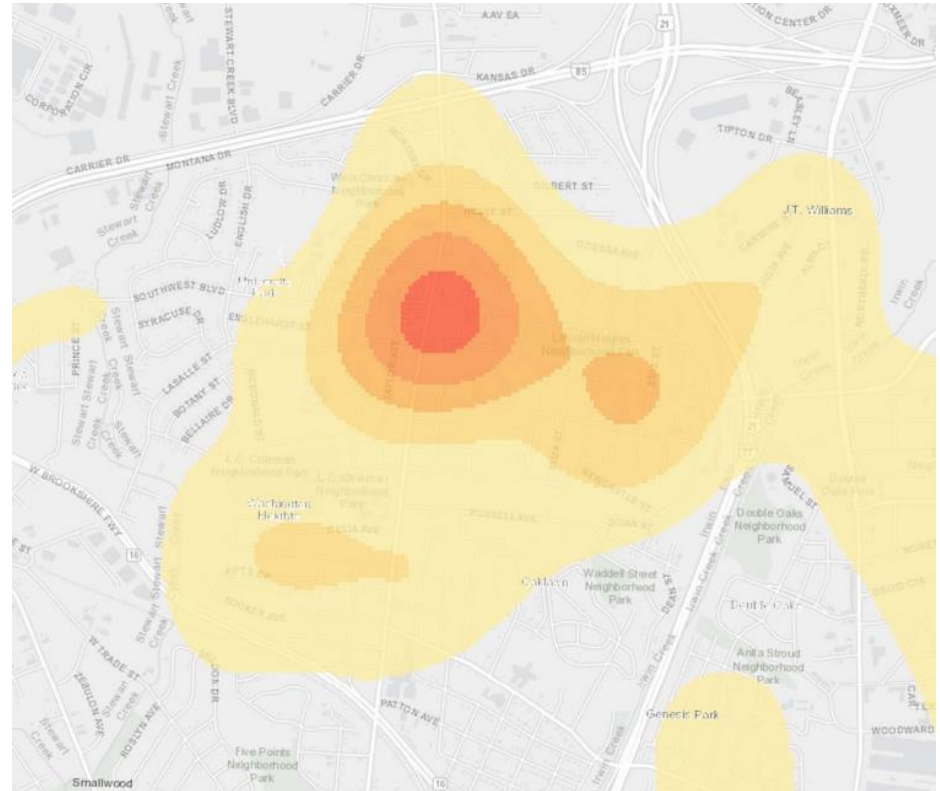




# PRIORITY AREA - BEATTIES FORD/LASALLE

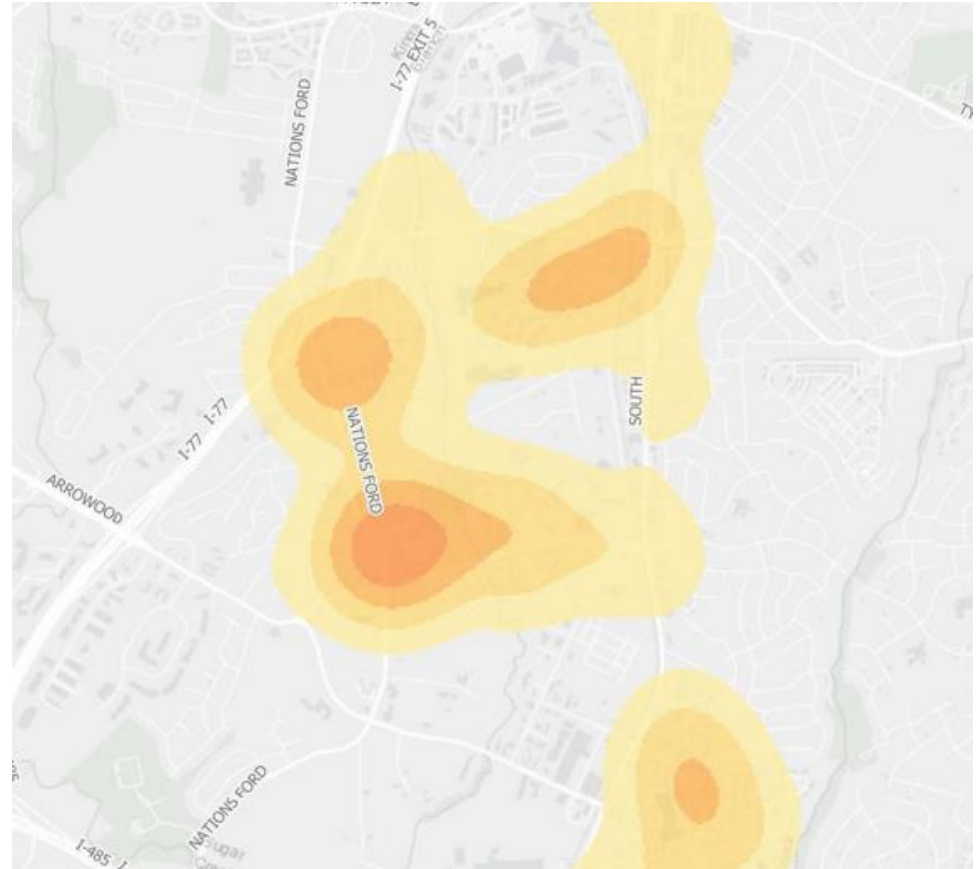
## Current conditions :

- Illegal drug activity
- Homeless population
- Some property owners less responsible with property upkeep
- Concentration of check-cashing, convenience stores – lack of retail
- Code issues
- Increased community investments impacting area



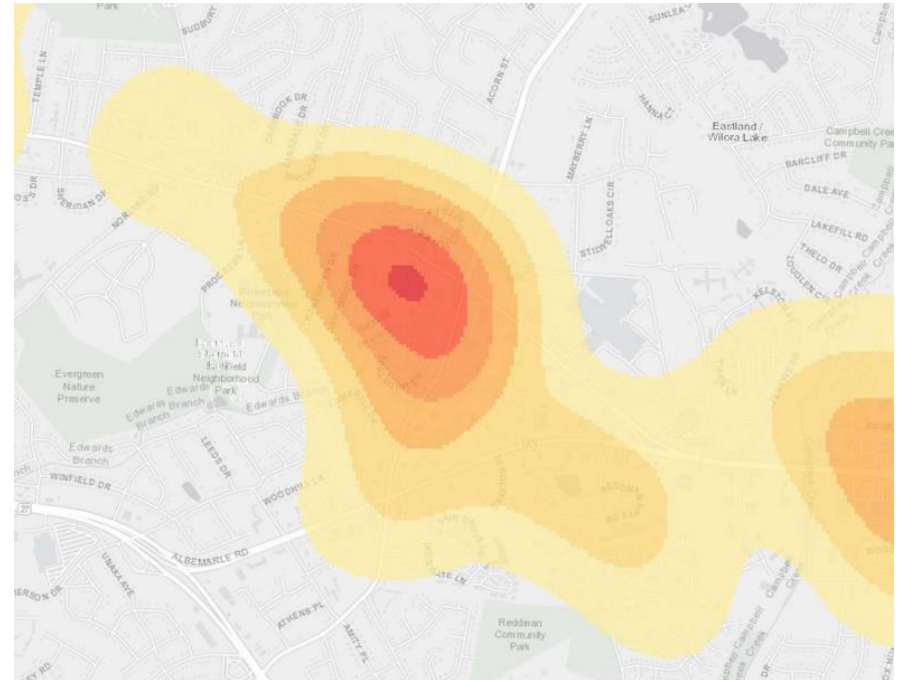
## Current conditions:

- Concentration of multi-family
- Predominantly armed robberies of Hispanic victims
- Communication/ education of “easy victim” – carrying cash, congregating in parking lots
- Rapid residential turnover
- Offenders coming from other areas – typically young, 16-18
- Not reporting crime
- Incident numbers increase as reporting increases



## Current conditions:

- Concentration of multi-family
- Predominantly armed robberies
- Diverse populations
- Communication barriers
- Rapid residential turnover
- Entry point for refugees
- Cultural mistrust of institutions



Using quality of life data, analysis of the statistical areas shows the following characteristics correlate to violent crime:

- Employment
- Poverty
- Housing Code Violations
- Single Family Rental Houses
- Education Level
- Disorder-Related Calls
- 311 Service Requests

These correlates point to opportunities for broad collaboration to address systemic issues and root causes – across city departments, partner agencies, and with residents and community-based organizations

# EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS & EXAMPLE CITIES RESEARCH





# MULTI-LEVEL RISK FACTORS FOR VIOLENCE PERPETRATION

## COMMUNITY

- Concentrated poverty
- Diminished economic opportunities
- High residential mobility
- High level of family disruption
- Socially disorganized neighborhoods

## INDIVIDUAL

- History of violent victimization
- History of early aggressive behavior / high emotional distress
- Involvement with drugs or alcohol
- Exposure to violence and conflict in the family



## SOCIETAL

- Rapid social change
- Gender, social, racial, and economic inequalities
- Poverty
- Weak economic safety nets
- Cultural norms that support violence

## RELATIONSHIP

- Parental substance abuse or criminality
- Authoritarian parenting practices
- Association with violent / delinquent peers
- Low socioeconomic status of household

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory model. Adapted from World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



# EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS FOR VIOLENCE REDUCTION

charlottenc.gov

Category	Programs	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Local Examples
Youth Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early childhood/home visitation</li> <li>• Mentoring programs: delinquency</li> <li>• School-based violence &amp; bullying prevention programs</li> <li>• Extracurricular activities for social engagement</li> <li>• Summer youth employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurse-Family Partnership</li> <li>• Early Head Start</li> </ul>
Justice-Involved Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multisystemic Therapy for juvenile offenders</li> <li>• Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) for offenders</li> <li>• Functional Family Therapy</li> <li>• Restorative Justice</li> <li>• Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care</li> <li>• Drug Courts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple practices in use within programs primarily administered by Mecklenburg County, Sherriff’s Office</li> </ul>
Policing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hot spot policing</li> <li>• Focused deterrence strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime analytics</li> <li>• Priority offenders team</li> </ul>
Planning & Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol outlet density restrictions</li> <li>• Firearm access laws</li> </ul>	X Some regulation, state preemption
Health Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violence interruption programs</li> </ul>	X Potential gap

What Works for Health Tool Evidence Ratings, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Accessed 10/18/19 at [https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health/policies?search\\_api\\_views\\_fulltext=violence&items\\_per\\_page=10&f%5B0%5D=field\\_program\\_evidence\\_rating%3A1](https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health/policies?search_api_views_fulltext=violence&items_per_page=10&f%5B0%5D=field_program_evidence_rating%3A1).  
 Scientifically Supported or Some Evidence

- **Broad, collaborative partnerships** plus a Lead Agency (typically not a law enforcement agency) with intentional management structure
- **Community voice and agency** in both the planning process and implementation of violence reduction strategies
- **Informed by data and evidence**, includes monitoring and evaluation
- **Youth engagement**
- **Neighborhood problem-solving**
- Building **strong police-community relations**
- Focus on **systemic issues** and root causes
- Implementation of **public health violence interruption** program:
  - Focus on most at-risk populations and neighborhoods
  - Employment of violence interrupters
  - Provision of wrap-around social services
- **Community will** to invest in evidence and sustain efforts over the long term



# CITY OF CHARLOTTE PROGRAMS/STRATEGIES

	Program / Strategy	Best Practice	Evidence-Based
Direct	Hot Spot Policing	Yes	Yes
	Focused Deterrence	Yes	Yes
	Youth Diversion Program	Yes	Yes*
	Youth Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Envision Academy</li> <li>REACH Academy</li> <li>Right Moves for Youth</li> </ul>	Yes	
	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design	Yes	
Indirect	Youth Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayor’s Youth Employment Program</li> <li>Charlotte Out-of-School Time Funding</li> </ul>	Yes	
	Nuisance Abatement	Yes	
	Employment Programs	Yes	
	Housing Programs	Yes	
	JumpStart Safety Micro-Grants**	Yes	

Note: Programs that are evidence-based undergo additional levels of academic scrutiny and evaluation; best practices are generally accepted, standardized methods or programs that have proven successful over time.

\*Based on local program evaluation

\*\* JumpStart Safety Micro-Grants are community-led which is an evidence based strategy to building community capacity, but the program itself has not undergone rigorous evaluation

MOVING FORWARD



- ✓ The City of Charlotte currently employs several evidence-based violence reduction strategies
- ✓ Program and example city research suggests there is room to explore additional evidence-based approaches that could have impact
- ✓ Collaboration and information sharing among departments and governments will be necessary to address violence as a public health issue
- ✓ Policing is a critical component, but is only one piece of addressing violence
- ✓ This expanded conversation is a step towards broadening the discussion and being more strategic and intentional

**Future steps will require a comprehensive, collaborative, data-driven approach to ensure sustainability**

**City, County, Partners and Community work together** to reduce violence, increase economic opportunity, and build healthier, more resilient communities

Community  
Collaborative  
Approach in  
Priority Areas

Implement  
Violence  
Interruption  
Program

Invest in  
Community –  
Led Efforts

Use Data &  
Evidence

Expected Outcomes:

Violence Reduction, Healthier Neighborhoods, Increased Access and Awareness of Youth and Family Programs and Services, Increased Community Capacity

# DISCUSSION