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DEPARTMENT OF  
POLICE

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March 2, 1998

City Council  
Sacramento, California 95814

Honorable Members in Session:

**SUBJECT: REPORT BACK REGARDING ALTERNATIVES TO COMBATING  
GUN VIOLENCE**

**LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT:** City-wide.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This report provides information on alternatives to combating gun violence and requests City Council direction that could be implemented in Sacramento.

**CONTACT PERSON(S):** Lieutenant Mark Sakauye, Economic Development, 264-7327  
Tammy Jones, Economic Development, 264-7707

**FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF:** March 10, 1998

**SUMMARY:**

As part of adoption of the ordinance to ban the sale of Saturday Night Specials, adopted on December 16, 1997, City Council requested a report back on alternatives to combat gun violence. This provides information on efforts to combat violence in Sacramento, efforts undertaken by other cities, and additional alternatives that could be implemented in Sacramento.

## **BACKGROUND:**

In response to City Council's request for information on combating gun violence, staff contacted a number of other cities to identify successful strategies and researched specific programs identified by Council, such as the Kansas City Experiment and the city of Boston's program.

Gun violence is an extremely complex issue that occurs in a wide variety of circumstances such as domestic violence, gang activity, and accidental shootings. The research for this report revealed that other cities, like Sacramento, have found that a multifaceted approach is most effective in combating gun violence. No single solution is effective in addressing this issue. Staff research also revealed that the community oriented policing philosophy is the most widely used method in combating gun violence.

### Summary of City of Sacramento Police Department Efforts

As with other cities, the Sacramento Police Department has used or plans to use many approaches to address gun violence such as:

#### Operational

- Community Oriented Policing (COP) is a strategy that promotes pro-active problem-solving and police-community partnerships to address the causes of crime and fear and other community issues.
- Advancing Community Oriented Policing (COP) grant will better utilize patrol resources by improving the coordination of patrol assignments and deployment strategies among NPOs, patrol officers, and supervisors. This will also provide patrol officers with more opportunities to work on NPO projects.
- The recently awarded Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) Technology Grant will enable the Sacramento Police Department to update its records system. This will save time and provide officers more opportunities for Community Oriented Policing and Problem Oriented Policing.
- Firearms Abatement and Suppression Team (FAST) Pilot Program, modeled after the Kansas City Gun Program where a specific geographical area was identified. Officers spent 90 overtime hours targeting the Mack Road/Meadowview area for firearms violations. This effort resulted in 124 arrests and 119 firearm confiscations over a 6 week period. Officers received training in weapons law and in identifying behaviors for reasonable cause for a search. Approximately 45 officers and detectives attended the four-hour training presented by the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office. An estimated \$3,450 was spent on overtime.
- Participation in the UC Davis Gun Confiscation Study, published October 1997.
- Specialized truancy and curfew enforcement.
- Gun exchange program (Kings tickets for guns).

- Constantly exploring grant options for additional staffing, advanced technology, and public education.

#### Legislative

- The passage of a "Saturday Night Special" ordinance prohibits the selling of certain types of guns which are frequently used in criminal activity due to their inexpensive cost, compact size, and easy concealment. In addition, these guns are inferior in manufacture quality, easy to operate, and lack sufficient safety devices.

#### Multi-agency

- Membership on the Firearm Injury Surveillance Program (FISP) Advisory Committee, a State of California, Department of Health Services committee whose purpose is to aid in the prevention of firearm injuries.
- Project SAVE (Safe Alternatives and Violence Education), a six-hour juvenile offender program that addresses the issues of weapons and violence.
- The Police Department recently submitted an application for a Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) grant through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF). Four NPOs would be trained to provide seventh and eighth grade children with alternatives to gang violence if the grant is awarded. This program has proven to be successful in 1,100 communities nationwide.

#### Status of Model Programs in Other Cities

Programs in Kansas City and Boston have been successful in combating gun violence and are modeled in other cities. Many programs in both Kansas City and Boston require considerable resources. As previously mentioned, the Sacramento Police Department successfully modeled a pilot program after Kansas City's FAST Program.

#### Additional Alternatives

In conducting the research for this report, staff strived to identify gun violence strategies that are successful in other cities that could be applied in Sacramento. In addition, many technological advances have occurred in law enforcement and crime prevention. Some new alternatives that the City Council could consider are:

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Operational

- Constantly maintain officer staffing levels at full capacity.
- Activate a unit consisting of full time police officers to target gun violence specifically. (Boston, Baltimore, Richmond, California)
- Impose a department wide "zero tolerance" policy directed at decreasing gun violence. (Boston)
- Institute a program to debrief suspects who are arrested with guns to help track the source of crime guns. (Boston)
- Implement a computerized crime mapping and analysis system that will aid in the geographic analysis of reported crimes and crime patterns as they occur. (Chicago, Baltimore, Indianapolis)
- Purchase the ShotSpotter System which pinpoints gunshots through sound waves. The sound waves reach microphones concealed on various rooftops and telephone poles connected to the police dispatch center. It determines the source of the gunshot and pinpoints the location on a grid of the city. (Redwood City)
- Sponsor a "Youth Alive" program that offers counseling to crime victims while in the hospital. (Oakland)
- Sponsor a program that teaches students the medical and legal consequences of using guns. (Seattle & Washington, D.C.)
- Organize a violence prevention yellow pages that catalogues area services for violence prevention programs ranging from male-aggression discussion groups to tattoo-removal programs. (Chicago)
- Ensure compliance by all gun dealers with local, state and federal regulations. (Bay Area Consortium)

Legislative

- Create an ordinance to require trigger locks and/or lock boxes be sold with all handguns. (Bay Area Consortium)
- Create an ordinance to require safety training for first-time gun buyers. (Bay Area Consortium)
- Create an ordinance to require all licensed gun dealers to operate out of a storefront. (Oakland, Contra Costa County)
- Create an ordinance that eliminates gun shows in the city. (San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties)
- Create an ordinance to require identification and/or background checks for all ammunition purchases. (Los Angeles is considering)
- Create an ordinance making it illegal for an individual to purchase multiple handguns during a specified time period. (South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland)

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Multi-Agency

- Form a partnership between the department and probation to conduct probation searches. (Boston)
- Organize an early intervention peer court where teens try first-time juvenile offenders of nonviolent crimes. (Boston)
- Initiate a curfew program where parents give the police permission to pick up and bring their children home when the children violate curfew. (Charleston, SC)
- Create a gun stoppers program that provides a \$100 reward, through donations, to citizens identifying people carrying guns illegally. (Charleston, SC)
- Station an officer at every high school during school hours and at school activities. (Phoenix)

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

This report has no fiscal impact. Based on direction from City Council, staff will evaluate any costs associated with implementing new gun violence strategies.

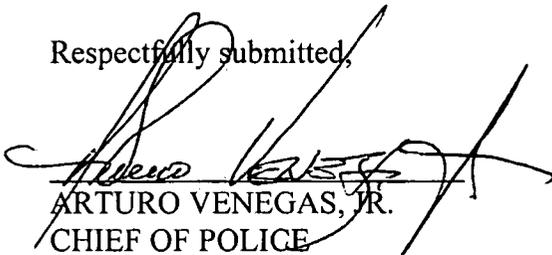
**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:**

The information in this report is provided at City Council's request. Additional alternatives have been identified that could be implemented without additional resources. A more focused or intensive program to combat gun violence would require additional general fund resources.

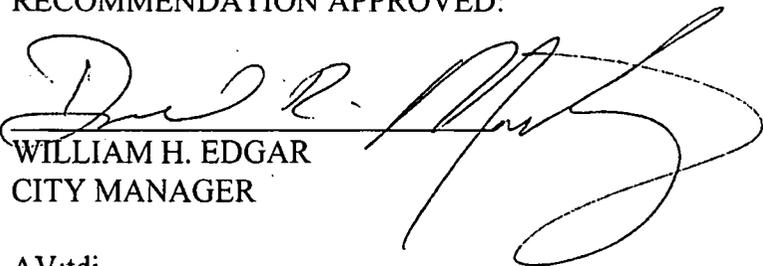
**MBE/WBE**

Not applicable.

Respectfully submitted,

  
ARTURO VENEGAS, JR.  
CHIEF OF POLICE

**RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:**

  
WILLIAM H. EDGAR  
CITY MANAGER

AV:tdj  
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