



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 4C
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**Request for Petworth and Columbia Heights Violence Interrupters
and additional violence prevention program funding**

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March 11, 2020

Councilmember Todd
Councilmember Bonds
Councilmember Grosso
Councilmember Silverman
Councilmember R. White

The ANC 4C Commission, at a duly noticed public meeting, with a quorum of 7 Commissioners present at its March 11, 2020, meeting, voted, with 7 Yeas, 0 Nays, and 0 Abstentions to request that the District allocate emergency funding to establish a violence interruption team in Petworth and the appropriate funding for this initiative in the upcoming fiscal year.

In February 2020 the Petworth community experienced an extreme amount of gun violence in our neighborhoods. We recognize that gun violence is not unique to us and we share the trauma of our neighbors across the District who live through this daily. We believe there is an opportunity to use these crimes, the loss of lives of our neighbors, and the community outrage to make real investments in public health based approaches that have proven track records of reducing or eliminating this epidemic. We are asking Councilmember Todd to introduce the recommendations below and for our At-Large Councilmember's support for that legislation and budgetary needs.

The community recognizes that our Metropolitan Police Department officers in PSAs 404 and 407 have been tremendous resources in keeping many of us safe from gun violence and routinely removing illegal guns off of our streets. The community also recognizes that systemic issues often lead to gun violence and can't be addressed solely through policing and arrests. We believe that our communities need additional resources to supplement the work of our police. These programs should aim to address the issues that lead to gun violence and work to prevent them. Our current model is reactionary policing after gun violence and this puts unrealistic pressure on MPD to solve these public health issues. We are requesting emergency funding for the Office of the Attorney General to establish a new cohort of their CURE the Streets team to be based in Petworth. Additionally we are calling for more fiscal year funding to be dedicated to supplemental programs.

We anticipate this costing approximately \$600,000.00 based on the FY2020 budget for OAG's six new sites. In February 2019 the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety held a round table on the progress of violence interruption programs and Chairperson Allen stated "If we can increase more sites and the number of violence interrupters it would make significant differences in neighborhoods across D.C." We believe this investment, a small fraction of the District's surplus, is indeed a smart investment that will make a significant difference in our community. It is also an economically smarter investment in the well being of our fellow neighbors compared to the cost families, communities, and the District incur in senseless deaths connected to gun violence. We need a multi-pronged solution to gun violence and this tool has yielded tremendous results in other communities and needs to be expanded across the District. We also are encouraged by Councilmember Robert White's budget requests to increase recurring funding for Cure the Streets by \$7.5 million.

We are asking for an OAG based CURE the Streets team as a means to study their efficacy side by side with the ONSE violence interrupter team currently operating in the Kennedy St corridor of Ward 4. Having both of these teams operating in adjoining neighbors will allow us to view them in similar environments and measure their impacts.

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In May 2019 ANC 1A called on the DC Council to provide a CURE the Streets team in Columbia Heights.² ANC 1A is our immediate neighbor to the south in Ward 1 and we fully support a new team whose territory can cross Ward, PSA, and neighborhood boundaries between our communities so that we collectively can address these issues that are not bound by boundaries on a map. Our success and well-being depends on our neighbors' success in 1A.

In January 2018, ANC 4C passed a resolution calling for the full funding of numerous initiatives under the NEAR Act.³ Many of those programs went unfunded or underfunded leading to where we are today with continued gun violence in our community and calls for investments in programming that can address it. These requests below are a continuation of that call that we thoroughly invest in programs that address the public health crisis of gun violence the District faces.

The ANC is additionally asking for more funding in the upcoming budget for the following programs to provide numerous touch points in our communities to try to end the epidemic of gun violence:

- Expand the DPR and ONSE Roving Leaders programs and return funding to 2017 levels prior to budget decreases in 2018 and 2019. This is an additional cost of approximately \$215,000 for the program in our community. Currently Petworth only has two Roving Leaders serving Petworth, Riggs Lasalle, Raymond, Parkview, and Emery recreation centers.² The mission of the DPR Roving Leaders Program is to prevent, neutralize, and control hostile behavior in youth and youth groups through the development of positive relationships between teens/youth and outreach workers. Roving Leaders utilize recreation and leisure time activities as the intervening vehicles for redirecting antisocial and aggressive behaviors.³
- Increase funding for mental health and substance abuse outreach teams operating in our community so that MPD doesn't have to try to address these public health issues via arrests. We are calling for professional teams to work alongside of MPD rather than to have MPD tasked with performing this duty.
- Increase Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants funding for trauma response teams in hospitals that provide counseling and support to end retaliation shootings. Victim Services program supports place-based trauma and community outreach services, physical offices in key neighborhoods where people can get clinical trauma-informed mental health support, and training for community leaders in trauma-informed action. These trauma services help end the cycle of gun violence by providing health care outreach and support where retaliation may be one of the only known options. ANC 4C cannot make a specific budget increase recommendation here but believes increased investments here will lead to significantly improved outcomes for our communities.
- Dramatically increase after school and weekend programming, rec center staff/coaches, and arts programs. The the Kennedy St Violence Interrupter team, under the Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, has requested increased spending in these areas in past conversations with ANC 4C Commissioners. They believe this is the best investment in our community to help provide opportunities for youth to avoid drugs and gun violence.
- Provide dedicated staffing resources for the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety's community wrap around services currently being piloted to engage communities impacted by gun violence. This group was one of the first on the ground after the September 2019 shootings at 4th and Taylor Streets NW. However they lacked dedicated resources and were operating as a proof of concept response team.
- Increase funding for jobs training programs in Ward 4 to better address education and employment inequities that lead to drug and gun violence.

We note that many of the areas where our community sees the need for additional prevention funding parallel many of Councilmember Robert White's violence prevention funding requests in his March 6, 2020 request to Mayor Bowser. We strongly support the Councilmember's recommendations and encourage our DC Councilmembers to ensure all the areas of need he has identified are fully funded in this year's budget.

The Commission also voted with 7 Yeas, 0 Nays, and 0 Abstentions to appoint the Commissioners for Single Member District 4C07 and 4C10, or any member of the Executive Committee in their absence, to be authorized to communicate this resolution and represent ANC 4C before the DC Council related to this matter.

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Charlotte Nugent

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1. <https://www.afro.com/d-c-council-works-to-curb-growing-gun-violence-in-district/>
2. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uIHk-1QZaSXF6drCffgkgfG1qBpkmBM8/view?usp=sharing>
3. <https://dpr.dc.gov/service/dpr-roving-leaders>
4. https://docs.google.com/document/d/10oTSc4wuhq9AfRxcOT6F8Cpd4HBGO_dx6YVGE1smi84/edit?usp=sharing
5. https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/ha_dpr_chapter_2019m_0.pdf

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