



Gang Violence in Kern County: A Strategic Plan

**JOINT CITY / COUNTY STANDING COMMITTEE
TO COMBAT GANG VIOLENCE**

MARCH 19, 2007

Kern County Board of Supervisors:

Michael Rubio, Supervisor – Co-Chair
Ray Watson, Supervisor

Bakersfield City Council:

Irma Carson, Councilmember – Co-Chair
Jacquie Sullivan, Councilmember
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OUR MISSION

**To reduce the level, magnitude and frequency
of gang violence within the County of Kern
and the 11 incorporated cities
within the county.**

STRATEGIC PLAN CONTRIBUTORS

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INTRODUCTION

The gang violence problem in our community has reached epidemic levels. Both the City of Bakersfield and the County of Kern are experiencing a tremendous spike in



the number of crimes and homicides attributed to gangs in those jurisdictions. In the City, 47% of homicides committed in 2005 were caused by gang members, 58% of homicides in 2006 were gang-related and an astonishing 100% of homicides in 2007 (as of February 27, 2007) have a direct link to gang activity. In the County, the trend is equally disturbing.

Approximately 30% of the total homicides committed in 2005 and 2006 were gang-related, while a shocking 86% of homicides thus far in 2007 (again, as of February 27, 2007) have been related to gangs. Simply put, the vast majority of homicides committed now in both the City and County are gang-related.

Isolated efforts to combat the rising tide of gang violence in our community have had variable results. Even more unsettling is the fact that there has never been a genuinely concerted effort by the City and County—across the Prevention, Intervention and Suppression realms—to develop a comprehensive, unified plan of attack. In order to regain control of our community and continue to ensure a safe and thriving environment for our children, our priorities must be the same.

This process has now begun. For example, one recommendation you will find in this report is to enhance the Gang Unit within the Kern County Sheriff's Department. The County must establish a force that is comparable in size and scope to the one that the Bakersfield Police Department already fields within its jurisdiction. Only with similarly situated Gang Units will both the Sheriff's Department and the Police Department finally be able to work in tandem and not with such a considerable difference in resources.

Studies have consistently shown that there is no single cause for youth gang membership. A multi-pronged and multi-faceted approach is required to address the many risk factors that contribute to the likelihood of gang membership. As such, this Strategic Plan seeks to create a unified countywide approach that brings together private, community and government stakeholders—under the broader umbrella of prevention, intervention and suppression—to help implement a solution-based plan that will offer results.

Let our work begin...

OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To more effectively address the gang problem in Kern County, the Joint City / County Standing Committee to Combat Gang Violence was created by the County of Kern and the City of Bakersfield in Fall 2006. The primary purpose of the Standing Committee is to develop a straightforward plan of attack against the root causes of gang violence. It is also charged with developing a comprehensive countywide prevention, intervention and suppression approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County. Additionally, the Joint Standing Committee serves (1) as a unifying clearinghouse for information, (2) to gather intelligence in the field and (3) to develop and implement a comprehensive Strategic Plan to be presented to both the Kern County Board of Supervisors and the Bakersfield City Council during their biannual joint City / County meetings.

The three subcommittees—Prevention, Intervention and Suppression—were tasked by the Joint City / County Standing Committee to Combat Gang Violence with developing action-oriented objectives to confront the core issues associated with gang violence in Kern County. Under each objective, in the main body of this Strategic Plan, you will find individual action steps, target deadlines and individuals / organizations responsible for each goal. Below appears a synopsis of the particular objectives that this Strategic Plan seeks to address:

Prevention

- Build capacity and increase effectiveness of funded programs to prevent gang involvement and violence.
- Increase availability of academic enhancement and after school programs (including literacy, tutorial and mentoring opportunities) for youth in communities with high incidences of gang violence.
- Provide substance abuse treatment opportunities for at-risk youth.
- Increase mentoring services to youth and their families who are at risk of gang involvement and violence.

- Mobilize community members and groups to reduce gang activity and violence in communities.
- Provide skills enhancement and support for parents of at-risk youth.

Intervention

- Better leverage existing county “best practice” intervention programs.
- Build systems intervention capacity through enhanced collaboration with community- and faith-based organizations to ensure accountability of outcome based programs.
- Ensure that at-risk youth receive state-of-the-art prevention and intervention services designed to address the root causes of gang involvement.

Suppression

- Develop a process whereby local, state and federal agencies work together and share information to reduce criminal gang activity.
- Create a Target Gang Unit within the District Attorney’s Office.
- Expand Regional Gang Unit within the District Attorney’s Office.
- Ensure coordination between District Attorney’s Office and local agencies on preparing personnel as expert witnesses and the legal requirements of gang cases.
- Coordinate with local law enforcement agencies on further developing gang hotline, PSA campaigns and community involvement in suppressing gangs.
- Increase use of technology to assist in intelligence gathering and gang suppression.
- Suppress criminal activities in Kern County through continued monitoring and supervision of gang members on probation.
- Suppress criminal activities in Kern County through incarceration of gang members.

EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Though individual measures have been developed for each objective within Prevention, Intervention and Suppression, broader universal benchmarks must be established in order to gauge effectiveness of this Strategic Plan. In particular, over time, the following indicators must decrease in our community as increased elements of the Strategic Plan are approved and fully implemented:

- Number of Gang Members – Currently approximately 6,000 in Kern County
- Number of Gangs – Currently approximately 70 in Kern County
- Number of Gang-Related Crimes / Homicides

Below appear the most recent raw number statistics on actual gang-related and non gang-related homicides in Bakersfield and Kern County:

	Bakersfield	Kern County
2005 Total Homicides	32	30
2005 Gang-Related Homicides	15	9
2006 Total Homicides	24	33
2006 Gang-Related Homicides	14	10
2007 Total Homicides YTD	3	7
2007 Gang-Related Homicides YTD	3	6

Sources:

Bakersfield Police Department; Kern County Sheriff's Department

Only through deliberate attention to these benchmarks, coupled with an increased awareness of the root causes that cause gang violence, will Kern County ever begin to truly make an impact on the gang problem in our community.

JOINT CITY / COUNTY STANDING COMMITTEE TO COMBAT GANG VIOLENCE

On November 18, 2006, the Joint City / County Standing Committee to Combat Gang Violence hosted a half-day Special Meeting in the Board of Supervisors Chambers. At this meeting, the Standing Committee solicited input from all members of the community, particularly residents and anti-gang advocates that are on the front lines of the war against gangs. Full-group discussions, as well as break-out sessions, attempted to identify both existing gaps and resources that specifically address the gang problem in Kern County.

During the full group discussion, the Standing Committee sought to identify what the attendees perceived as the key root causes of gang violence (in descending order of priority):

- Family Instability / Improper Parenting
- Intergenerational Dynamics
- Hopelessness / Spiritual Disconnect / Moral Code Breakdown
- Poverty
- Lack of Education / Poor Experience with Education
- Need for Social Acceptance / Social Marginalization of Youth / Self-Identity
- Limited Positive Role Models / Media Images
- Lack of Effective or Engaging Community Programs
- Unemployment
- Prisons (“Gang Training Camps”)
- Overwhelmed and Ineffective Justice System
- Racism

Numerous community meetings have also been held throughout the county that have similarly echoed these root causes. These various meetings from all sectors of the community have resulted in tremendous input that is now embodied in this document. From the beginning, the entire community has been asked to participate via the media, as well as through churches, community groups, word of mouth and other formal and informal channels of communication. Many individuals were involved in this process and the Standing Committee looks forward to an ongoing dialogue with all interested groups in the community.

In order for this Strategic Plan to be a success, the community—as well as policymakers at both the County and City level—must embrace both the letter and spirit of this call to action. A wholesale balanced approach of the key elements within prevention, intervention and suppression is vital to truly make this Strategic Plan a “living document” that achieves the many milestones set forth in this document.

PREVENTION

Prevention

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide prevention approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: *Build capacity and increase effectiveness of funded programs to prevent gang involvement and violence.*

Measures: *Creation of administrative body; Implementation of at least one pilot project per social service County department; Department Head evaluations*

Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place responsibility of gang prevention services under the administration of a central administrative body (e.g. Kern County Network for Children or similar entity).—June 2007 	<p>Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct social service County departments to research and translate national best practices, resources and service delivery models for local implementation.—June 2007 	<p>County Administrative Office</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct social service County departments to develop holistic and innovative, outside-the-box strategies to directly address the gang plague in Kern County, including working with non-traditional community partners.—December 2007 	<p>County Administrative Office</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish process to reduce duplication of services across County departments.—June 2007 	<p>County Administrative Office</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster relationships and working partnerships between government agencies, the business community, education, community-based organizations / faith-based organizations, and neighborhood networks.—June 2007 	<p>Joint City / County Standing Committee to Combat Gang Violence</p>

Prevention

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide prevention approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: *Increase availability of academic enhancement and after school programs (including literacy, tutorial and mentoring opportunities) for youth in communities with high incidences of gang violence.*

Measures: *Once initiated, programs will serve 20% more students and families on an annual basis.*

Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funding for one to two countywide after school coordinators through the Kern County Superintendent of Schools to coordinate the early identification and referral of at-risk students and their families and manage academic skill enhancement activities in targeted communities, one focusing on metropolitan Bakersfield and another focusing on outlying areas.—<i>June 2007</i> 	<p>Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase capacity of school-based, faith-based and community-based after school programs to target children at risk of gang involvement by providing teaching resources, teaching personnel, as well as training and support for existing staff.—<i>December 2007</i> 	<p>Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage churches and other faith-based organizations to mobilize individuals to read to preschool children and be reading mentors for K-3 grade children in at-risk communities.—<i>December 2007</i> 	<p>Administrator of central administrative body (TBD)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate existing continuum of vocational and alternative education for at-risk youth and propose solutions.—<i>December 2007</i> 	<p>Kern County Superintendent of Schools</p>

Prevention

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide prevention approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: <i>Provide substance abuse treatment opportunities for at-risk youth.</i>	
Measures: <i>Creation of a youth substance abuse treatment program.</i>	
Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop community-based youth substance abuse treatment program through Kern County Mental Health.—<i>December 2007</i> • Expand relationships with business and community-based organizations / faith-based organizations that may partner with Kern County Mental Health to resolve youth substance abuse treatment issues.—<i>October 2007</i> 	<p>Kern County Mental Health</p> <p>Kern County Mental Health</p>

Prevention

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide prevention approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: <i>Increase mentoring services to youth and their families who are at risk of gang involvement and violence.</i>	
Measures: <i>By January 2009, there will be a 15% increase in mentoring services being provided to at-risk youth and their families.</i>	
Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand service potential of existing mentoring programs effectively targeting gang violence prevention.— <i>December 2007</i> • Identify and expand existing youth leadership development programs demonstrating efficacy working with at-risk youth and their families.—<i>December 2007</i> • Increase the capacity of community-based organizations / faith-based organizations to develop outcomes-based strategies and reporting on prevention efforts, including training and technical assistance.—<i>December 2007</i> 	<p>Community-based organizations / faith-based organizations (i.e. Stay Focused, Garden Pathways and Ebony Counseling Center)</p> <p>Community-based organizations / faith-based organizations (e.g. Stay Focused, Garden Pathways and Ebony Counseling Center)</p> <p>Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council</p>

Prevention

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide prevention approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: *Mobilize community members and groups to reduce gang activity and violence in communities.*

Measures: *Expansion of number of funded and non-funded field representatives; 20% increase in preventing community policing efforts in targeted communities; Local media outlets produce quarterly gang-focused segment; Implement quarterly community wide prayer gatherings; Initiate positive trend in job opportunities for at-risk youth.*

Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase mobilization capacity and effectiveness of field representatives (i.e. “foot soldiers”) already directly involved in local gang prevention activities.—<i>Ongoing</i> • Enhance preventive community policing efforts.—<i>December 2007</i> • Engage the support of media through forums and on-air and print dialogue.—<i>October 2007</i> • Support community wide gatherings for prayer through participation of leaders in the public sector.—<i>Ongoing</i> • Continue fostering job growth particularly focused on addressing the needs of at-risk youth and underserved communities.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	<p>Stay Focused</p> <p>Bakersfield Police Department / Kern County Sheriff’s Department</p> <p>Joint City / County Standing Committee to Combat Gang Violence</p> <p>Joint City / County Standing Committee to Combat Gang Violence</p> <p>Kern County Employer’s Training Resource</p>

Prevention

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide prevention approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: <i>Provide skills enhancement and support for parents of at-risk youth.</i>	
Measures: <i>Once granted supplemental funding, programs will serve 20% more parents of at-risk youth on an annual basis.</i>	
Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate funding to expand Parent Project for training of neighborhood stakeholders as an integral community-oriented component of expanding services to parents of at-risk youth.—<i>October 2007</i> • Foster small group networks for parents.—<i>December 2007</i> • Identify existing community assets that promote increased spiritual, emotional and mental personal wellbeing for parents of former and current gang members, such as mentoring.—<i>December 2007</i> • Refer parents of targeted youth for support services.—<i>December 2007</i> 	<p>Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council</p> <p>Community-based organizations / faith-based organizations; Kern County Department of Human Services Parent Leaders Program</p> <p>Social service County departments</p> <p>Community-based organizations / faith-based organizations; law enforcement; schools; family; peers; community members</p>

INTERVENTION

Intervention

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide intervention approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: <i>Better leverage existing county “best practice” intervention programs.</i>	
Measures: <i>20% increase in the number of “at risk” families and individuals served each year for a three year period.</i>	
Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize Geographical Information Systems (GIS) analysis to identify high density target areas, identify service providers, assess services gaps and overlap, and create a collaborative resource allocation plan.—July 2007 • Secure enhanced funding for the evidence-based “8% continuum” programs to be expanded throughout Kern County: Early Intervention Program (EIP) and Repeat Offender Prevention Program.—July 2007 • Secure adequate funding for Parent Project, an evidence-based education focused intervention program.—December 2007 • Secure adequate funding for evidence-based community intervention programs: Differential Response (DR), Multi-Integrated Services Team (MIST) and local Family Resource Centers.—July 2007 • Secure adequate funding for evidence-based programs targeting gang members who are currently in the custody of the Probation Department: LEAPS (Life Excelerator Assessment of Personnel Skills), Cognitive Behavior, Social Skills Training and Aggression Replacement Training.—July 2007 	<p>Kern County Probation Department / GIS Subcommittee</p> <p>Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council, Kern County Probation Department</p> <p>Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council</p> <p>Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council, Kern County Network for Children</p> <p>Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council, Probation Department, Mental Health Department</p>

Intervention

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide intervention approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: *Build systems intervention capacity through enhanced collaboration with community- and faith-based organizations to ensure accountability of outcome based programs.*

Measures: *20% increase in the number of community- and faith-based organizational gang intervention projects for a three year period.*

Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and place responsibility for coordinating community-based and faith-based gang intervention service expansion within a responsible, broad based, and historically effective organization. —March 2007 	Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate funding for domestic violence intervention strategies, including additional services to victims (e.g. Alliance Against Family Violence, court mandated training programs.)—October 2007 	Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase capacity for family involvement intervention strategies, including family mentoring, at risk leadership programs, and school outreach programs.—December 2007 	Kern County Network for Children, Probation Department, Kern County Superintendent of Schools,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop community-based youth substance abuse treatment program.—December 2007 	Kern County Mental Health Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide capacity building, outcome-based program development training for interested community partners.—December 2007 	Kern County Network for Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate Workforce Investment Act Youth Activities with gang intervention strategies to target employment and academic efforts for at-risk youth.—October 2007 	Employers’ Training Resource, Superintendent of Schools, Kern High School District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funding for innovative “promising practice” gang intervention programs.—December 2007 	Kern County Board of Supervisors / Bakersfield City Council

SUPPRESSION

Suppression

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide suppression approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: <i>Develop a process whereby local, state and federal agencies work together and share information to reduce criminal gang activity.</i>	
Measures: <i>Diminish duplication of efforts and establish greater working relationships between agencies to eliminate cross-jurisdictional gang activity</i>	
Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a regular forum for all law enforcement units dedicated to gang suppression to meet and exchange information.—July 2007 • Work with other agencies and increase periodic sweeps of identified gang members.—Ongoing • Establish a county-wide radio channel for interoperable communications dedicated to all local gang units.—December 2007 • Increase size and effectiveness of Kern County Sheriff’s Department Gang Unit—July 2007 • Augment utilization of the Gang Enforcement Team to assist in preparing and planning operations in outlying areas—March 2007 • Develop methods to disseminate gang related information received to all gang enforcement units countywide and to those agencies not having gang units.—July 2007 • Conduct regional interagency operations targeting communities with high levels of gang activity.—Ongoing • Coordinate with all law enforcement agencies to improve intelligence gathering and communication.—Ongoing 	<p>All local law enforcement agencies</p> <p>All local law enforcement agencies</p> <p>All local law enforcement agencies</p> <p>Kern County Sheriff’s Department</p> <p>Kern County Sheriff’s Department</p> <p>Kern County Sheriff’s Department</p> <p>Deputy Chief of Field Services Jeanie Lopez and all law enforcement agencies</p> <p>All local law enforcement agencies</p>

Suppression

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide suppression approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: *Create a Target Gang Unit within the District Attorney’s Office.*

Measures: *Decrease in most active known “shot callers” and gang leaders generating the most violent gang crime in Kern County*

Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish six (6) new deputy district attorney, one (1) gang crimes investigator and one secretary positions to staff a new unit to target the most active and violent gang members.—<i>August 2007</i> 	District Attorney Ed Jagels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish protocol to proactively identify and prosecute targeted gang members.—<i>July 2007</i> 	District Attorney Ed Jagels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with law enforcement agencies to conduct probation and parole searches on the targeted gang members.—<i>July 2007</i> 	District Attorney Ed Jagels, local law enforcement agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosecute all crimes committed by targeted gang members with emphasis on increased jail / incarceration time.—<i>August 2007</i> 	District Attorney Ed Jagels

Suppression

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide suppression approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: <i>Expand Regional Gang Unit within the District Attorney's Office.</i>	
Measures: <i>Decrease gang violence by focused regional approach; Increase filing of gang cases by 15%</i>	
Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish protocol with regional agencies and law enforcement for the investigation and submission of prosecution requests for gang related crimes.—<i>Ongoing</i> • Provide training to law enforcement in the regional areas and those dealing with juveniles in the requirements of gang cases and testifying as an expert witness.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	<p>District Attorney Ed Jagels</p> <p>District Attorney Ed Jagels</p>

Suppression

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide suppression approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: *Ensure coordination between District Attorney's Office and local agencies on preparing personnel as expert witnesses and the legal requirements of gang cases.*

Measures: *Increase law enforcement personnel trained as gang experts and increase legal knowledge of gang case requirements; Increase filing of gang cases by 15%.*

Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct training sessions with law enforcement on the legal requirements of gang prosecutions and testifying as a gang expert.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	District Attorney Ed Jagels and all local law enforcement agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on fully informing newly appointed gang deputies and gang officers with all legal requirements of gang prosecutions, including issues with investigations, questioning, report writing and testifying.—<i>July 2007</i> 	District Attorney Ed Jagels and all local law enforcement agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with regional substations and departments on their specific needs concerning the submission and prosecution requests for gang cases.—<i>July 2007</i> 	District Attorney Ed Jagels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with the District Attorney and other certified trainers to prepare probation staff to testify in court as expert witnesses.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	Deputy Chief of Field Services Jeanie Lopez and the District Attorney's Office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide gang training for sworn and detentions staff.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	Sheriff Donny Youngblood

Suppression

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide suppression approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: *Encourage local law enforcement agencies to further develop gang hotline, PSA campaigns and community involvement in suppressing gangs.*

Measures: *Increase public awareness and community cooperation in the prosecution of gang cases by increasing the number of witnesses assisting in prosecutions.*

Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue conducting regular forums with faith-based community to address the public’s relationship with law enforcement and concerns surrounding gang violence.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	District Attorney Ed Jagels and local law enforcement agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the community forum model to outlying regions of Kern County in an effort to educate and involve the public on gang violence, as well as finding proactive solutions.—<i>October 2007</i> 	District Attorney Ed Jagels and local law enforcement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and promote PSA campaigns to decrease gang violence.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	All law enforcement agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure proper implementation of protocol for the Communications Center to expeditiously transfer the information to the Special Enforcement Unit or the Officer in Charge.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	Chief Bill Rector / Bakersfield Police Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue public awareness campaign notifying the community of the Gang Activity Line.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	Chief Bill Rector / Bakersfield Police Department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a toll-free gang hotline into the Communications Center.—<i>July 2007</i> 	Kern County Sheriff Donny Youngblood; Chief Bill Rector

Suppression

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide suppression approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: <i>Increase use of technology to assist in intelligence gathering and gang suppression.</i>	
Measures: <i>Decrease in known gang “hangouts” coupled with an increase in technology to assist in the arrest and prosecution of gang members.</i>	
Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase surveillance efforts through the use of mobile camera technology to curb street narcotic sales, as well as assist in undercover operations in high crime areas and known areas of gang activity.—May 2007 • Develop a program by which all arrest information on known gang members is routed to the gang unit which will, in turn, notify the District Attorney’s Target Gang Unit of the arrest.—July 2007 • Work with the Kern County Probation Department and the California Department of Corrections to develop a GPS-based monitoring system of gang offenders released from custody.—July 2007 • Utilize existing and future technology such as GIS (Geographical Information Systems), GPS (Global Positioning Systems), etc. to monitor identified gang members and enforce Superior Court orders.—June 2008 	<p>Bakersfield Police Department</p> <p>Bakersfield Police Department</p> <p>Local law enforcement agencies, Probation Department and State Parole</p> <p>Probation Chief John Roberts, local law enforcement agencies</p>

Suppression

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide suppression approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: <i>Suppress criminal activities in Kern County through continued monitoring and supervision of gang members on probation.</i>	
Measures: <i>Decrease in criminal gang activity and gang violence in Kern County committed by probationers.</i>	
Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an Adult High Risk Offender Unit to monitor identified gang members and other high risk offenders to increase public protection.—June 2008 • Enhance the Gang Intervention and Suppression Team and Juvenile Aftercare Unit with additional staff.—June 2008 	<p>Deputy Chief of Field Services Jeanie Lopez</p> <p>Probation Chief John Roberts</p>

Suppression

Goal: *To develop a comprehensive countywide suppression approach to reduce criminal gang activity and violence in Kern County.*

Objective: *Suppress criminal activities in Kern County through incarceration of gang members.*

Measures: *Increase jail bed space to allow for dedicated beds.*

Action Steps	Individuals/Organizations Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill vacant positions.—<i>Ongoing</i> 	Sheriff Donny Youngblood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit 32+ jail beds for housing of criminal gang members.—<i>June 2008</i> 	Sheriff Donny Youngblood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase capacity for beds.—<i>June 2008</i> 	Sheriff Donny Youngblood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase size and effectiveness of detentions gang intelligence personnel.—<i>July 2007</i> 	Sheriff Donny Youngblood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop protocols for filling gang bed space.—<i>July 2007</i> 	Sheriff Donny Youngblood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the booking of gang members who have misdemeanor warrants.—<i>June 2008</i> 	Sheriff Donny Youngblood

BUDGETARY DISCUSSION

The commitments requested within this document will surely entail permanent annual budget funding earmarked specifically for the purpose of combating gang violence in Kern County. The eruption of gang violence in Kern County has not arisen overnight and, as such, will not be resolved instantaneously.

Simply put, the allocation of financial resources and a strong system of accountability by the County of Kern and City of Bakersfield are integral to the successful implementation of this Strategic Plan. Traditionally, suppression efforts in Kern County have received the lion's share of resources, relative to both prevention and intervention. The scope of our work will surely require equitable treatment of prevention and intervention efforts if we are to make a lasting and significant impact on the future of at-risk youth.

It is important to solicit continued grant opportunities from state and federal sources to this end. It is unrealistic for the County and City to wholly subsidize this endeavor, though they are the primary financial stakeholders that must set the example for business and other sectors to consequently follow suit.

Particular costs are not itemized by action item in this Strategic Plan. The workgroup members felt that it would be somewhat premature to attach specific dollar amounts to these action items before the entire Kern County Board of Supervisors and Bakersfield City Council had an opportunity to initially digest this information. At a later point, as these individual action items approach implementation, specific research can be requested to ensure that final dollar amounts are attached to these items.

CONCLUSION

We know that there are various obstacles that we, as a community, will need to contend with as the undercurrent of concern rises:

- Increasing numbers of gang-involved youth
- Increasing levels of serious crimes committed by young gang members
- Limited resources
- Disengaged families
- Lack of sufficient culturally and ethnically relevant dialogue

These difficulties are not true impediments but, rather, a manifestation of the significant need for direct and overt action today. The oftentimes blatant disregard for human life exhibited by younger and younger gang members speaks to this immediate need. Some community members have gone as far as calling youth gang members “street terrorists” since they disavow any sense of common decency and seek to terrorize our communities.

Community members suggested a wide range of possible solutions that we will continue to explore as this process develops. From including current and former gang members in these efforts to possibly creating a Kern County Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives modeled after its state and federal predecessors, we must continue to push the envelope and think “outside the box.” Maybe part of the solution is to develop non-financial and financial incentives for good students in high-risk communities. Or possibly working to expand access to after-school programs during non-traditional hours (e.g. early evenings, weekends.) These are all valid discussions that are worthy of further consideration. Only with thorough consideration by all stakeholders will these ideas ever come to fruition and possibly bear fruit benefiting our community at-large.

Over time, the Joint City / County Standing Committee to Combat Gang Violence will require continued direct self involvement in the implementation and evaluation of the action steps noted above. The Standing Committee will also commit to researching and evaluating “best practice” models that apply to our local conditions. Again, it is crucial that we find a

community-based organization that can help us execute this plan over the long-term. This group will, by design, need to function in a way that is proactive and not bogged down by traditional bureaucracy. There are many key players that lent their precious time in the last several months to see this Strategic Plan realized. They too will undoubtedly bring many insights to the table to ascertain what organization(s) may best lead the day-to-day charge in this important war against gangs.

Kern County needs an “All Hands on Deck” mentality now to directly fight gang violence!