

# **Gun Violence Reduction in Portland**

## **City Council Work Session 2/6/2020**





Gun Violence is a Public health issue, that individuals and communities can change for the better; that community partners and strategic partnerships are keys to success, and that rigorous, scientific, professional ways of working are essential for effectiveness.

# Gun violence in Portland

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**In 2020 so far...**

- **A reported shooting every 13 hours**
- **A person struck every 2 days**

# Gun violence in Portland <sup>4</sup>

**Who is most directly impacted?**

- **Adult men in their late 20's and 30's**
- **Homicides - 48% Caucasian, 38% African American**
- **Injury shootings - 51% African American, 39% Caucasian**

# Gun violence in Portland

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Who is most directly impacted?

- 5.7% of population
- 39% of those impacted by homicide
- 51% of those impacted by injury shootings

*There is no group more directly and disproportionately impacted by gun violence in Portland than African American men.*

# Financial costs (NICJR, 2019)



2019

22 gun homicides 88 injury shootings

# Gun violence in Portland

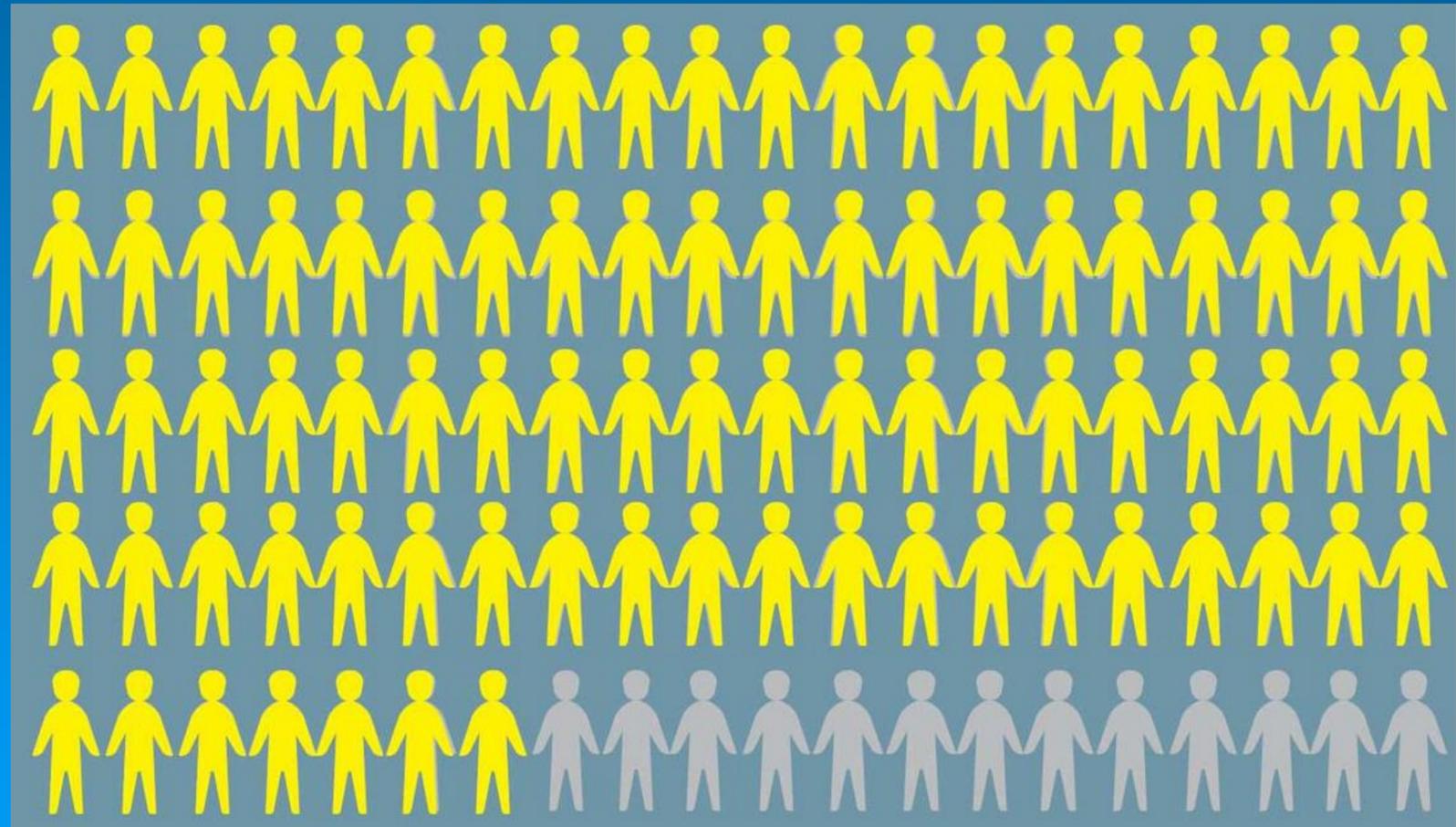
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**If you are harmed by a gun, you are much more likely to be harmed again or to harm others.** (Kerns, 2014)

**63% of people directly involved in gun violence were shot on average 125 days after the initial exposure.** (Papacristos, 2017)

# Gun violence in Portland

**“Gunshot violence follows an epidemic like process of social contagion that is transmitted through networks of people by social interactions.”  
(Papacristos, 2017)**



# Community Impact Cost

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“Community members in neighborhoods where rates of violence are highest, suffer from social impacts of trauma, toxic stress, and community tension.”

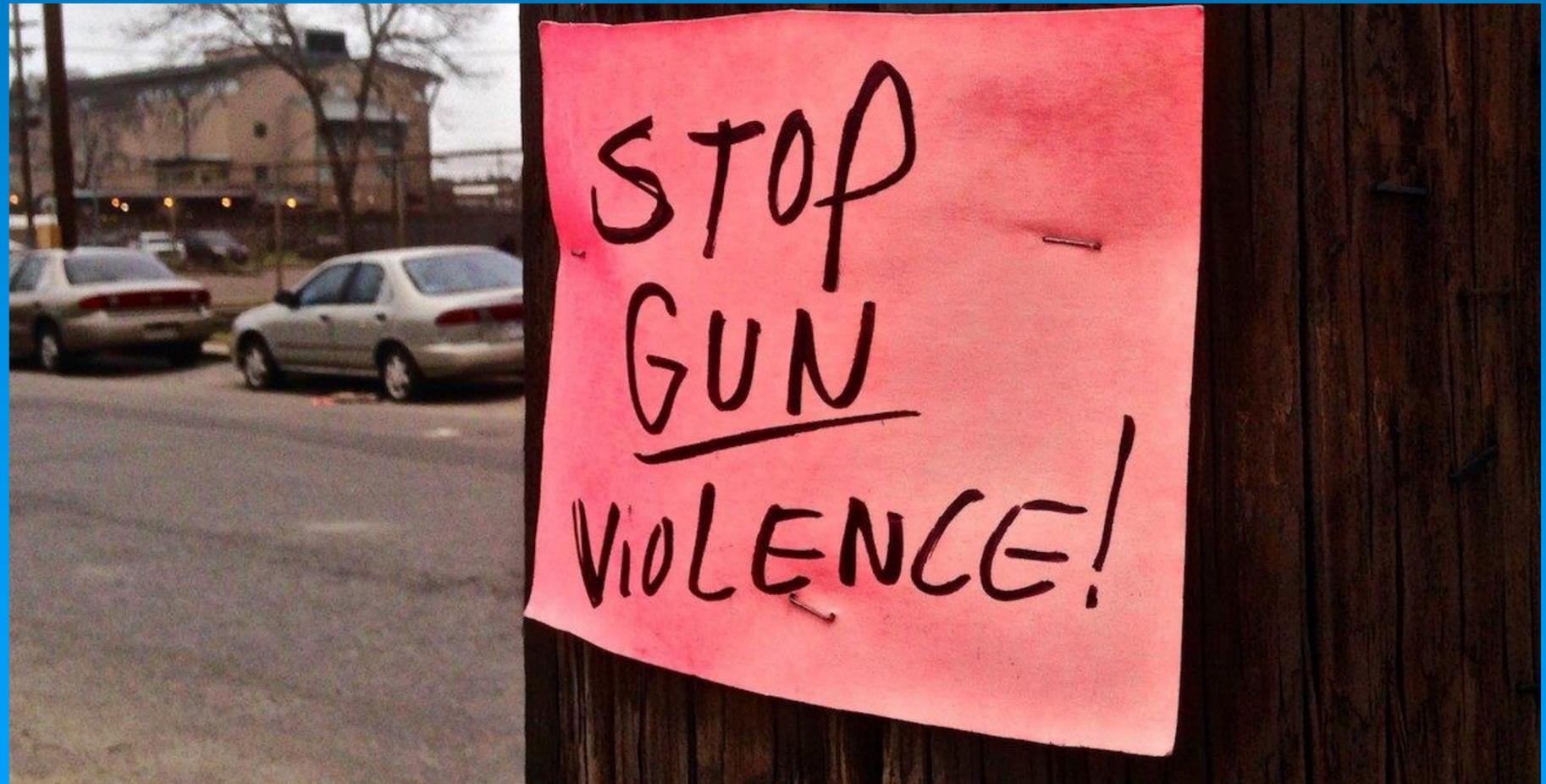




# GVRT

**A specialized unit focused on the investigation and disruption of violent crimes where firearms are used.**

- **Investigations**
- **Interventions**
- **Relationships**



# Lessons learned

**“Not to be overly dramatic, but if you lose the unit which focuses on removing firearms from the hands of violent offenders, people will die. It’s really just that simple...”**

**Chief Kelly McMillin (Ret.), Salinas PD**

# Lessons learned

**"The City of Stockton, in 2010, began disbanding and defunding proactive police units dedicated to gun violence. Unfortunately, this was followed by significant increases in gun violence, specifically record high years of homicides in 2011 (58 homicides) and 2012 (71 homicides). Once the City restored the proactive units focused on group-gun violence, as well as outreach workers and community efforts, Stockton experienced significant declines from those high years. Partnerships between community outreach and data-driven law enforcement are absolutely critical in addressing group-related gun violence."**

**Chief Eric Jones, Stockton PD**



**Office of Youth Violence Prevention**



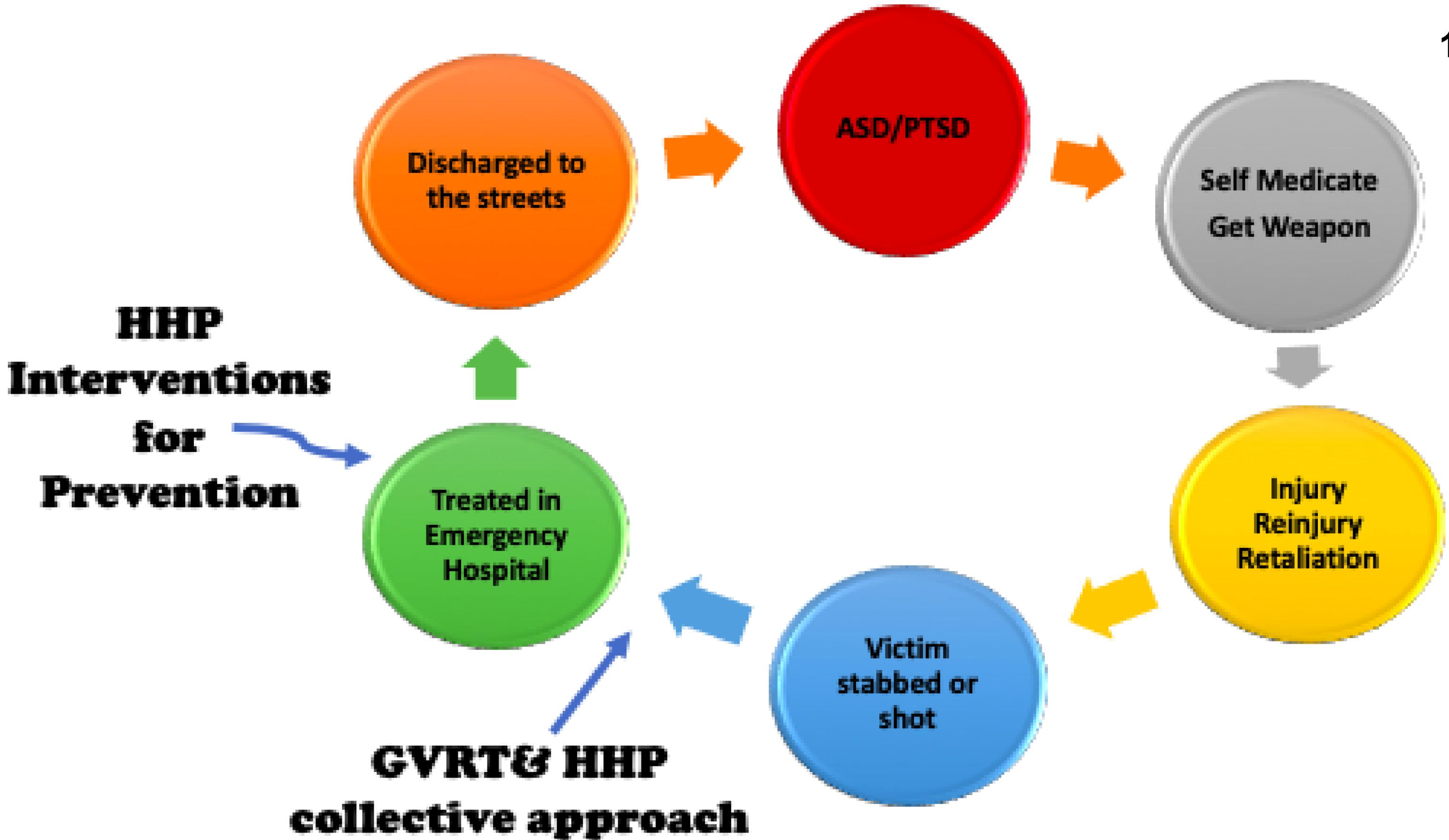
# Healing Hurt People

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Healing Hurt People-(HHP) is a trauma-informed program designed to intervene in the lives of injured patients at the life-changing moment of violent injury.

HHP serves individuals of color; ages 8-35, who have experienced intentional trauma such as gun shot wounds and stabbings. HHP intervenes in the emergency room, when people are the most-ready to consider making real change.





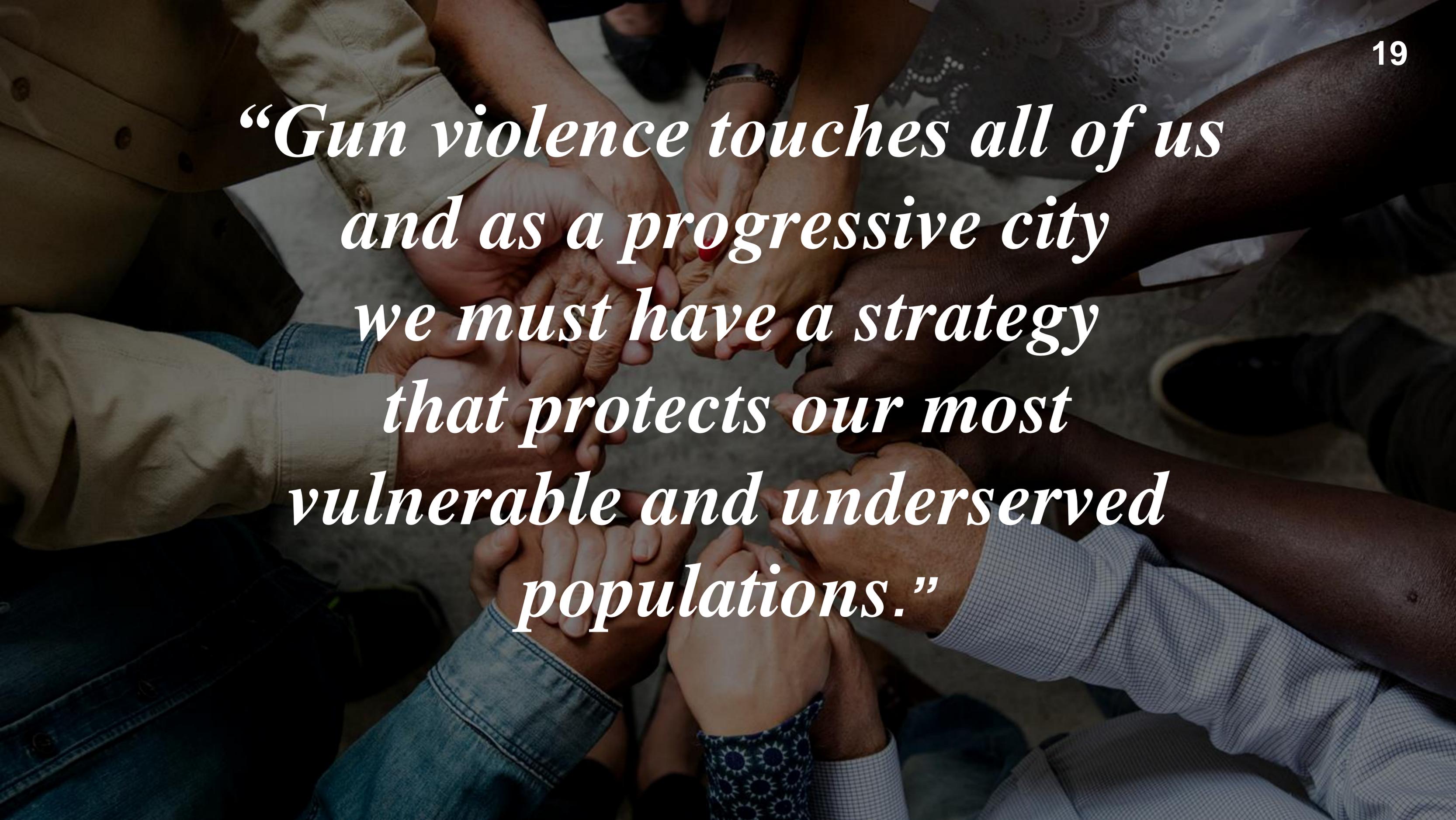
# Where do we want to be?

- **Increased commitment in social services**
- **Strategic focus on the most violent**
- **Reduce disproportionalities**
- **Reduce criminal justice system involvement**
- **Reduce economic costs to taxpayers**
- **Improve overall community safety**

# Best Practices

*Although Portland's gun violence rate is low compared to other big cities, far too many, mostly young Black men, are being killed on the City's streets. The enormous disparity in rates of gun violence victimization for Black males in Portland is alarming. The Portland Police Bureau has tried to combat this problem with the creation of a Gun Violence Reduction Team. We have worked with many cities across the country to reduce gun violence. GVRT is one of the better organized police units with which we have worked. Despite understandable concerns that specialized police units can produce over policing in communities of color, well organized and focused law enforcement efforts can actually result in less emphasis on enforcement of low-level offenses and better focus on protecting human life. GVRT has been focused on reducing gun violence. There is a very small population of people who are at high risk for committing gun violence in Portland and GVRT's work can be effective in implementing focused deterrence efforts that actually result in fewer arrests but greater safety. For these reasons, I support PPB maintaining the GVRT unit. Additionally, I am confident in the leadership of PPB to ensure that GVRT keeps strict adherence to its mission to reduce gun violence in a manner that is fair, respectful, and just to the people of Portland, especially the Black community."*

*David Muhammad, Executive Director of the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform*



*“Gun violence touches all of us  
and as a progressive city  
we must have a strategy  
that protects our most  
vulnerable and underserved  
populations.”*

# References

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