

Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan has allotted **\$20 Million** in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to combat youth and community violence. Together, with community support, we can create a safer Akron.

1. Prevention

WHY: Stop violence before it starts by providing community members with stable neighborhoods, healthy recreational opportunities, and economic hope.

WHO: The City of Akron, the Akron community, non-profit organizations, schools, youth sports & faith based organizations.

HOW:

- Tackle youth and community violence with a robust, sustainable, culturally competent approach, building on the priorities established by the Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan, issued in 2019. The City will hire a facilitator to coordinate these efforts and programs.
- Fund and support effective youth programming, reentry services, and prevention strategies.
- Invest in recreational assets and opportunities, including community centers, pools, and recreational programming.
- Enhance mentoring programs for youth at risk of violence, and enhance youth employment programs to offer jobs to Akron high school seniors.

2. Intervention & Support

WHY: Intervening in the lives of at risk individuals is critical to reducing overall community violence, and is a strategy used successfully in other communities like Akron.

WHO: The City of Akron, the Akron community, Akron hospitals, Summit County ADM Board, local service providers, non-profit organizations, and the Akron Police Department.

HOW:

- Partner with local providers to reduce stigma related to mental health care, and improve overall wellness in the community.
- Utilize trained mental health providers to respond to mental health crises in coordination with law enforcement to dispatch the right response to each call.
- Partner with local hospitals to launch a Violence Interrupter program to help stop the cycle of murders, and intervene with individuals and families at the greatest risk of gun violence.
- Work with the community to create a shared vision. Enhance relationships between the community and police in order to better prevent and investigate crimes.

3. Enforcement

WHY: Police and Judicial System partners are essential to keeping dangerous offenders out of our neighborhoods and cutting off networks of illegal guns, drugs, and violence. By working with the community, police can help enhance safety and reduce fear.

WHO: The Akron Police Department, Summit County Sheriff's Office, Summit County Prosecutors, local judges and prosecutors, state and federal law enforcement, and the Akron community.

HOW:

- Support robust and effective Community Policing strategies, including increasing foot patrols.
- Continue and enhance implicit bias and CIT training for APD officers and study upcoming recommendations of Racial Equity and Social Justice Taskforce related to Criminal Justice.
- Continue to seize illegal guns off our streets. Over 1,800 illegal guns were recovered by the Akron Police Department between December 2019 & August 2021.
- Work with Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Taskforce and other agencies to ensure the most dangerous individuals are incarcerated.
- Leverage technology for better intelligence gathering and targeted enforcement efforts.
- Continue to partner with City Council to allocate additional resources to targeted enforcement at known hot spots.

4. Partnership & Advocacy

WHY: The City cannot address this issue alone, we need strong partnerships, effective legislation, and state and national policy around reducing violence. If carrying illegal guns or engaging in dangerous illegal behavior does not carry significant consequences, the cycle of violence will only continue.

WHO: Elected officials and criminal justice policy-makers at all levels, including the judicial system.

HOW:

- Work with state and federal legislators who can take action on gun control and criminal justice reform, and direct appropriate resources to effective local programs.
- Communicate with other criminal justice partners to address gaps in the system and develop new strategies to increase coordination and communication.
- Fund local organizations focused on violence reduction programming.

5. Community Accountability

WHY: Reducing violence will take a whole-of-Akron approach. Every citizen and stakeholder can help take ownership of the problem, and the solutions.

WHO: The Akron community, faith community, neighborhood organizations, community leaders, schools, parents, grandparents, etc.

HOW:

- Increase work across the community to help direct young people toward positive pathways and send a strong message of accountability to those who inflict violence and trauma.
- Enhance two-way communications with local government so that neighborhood concerns can be addressed and information can be shared about opportunities, programs and resources.
- Support a gun violence reduction awareness campaign involving Akron students.
- Build a network of community leaders offering programs and mentorships, identify service gaps to strengthen the network, engage in consistent communication and coordination.

“It will take a whole-of-Akron approach to drive down violence in our city. It is essential that we work across the community to stop violent offenders in their tracks, address the root causes of violence, and create sustainable pathways for youth to choose healthier futures.”

-Mayor Horrigan