

DANIEL HARRIGAN, MAYOR

City of Akron

Strategic Plan

Youth Violence Prevention

A strategic plan by Mayor Daniel Horrigan in collaboration with the The Akron Youth Violence Steering Committee, this plan is a blueprint for coordinated, collaborative action, with roles for everyone including government, businesses, nonprofit agencies and organizations, everyday citizens, parents and the youth themselves.

Date of Plan Release: April 15, 2019

April 15, 2019

Dear Community Members:

Violence among our nation's youth is all too common in this country. The consequences of this type of violence are visible, immediate, and horrific for both the individuals involved and the community at-large. Most forms of interpersonal and community violence are intimately connected. They are linked with factors related to health and well-being; such as an individual's developmental stage, quality of peer and protective relationship, neighborhood transiency, level of community trauma (including historical trauma and structural racism), social norms, economic and personal growth opportunities, and alcohol/substance abuse.



To begin to wrap our arms around these complicated problems, my office, supported by the Akron Youth Violence Steering Committee, applied for grant funding to create a plan to combat youth violence in the Greater Akron community. In 2017, the City of Akron and partners were successfully awarded funding to hire a facilitator for this endeavor. Crystal Jones, former Executive Director of Project Ujima, was selected to lead the effort in developing a Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan and build community capacity to tackle this issue through multidisciplinary partnerships.

After a year-long process, the Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan was created. As an innovative tactic, the identified strategies and partners within the plan are not static, but malleable. The plan is meant to be revised and updated on an ongoing basis, in order to retain relevancy and remain a high priority for our local leaders.

Summit County Health Commissioner, Donna Skoda, has agreed to oversee the implementation of the strategic plan and ensure that the community as a whole continues to work together to reduce youth violence in Akron and surrounding communities. In addition, the Akron Youth Violence Steering Committee has secured commitments from institutional and community stakeholders through the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding, solidifying the commitment of community partners to the implementation of the strategic plan and providing leadership around reducing youth violence.

We all want our community to be a safer place to live, work and play, but this can only happen if we are coordinating and aligning our local resources. My sincerest gratitude goes to our community partners for playing an integral role in reducing youth violence in our community, and I encourage every citizen to be an active part of the solution as well.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan Horrigan" followed by a horizontal line.

Mayor Daniel Horrigan
City of Akron

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I. Introduction

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, youth violence is one of the leading causes of death and nonfatal injuries in the United States.¹ Like communities nationwide, Akron recognizes the need to take aggressive action to prevent the commission of violent crimes by the City's young people. The City has made a commitment to partner with community stakeholders to create and implement this Akron Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan (the Akron Plan).

This first phase of the Akron Plan targets older youth, ages 15 to 24, because an inventory of local resources indicates that the greatest deficits in intervention and support services exist for youth in this age category. The Akron Plan is intended to remedy the weaknesses in Akron's continuum of comprehensive services for *all* at-risk youth by focusing on plugging the service gaps for youth ages 15-24.

This document is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of the causes and effects of youth violent crime, but rather a blueprint for coordinated, collaborative action—with roles for everyone, including government, businesses, nonprofit agencies and organizations, everyday citizens, parents and the youth themselves. The Akron Plan is based on the recognition of the need for better systemic coordination of existing resources and new efforts to maximize the effectiveness and sustainability of youth violence prevention programs and services.

II. History of Akron's Recent Youth Violence Prevention Efforts

In December 2011, 11 homicides occurred in a two-week period that is often referred to as the “awful week of murders.” All the deaths during this time were the result of gun violence, and several of the dead were under the age of 25. The murders inspired community members to begin the Stop the Violence Movement, which was formed as a way for the community to work through its grief together. Following the awful week of murders, a meeting was held that brought 250 community members together. It was then that community leaders decided that something needed to be done.



In early 2012, Save a Life (SAL), a grassroots coalition was formed to find ways to help end violence in Akron. In February 2012, with sponsorship by Akron Summit Community Action, Inc., SAL hosted a public screening and discussion of the critically acclaimed documentary, “The Interrupters”, and followed up with a report of recommended actions offered by participants during the post-screening discussion. Although a good start, progress stalled for various reasons after issuance of the report. The next groups to work on gun violence prevention were the Health Connections Network and the Minority Health Roundtable. These groups, now part of larger groups, put gun violence prevention at the top of their priorities for 2013, but were unable to make any progress because they were unsure how to handle the problem. After two years searching for a path to address to this issue, it was decided that a forum addressing gun violence would be held. The forum, held on April 25, 2015, featured discussion circles on how gun violence affects health and wellbeing. Close to 100 people were brought together, though some community members felt like it was too much telling of what is important and not enough action. The

groups continued to try to make progress, but it was not until the end of 2016 that the original group members went to newly-elected Mayor Dan Horrigan to advance their agenda.

Various conversations between city council members, community members, and high-level members of the Mayor's staff occurred as a result of the group members' push to respond to community violence in general, and gun violence in particular. Through these conversations, participants recognized the need for a broader plan regarding youth violence prevention. The group decided it was necessary to create a strategic plan to outline Akron's youth violence issues and to identify a path to effectively address those issues. The Mayor asked Chief of Staff James Hardy and Deputy Mayor for Public Safety Charles Brown to work with Councilwoman Veronica Sims to formulate a group comprised of a cross-section of agencies that work in and around youth violence. From this came The Akron Youth Violence Steering Committee (the Committee), to guide a process for addressing youth violence prevention. The Committee asked the City to identify potential grant opportunities to support an individual to facilitate development of a strategic plan.

The Mayor made safety for all citizens, including youth, a priority in 2017 as part of his 2017 strategic priorities. In January 2017, the Mayor's Office began looking for grant funding and identified funding through the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) in Columbus. The Mayor submitted a letter to Carlton Moore, the Director of OCJS, explaining what Akron wanted to do and asked for funding from OCJS to finance the creation of the strategic plan. The City received \$22,500 from OCJS to hire a consultant to facilitate community engagement and lead in the drafting of the strategic plan to address Akron's youth violence issues.

Project Ujima, Inc. was identified as the nonprofit to take on this role. This grassroots organization was chosen because it is embedded in the Akron community and thrives through the collective work of volunteers who live and work in neighborhoods impacted most by violent crime. Project Ujima Executive Director Crystal Jones is also an attorney and understands the social and legal aspects of this project. Project Ujima's primary service areas are Zip Codes 44307 and 44320. As shown in the Baseline Data in Appendix B, these are two of the areas with the highest rates of youth violent crime in Akron.

The Committee formed a second partnership with Dr. Jacqueline Curtis from the Kent State University Health and Hazards Lab to map the youth crime data in Akron. Dr. Curtis mapped suspect data to assist the Committee in better understanding Akron's youth violence issues and where to focus various types of efforts. The Akron Police Department (APD) provided the data, which showed disturbing numbers for crimes with youth suspects. The Committee undertook this data mapping in order to see Akron-specific data at a neighborhood level, so it would have information to develop neighborhood level interventions responsive to specific needs.

The Committee also utilized a technical assistance grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to help guide the strategic planning process. Technical assistance from the American Institutes for Research gave Akron access to subject matter experts, best practices, and other communities working to combat youth violence.

In developing the Plan, the Committee met in two configurations. The large committee, with more stakeholders, met monthly to keep the project on track. A smaller work group met separately on a regular basis, to identify and complete specific tasks related to the development of the Akron Plan. Membership of each of these two configurations has been fluid; a list of members can be found in Appendix A.

III. Goal of the Akron Plan

The Goal of the Akron Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan is to reduce by at least 20% the number of violent crimes committed by Akron youth ages 15-24 by the year 2024.

IV. Baseline Data

In determining the overall goal of the Akron Plan, the Committee first decided upon the following as its working definition of “crime of violence”, adapted from the United States Code: “An offense that involves the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against another person.” In selecting which specific crimes to focus on, the Committee relied on crime data provided by APD for suspects ages 15-24, from 2012 through 2016. The following offenses had the highest reporting rates and therefore were selected by the Committee to be the focus of the Plan: assault, felonious assault, discharge of a firearm, family violence, menacing, robbery and sexual assault. Because concern about gun violence was the driving force behind creation of the Akron Plan, the Committee decided to measure changes in the number of shots fired and weapon law violations as well.

The data shows the following from 2012 through 2016, for suspects ages 15-24:

Akron Police Department ‘Report’ data:

Assault	4,844
Felonious/Aggravated Assault	848
Discharge Firearm	273
Family Violence	5,027
Menacing/Aggravated Menacing	2,287
Robbery/Aggravated Robbery	2,253
Sexual Assault	615
Weapon Law Violations	1,953
City-wide Shots Fired “Calls for Service”	7,486

See Appendices B and C for an overview of the demographic, temporal and geographic characteristics for each type of offense and a narrative summary of the baseline data.

V. Research

The Committee acknowledged early in the planning process that in order to decide which violence prevention strategies to include in the Akron Plan, it needed to identify the most prevalent risk and protective factors impacting Akron’s youth in the targeted age range. These risk and protective factors are those pre-existing personal characteristics and environmental conditions that increase or reduce the likelihood of youth involvement in criminal behavior. The Committee also recognized the need to identify current local resources and to research best practices being implemented successfully in other parts of the country.

Risk Factors

The Centers for Disease Control and other national researchers have identified the most prevalent risk factors that lead to youth violence. Some are individual, including substance abuse, history of violent victimization, history of treatment for emotional problems, and low IQ; some are relationship-based, such as witnessing violence in the home, parental substance abuse or criminality and having a peer group that is involved with delinquent activities; and some are community-based, such as violence in the neighborhood and a lack of resources for after-school programs and other community recreational activities. Additional identified risk factors are poverty/lack of economic opportunity, social inequities



(including race discrimination), lack of quality educational opportunities, disenfranchised neighborhoods, culture of violence, family isolation and other stressors.

To identify local risk and protective factors, the Committee relied on research conducted by Akron area youth services providers and on direct input from the community, including incarcerated youth. This research confirms that Akron youth are impacted by many of the same risk factors identified in the national research.²

In face-to-face conversations conducted by Project Ujima with males in the Summit County Juvenile Detention Center, the youth identified the following factors that led to their incarceration in the Detention Center:

- Hanging with the wrong people
- Living in the wrong neighborhood/environment
- Lack of money and employment that pays a decent wage
- Lack of resources and positive things to do to occupy their time
- Lack of a family support system

See Appendix D for a complete summary of the conversations held on March 17, 2018, with youth at the Detention Center.

In community discussion circles held in December 2017, participants identified essentially the same risk factors as the incarcerated youth did, including a culture of violence in their neighborhoods (e.g., black on black crime); lack of positive role models and support systems; and lack of community resources (e.g., mentoring, livable wage jobs for young people). See Appendix E for flipchart notes from the discussion circles.

Protective Factors

Protective factors are factors in the lives of young people that diminish the likelihood of engagement in violent activities. These include healthy social, problem-solving, and emotional management skills, strong academic achievement, healthy relationships with parents, other caring adults, and peers, and activities that keep students busy during and after school. Akron has a wide array of resources that serve youth, many of which provide evidence-based programs and other protective interventions to deter criminal behavior. Akron's challenge is to ensure that these resources are fully integrated so that they provide a seamless system of services to effectively address youth violence. See Appendix F for a comprehensive list of Akron Area Youth Service Providers and Resources.

VI. Recommended Approaches

The following recommended approaches are the result of the Committee's discussion and research over the past year of Akron's youth violence problem. In recommending these approaches, the Committee acknowledges that work is already being done by local providers under each of these approaches but recognizes that much more needs to be done to reach the goal of reducing youth violence in Akron by 20% by the year 2024.

Approach One: Mentoring – Research on evidence-based mentoring programs has shown that mentoring has a positive effect on the prevention and intervention of delinquent behaviors, including substance abuse and aggressive behavior.³ Although there are many youth mentoring services in Akron, operating either as stand-alone programs or as components of larger youth services organizations, the Committee's research shows a deficit of mentoring services targeted to youth ages 18-24 and incarcerated youth. This includes both one-on-one and group mentoring services.

Approach Two: Recreation and Discretionary Time - Analyses of data on juvenile delinquency indicates that most delinquent activity of school age children occurs between 3 and 6 p.m.⁴ Akron has a number of effective programs aimed at keeping children safely engaged in positive after school activities. For instance, Akron After School sponsored by Akron Public Schools provides a safe place after school for students to engage in enrichment activities and spend time with friends, mentors, tutors and other caring adults. Like with the mentoring services, the Committee's research shows a lack of positive, safe recreational and social activities for youth in the 18-24 age range.

Approach Three: Re-entry support – Akron youth who are released from incarceration (from juvenile detention as well as adult prison) need a variety of support services to help them get their lives back on track and avoid recidivism. This includes re-entry into school or job training, adequate employment, housing, help establishing healthy connections with family and children and disconnecting from negative influences, as well as mental/behavioral health supports and treatment. (See Approach 5.)



Approach Four: Police-Youth Relations & Gun Violence Reduction – Initiatives to build and improve relationships of trust between youth and the police are showing success in cities around the country. In 2015 the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services of the U.S. Department of Justice published a “Guide for Improving Relationships and Public Safety through Engagement and Conversation.” Acknowledging the difficult, complex challenge of improving relationships between police and youth, the guide points out that “young people often associate police only with punishment, while officers may approach young people in ways that contribute to anxiety, even with the best intentions.”⁵ After engaging in these types of youth/police dialogue initiatives, youth report increased comfort in talking to police and greater willingness to report a crime. Police officers report an increased consciousness of racial dynamics and greater effort to interact with youth outside of conflict settings.

Approach Five: Gun Violence Reduction – Although reducing youth access to guns is not the singular solution to the problem of youth violent crime, it is a piece of puzzle. Unsupervised, unrestricted access to firearms makes youth crime not only violent, but lethal.⁶ APD data shows that from 2012–2016, there were 273 reports involving discharge of a firearm by youth ages 15-24 and 1,953 weapons law violations. In addition there were 848 aggravated assault reports and a total of 4,540 reports of menacing and robbery, which included aggravated offenses involving the use of lethal weapons. Although this approach involves controversial policy and legislative changes that need to be addressed, there are more immediate actions that can be done on the neighborhood level. For instance, gun buyback programs have had some success in getting guns off the streets. Since 2007, 3,174 operable firearms have been removed from Cleveland's neighborhoods through its gun buyback program.⁷

Approach Six: Mental Health, Traumatic Stress and Substance Abuse Supports and Treatment – A holistic approach to youth crime prevention must include targeted support to youth who are struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues and their families. The CDC reports that “youth who experience violence as victims, perpetrators, or witnesses are more likely to have behavioral and mental health difficulties, including future violence perpetration and victimization, smoking, substance abuse” and other high risk behaviors.⁸

Approach Seven: Community Awareness and Involvement – The many community meetings, forums, summits and stop the violence efforts held in Akron over the years clearly show that residents are aware

of the problem of youth violent crime. At these often emotional community gatherings, residents are provided the opportunity to voice their concerns and share how they have been personally impacted by the problem. The challenge for the community continues to be identifying and implementing solutions. This approach will focus on the development of processes and structures to promote awareness and generate sustained community participation in the collective work of preventing youth violence in Akron. This approach will honor and support the many grassroots efforts underway and seek to replicate some of the evidence-based efforts underway in other parts of the country, like Baltimore's *Safe Streets* and Chicago's *Cure Violence* programs.⁹

Approach Eight: Capacity and Infrastructure Development – The effectiveness of the Akron Plan depends upon coordinated, integrated implementation and evaluation of the Plan's Recommended Approaches and Recommended Actions. The achievement of successful seamless implementation of the complementary interventions set forth in the Akron Plan will require development of a mechanism for collaboration among all partners in priority-setting, decision-making, continuous data sharing, monitoring, and evaluation.

VII. Recommended Actions

The following list of recommended actions and lead partners is not comprehensive. The list will grow as individuals and organizations continue to commit to lead specific actions to address Akron's youth violence problem.

Approach One: Mentoring**New Actions**

- Develop shared evaluation criteria specifically for youth violence prevention (YVP)
- Educate mentoring programs on youth violence risk and protective factors and current data trends
- Coordinate mentoring in areas identified as youth violence (YV) hot spots
- Expand/develop mentoring programs to serve incarcerated and returning youth
- Provide training to mentors and mentoring programs on Botvin Life Skills curriculum (which provides youth with effective social and self-management skills, decreasing motivation to use drugs)
- Convene existing YVP programs to determine whether the iC.A.R.E. Mentoring portal would be beneficial for tracking mentoring participants and outcomes and, if so, implement shared tracking through this portal

Lead Partners

United Way iC.A.R.E. Mentoring
Williams Challenge Man2Man Mentoring
Koinonia Education and Family Resource Center, LLC.

Approach Two: Recreation and Discretionary Time**New Actions**

- At City of Akron Community Centers in YV hot spots, establish new violence prevention programming, and enhance outreach and referrals of youth to existing resources
- Use Peace Circle techniques to mediate conflict and resolve peer issues
- Work with SCDJFS to incorporate tailored matching into their youth summer employment program

Lead Partners

City of Akron
Akron Police Department
Peace Justice & Equality
My Brother's Keeper NEO

Approach Three: Re-entry Support

New Actions

- Provide one-on-one support to returning youth to assist with re-enrollment in school, job training and employment, housing, reconnecting with family and children
- Provide job training in construction, home rehabilitation, commercial cleaning, landscaping and lawn maintenance
- Provide mentoring services to youth prior to release from incarceration
- Provide resources to implement job training and apprenticeship programs, e.g. Williams Challenge Tailor Apprenticeship Program
- Create programs involving parents/youth working together, e.g. City's Recreation Bureau offering opportunities for parents/adults/youth to assist with larger events
- Provide life coaching to help youth set personal goals, identify existing and potential challenges and obstacles and devise a plan of action to achieve specific outcomes

Lead Partners

Summit County Job & Family Services

Williams Challenge/Man2Man

Truly Reaching You

City of Akron Recreation Bureau

The WOMB (Stop The Violence Movement, My Brothers Keeper NEO, Akron Organizing Collaborative, Peace Justice & Equality)

Koinonia Education and Family Resource Center, LLC

Approach Four - Police-Youth Relations

New Actions

- Develop a campaign with APD and APS to promote anti-violence messaging
- Develop ways to increase the dialogue and trust between police and youth, e.g. youth-police dialogue circles, on-going coordination with Community Centers and Community Safety Liaison, support social media video campaign
- COPS Unit and NRT commit minimum of 4 hours/week to Community Centers
- Maintain targeted APD patrols in YV hot spots and provide alerts to service providers of need for increased outreach efforts
- COPS grant



Lead Partners

Akron Police Department

Akron Public Schools

APD: Community Relations, Community Oriented Policing Unit, Neighborhood Response Team

Approach Five - Mental Health, Traumatic Stress, and Substance Abuse Supports and Treatments

New Actions

- Continue providing psychological evaluations, individual and group therapy for youth ages 18+
- Formalize a plan/policy between Akron Children's Hospital and Summa Health so that as youth age out of the child sector there is a seamless transition to services in the adult sector to ensure continuity of care

Lead Partners

Summa Health Traumatic Stress Center
 Summa Health Behavioral Health Institute
 Summit County ADM Board
 Akron Children's Hospital

Approach Six - Gun Violence Reduction

New Actions

- Promote and enhance gun safety, awareness, and reduction programs
- Apply for funding to implement a Communities Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) model
- Organize coalition to change state policy on gun access

Lead Partners

Stop The Violence Movement/Violence Interrupters

Approach Seven: Community Awareness and Involvement

New Actions

- Create survey for individuals to report gunshots heard
- Create an awareness campaign to educate community on what gun violence is and what to do when they witness it
- Provide clear, comprehensive information to the community on current law enforcement strategies that are in place to interrupt gun violence
- Educate community on what APD is doing about unsolved murders
- Increase awareness of violence and other forms of trauma and their effects, improve quality of care and access to evidence based services for individuals and families affected by trauma, and



facilitate collaboration across systems

Lead Partners

Koinonia Education and Family Resource Center, LLC
Akron Police Department
Ohio Organizing Collaborative
Project Ujima, Inc.
Summit County Trauma Informed Care Coalition

Approach Eight: Capacity and Infrastructure

New Actions

- Develop a mechanism for continuous data sharing among partner agencies to monitor YV trends
- Continue YVP Coalition and engage additional partners in coalition work, especially partners engaged in work in YV identified hot spots
- Provide ongoing administrative support for YVP Coalition
- Promote 2-1-1 as entry point to services for youth; develop questions to conduct deeper screening to match youth with appropriate services; create specialized search categories on 2-1-1 online database that can be linked to service organizations; create texting option for youth/parents to access information about available services
- Provide educational and referral resource guides to existing resources identified in the Akron Plan for dissemination in hot spot areas
- Conduct targeted marketing to families and youth through texting and social media, e.g., Youth Violence Prevention Facebook page

Lead Partners

Akron Police Department
Summit County Public Health
City of Akron
2-1-1
Community organizations and residents, including youth
The WOMB
Summit County Trauma Informed Care Coalition

VIII. Evaluation and Outcome Measures

Progress towards reaching the overall goal of the Akron Plan will be measured by ongoing evaluation of the following outcome measures. Evaluation of the Plan's specific programs and activities will occur as the actions are identified and implemented.

Data	Source	Updated
Victim crime counts: Family Violence	APD	As needed
Victim crime counts: Assault	APD	
Victim crime counts: Aggravated Menacing	APD	
Victim crime counts: Felonious Assault/ Aggravated Robbery	APD	
Victim crime counts: Sexual Assault	APD	
Victim crime counts: Discharge of a firearm	APD	
Percent of youth engaged in physical fighting in past 12 months	Youth Risk Behavior Survey	Every 5 years
Bullied in past 12 months (on or off school property)	Youth Risk Behavior Survey	
Carried weapon in past 30 days	Youth Risk Behavior Survey	
Engaged in intentional self-harm	Youth Risk Behavior Survey	
N and % of children/adolescents enrolled in certain after school programs		
N and % of children/adolescents newly enrolled in mentoring programs		
N and % of youth released from detention/jail who get connected with mental health services		
N of new mentors trained in evidence based methods		
N of new partnerships/relationships/collaborations that emerge among organizations involved in this project		

IX. Conclusion

The law defines a juvenile as individuals under the age of 18. However, the length of adolescence has generally been extended to include the mid-to late twenties. This large age range makes it difficult to identify youth violence intervention efforts because, when it comes to local assistance programs, one size does not fit all. National research shows us programs that address multiple risk factors and focus on specific age groups are more effective than those that address only one risk factor and multiple age groups. Programs that operate across social settings – including the family, schools, peer groups and the wider community – are more effective than programs that are isolated within one area of a young person’s life. Through the development of Akron’s Youth Violence Strategic Plan, Akron, for the first time, researched and evaluated, both quantitatively and qualitatively, our local youth violence problem. We were able to identify ‘high risk’ locations for targeted outreach, recognize best practices for diverse intervention efforts and appraise our communal strengths and weaknesses.

There is no magic formula or single, perfect program that will prevent violence and criminality for all youth. A popular African proverb states, “It takes a community to raise a child.” Consistent with this theme, evaluation research suggests that it will take a community implementing effective programs, collaboratively working together to prevent youth crime and violence. The Akron Youth Violence Strategic Plan has highlighted a number of proven and promising local partnerships and programs that can help reduce youth crime and violence. But how can the administration of so many programs be properly managed and coordinated? How can we ensure that the correct collection of prevention programs reach the right children and young adults? Many scholars have come to believe that we must create a centralized governance body, perhaps a crime prevention department or ministry, in order to effectively manage the implementation and administration of these programs.

Akron has shown its commitment to reducing youth violence through the creation of the Akron Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan. A concrete goal has been set, approaches recommended, and initial action steps determined. But the creation of the Akron Plan is only the beginning. Specific commitments must be made by all Akron Youth Violence Prevention Committee Members, their respective agencies, community residents, parents, youth and other community stakeholders to ensure comprehensive implementation of the Akron Plan. The Akron Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee has committed to meeting quarterly to further plan implementation, continue to identify and reach out to additional local resources to form new partnerships and update and revise the plan as needed. Future Committee discussions include the feasibility of creating a centralized body or office to guarantee and oversee plan implementation and then future re-evaluation of the Akron Plan for possible modification. In addition, grant funding will continually be sought by Committee members to assist with all implementation efforts. Through collective work, will, and responsibility, we CAN reduce youth violence in Akron by 20% by the year 2023.

The Akron Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee would like to acknowledge the contributions of University of Akron Law Students Chloe DeAngelis and Morgan Mayer, whose research and drafting efforts were incorporated into the Akron Plan.

APPENDIX A

Akron Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee

Crystal Jones, Project Ujima, Inc.
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Richard Marountas, Summit County Public Health
Cory Kendrick, Summit County Public Health
Rick Cugini, Summit County Job & Family Services
Veronica Sims, Akron City Council
Marilyn Keith, Akron City Council
Patrick Palmieri, Summa Health
Michael Wellendorf, Akron Children's Hospital
Darrita Davis, Stop the Violence Akron Movement/WOMB
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Elizabeth Kargbo, Info Line
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Natasha Pulliam, Rebound
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Tony Ingram, Akron Probation Department
Perry Clark, Truly Reaching You
Dr. Michael Forbes, Akron Children's Hospital
Dr. Norm Christopher, Akron Children's Hospital

Akron Youth Violence Prevention Work Group

Marie Curry
Dr. Jacqueline Curtis
Elizabeth Foster
Crystal Jones
Tamiyka Rose
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APPENDIX B

Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee Report

Section 4: Baseline Data

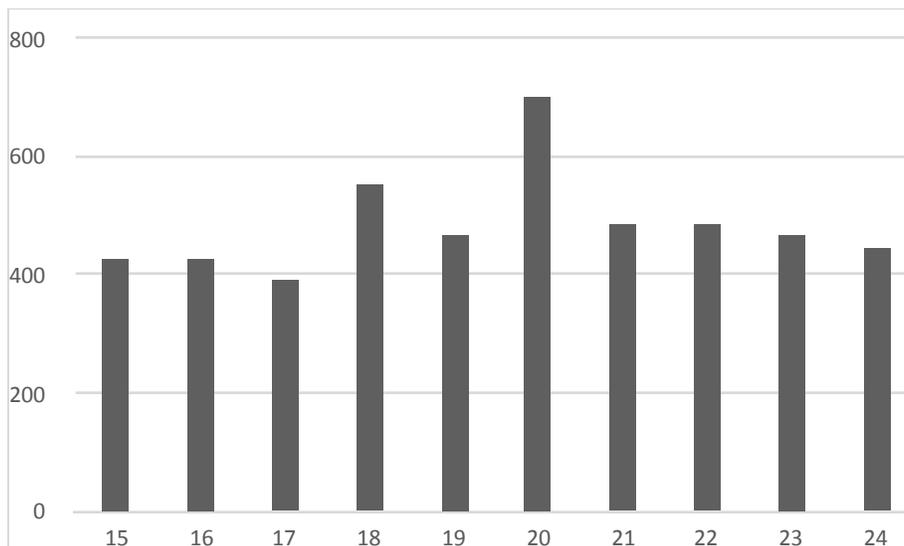
Baseline data for this report are criminal offenses reported by the Akron Police Department (APD) for suspects ages 15-24 from 2012 through 2016. The following types of offenses were selected for review by this committee: assault, felonious assault, discharge firearm, family violence, menacing, robbery, sexual. In addition, weapons law violation and calls for service for “shots fired” were also included. This section provides an overview of the demographic, temporal, and geographic characteristics for these data that will be meaningful as part of an evidence base for interventions and for monitoring the progress of these interventions. As with data from a single source, in this case only from APD, they provide a useful, but partial picture of activities occurring in our community. Therefore, the following graphics serve as a dashboard of trends and patterns, rather than as a definitive assessment of youth violence.

ASSAULT

Demographics

For the study period, there were 4,844 recorded assaults with males accounting for 58% and females for 42% of the suspects. The following figures provide an overview of demographic, temporal, and spatial characteristics of this offense.

Figure 1. Age of Suspects



Temporal Patterns

Figure 2. Offenses by Month

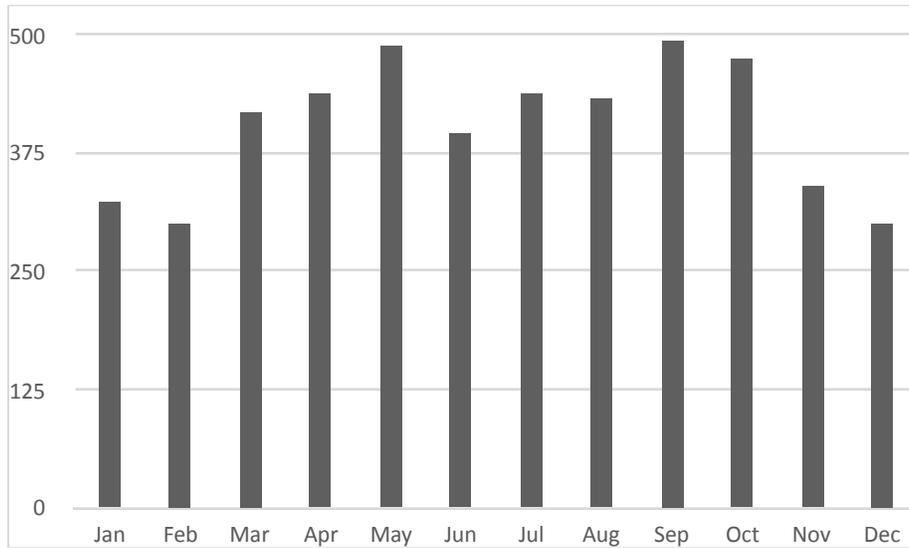
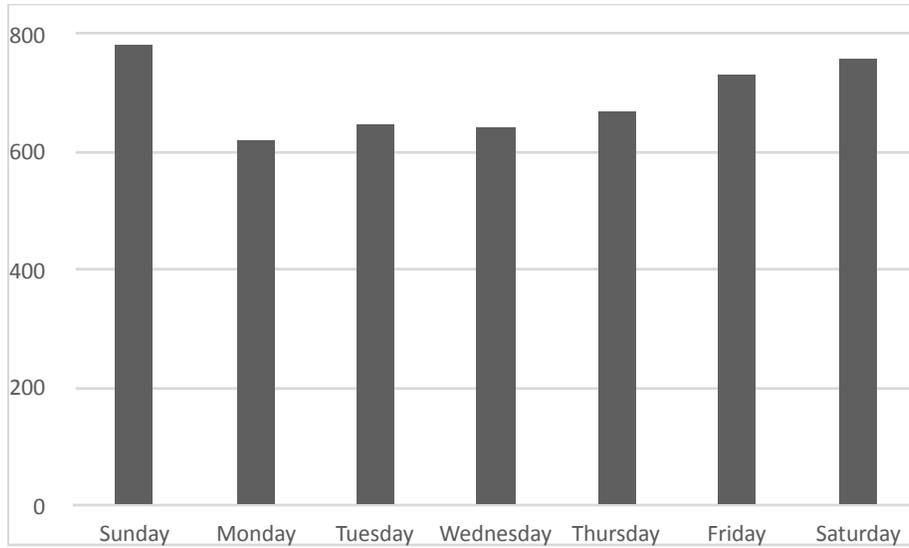


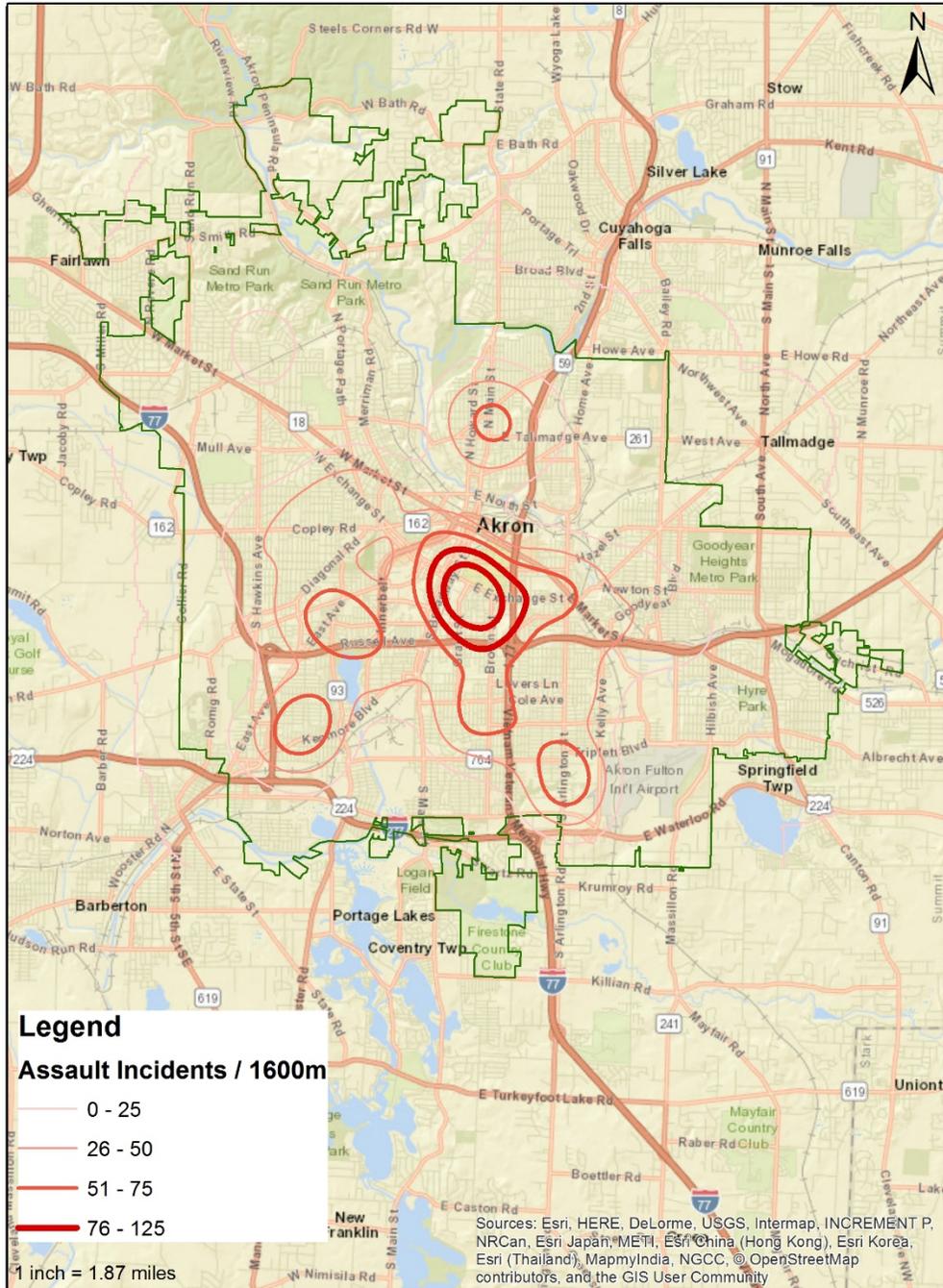
Figure 3. Offenses by Day



Geographic Patterns

Of the 4,844 recorded offenses, 4,778 (99%) had a mappable address for the location of the incident.¹⁰

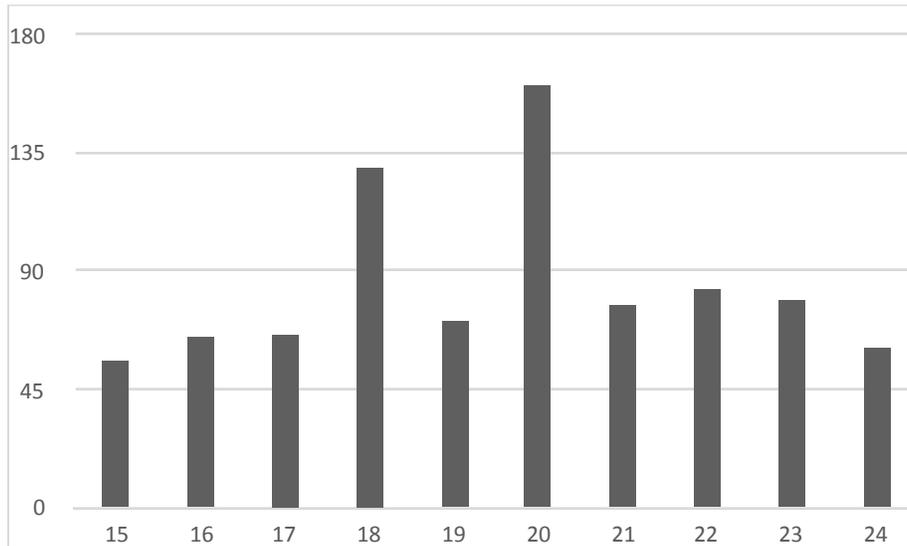
Figure 4. Density of Offenses



FELONIOUS ASSAULT
Demographics

For the study period, there were 848 recorded offenses of felonious assault, with males accounting for 80% and females for 19%; 1% of suspects did not have sex identified in the records.

Figure 5. Age of Suspects



Temporal Patterns

Figure 6. Offenses by Month

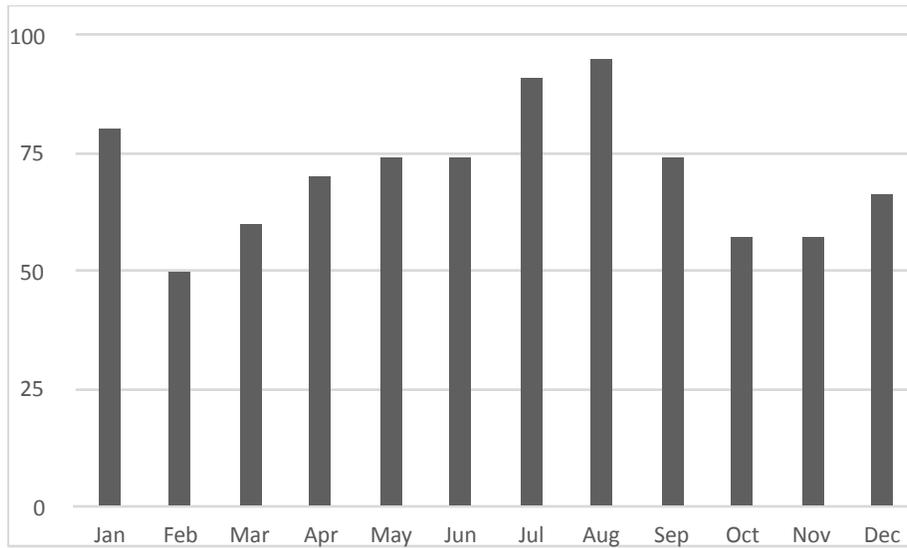
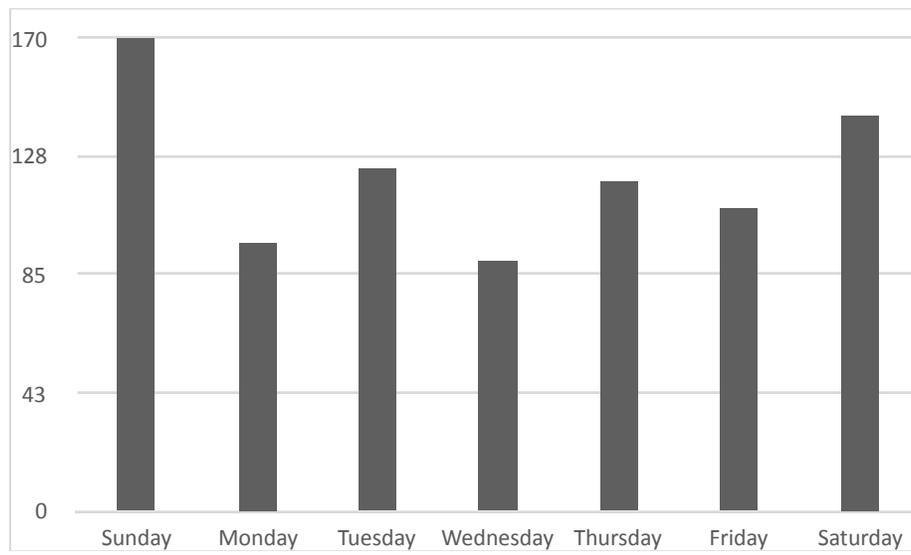


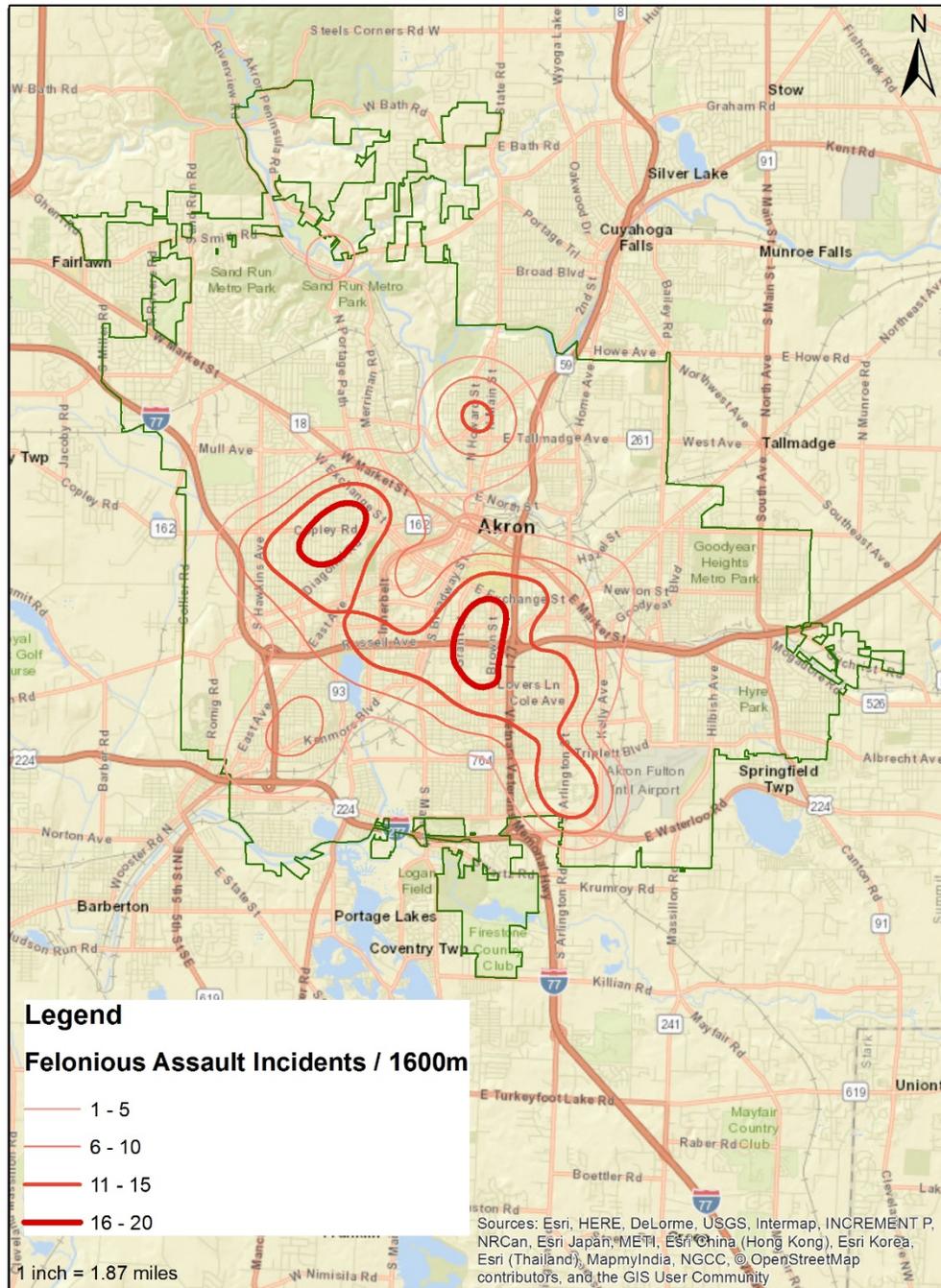
Figure 7. Offenses by Day



Geographic Patterns

Of the 848 recorded offenses, 826 (97%) had a mappable address for the location of the incident.

Figure 8. Density of Offenses

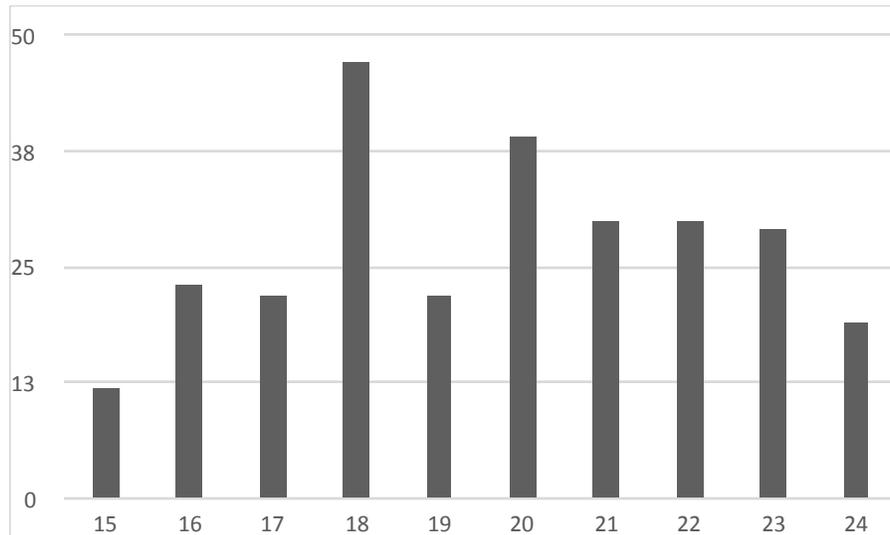


DISCHARGE FIREARM

Demographics

For the study period, there were 273 recorded offenses for discharge of firearm, with males accounting for 92% and females for 7% of suspects; 1 % with reported an unidentified gender.

Figure 9. Age of Suspects



Temporal Patterns

Figure 10. Offenses by Month

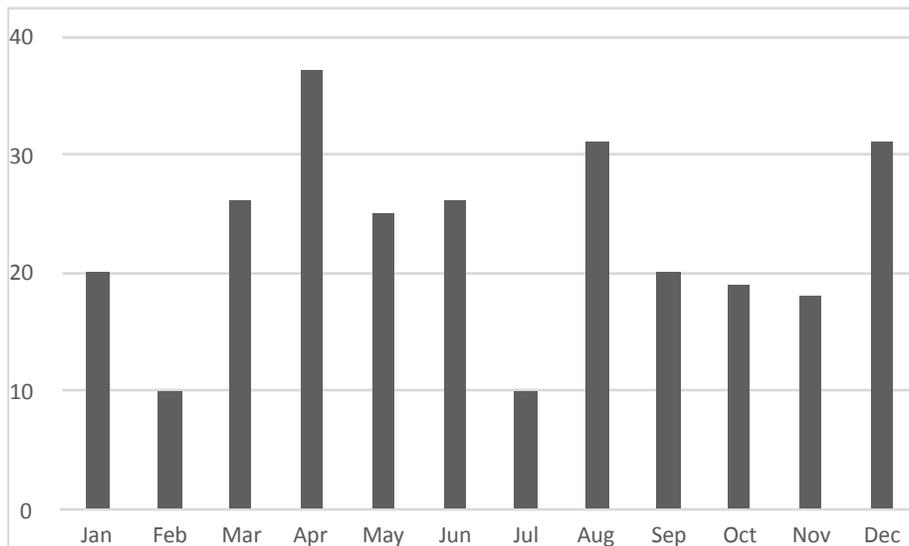
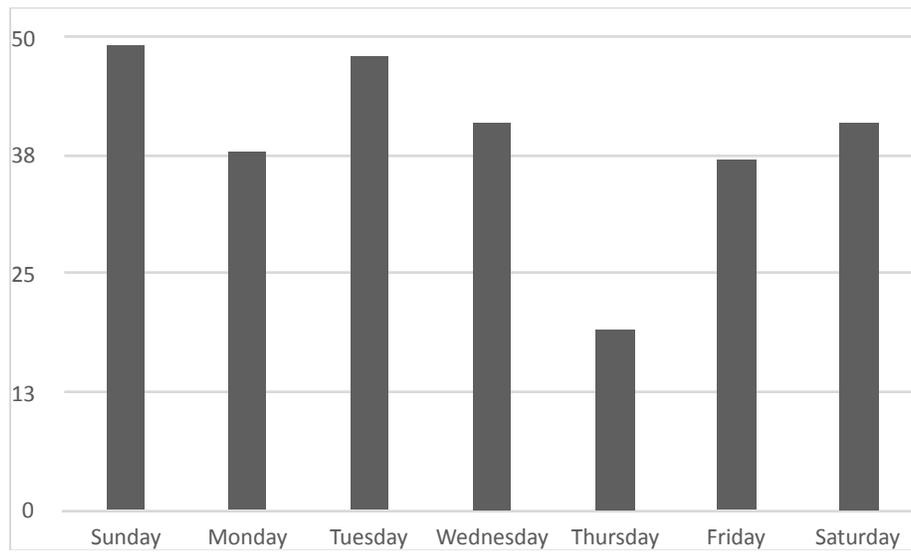


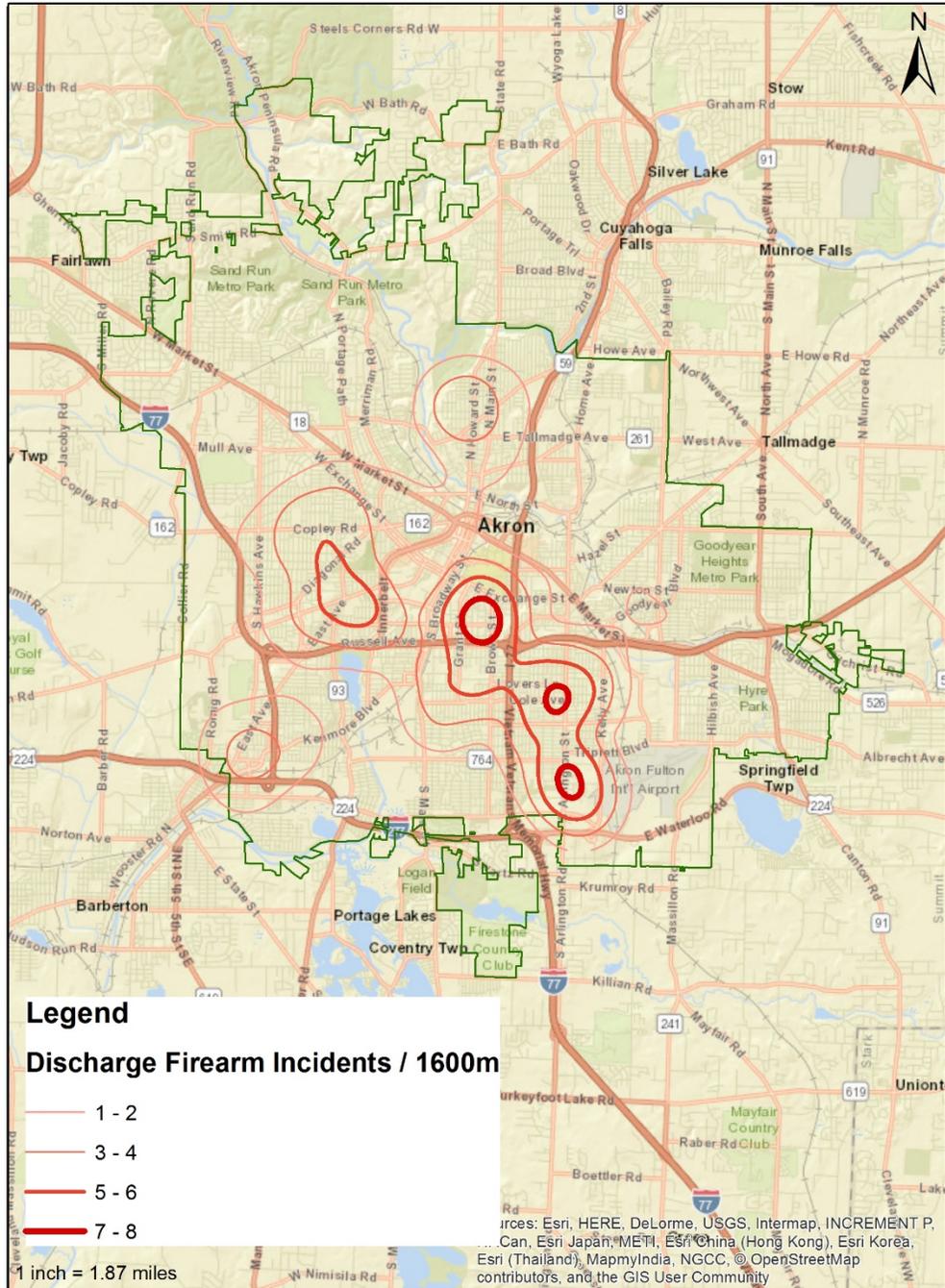
Figure 11. Offenses by Day



Geographic Patterns

Of the 273 recorded offenses, 268 (98%) had a mappable address for the location of the incident.

Figure 12. Density of Offenses

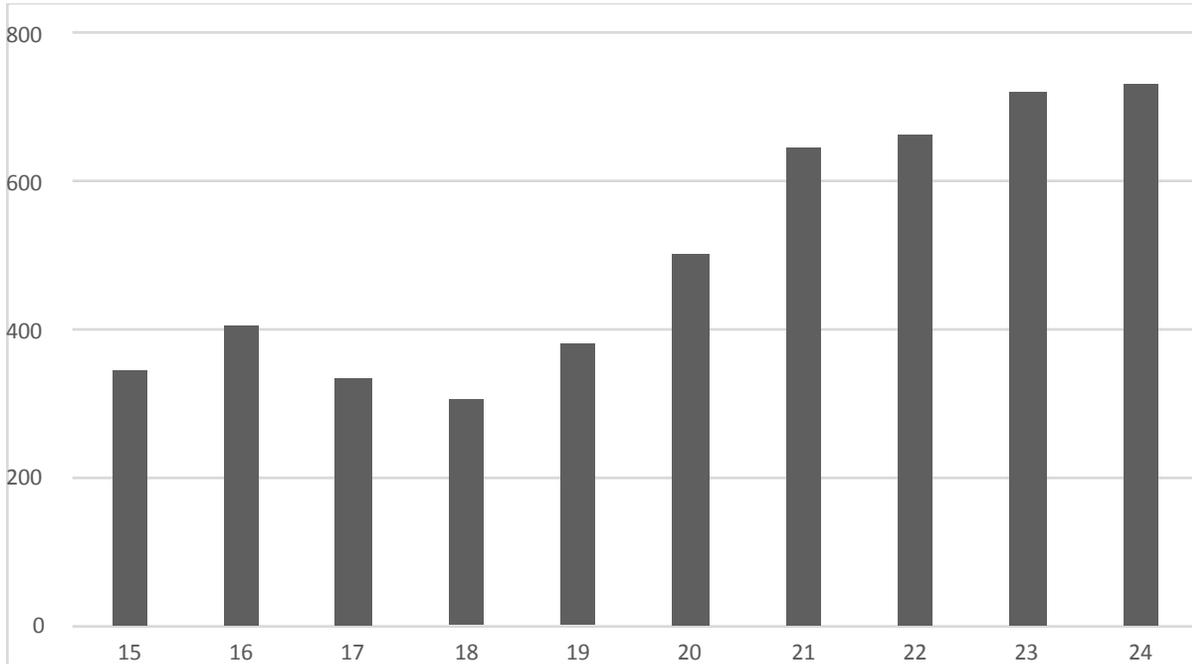


FAMILY VIOLENCE

Demographics

For the study period, there were 5,027 recorded offenses of family violence, with males accounting for 62% and females for 38% of suspects.

Figure 13. Age of Suspects



Temporal Patterns

Figure 14. Offenses by Month

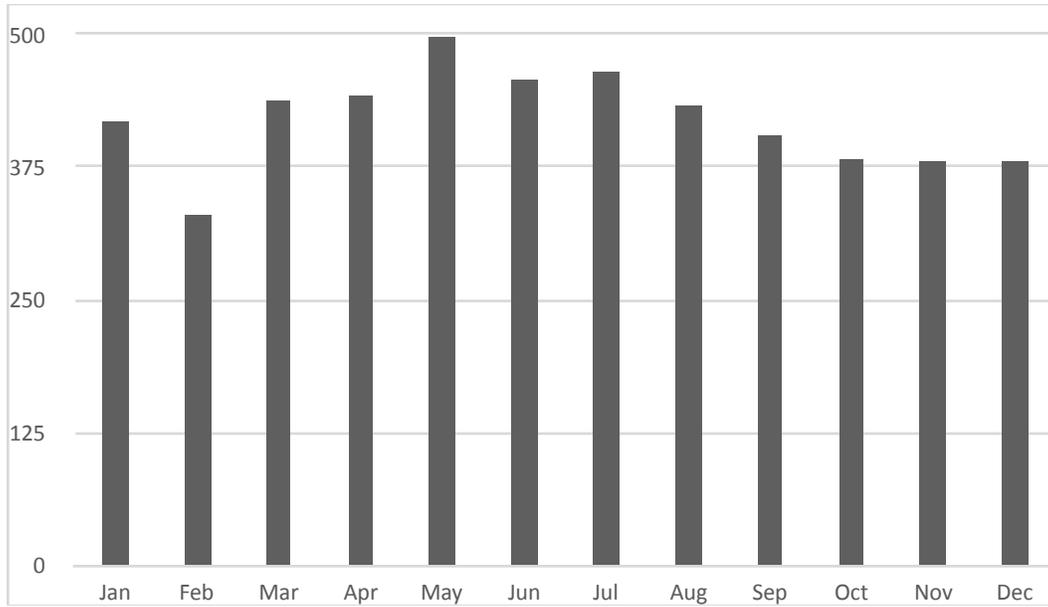
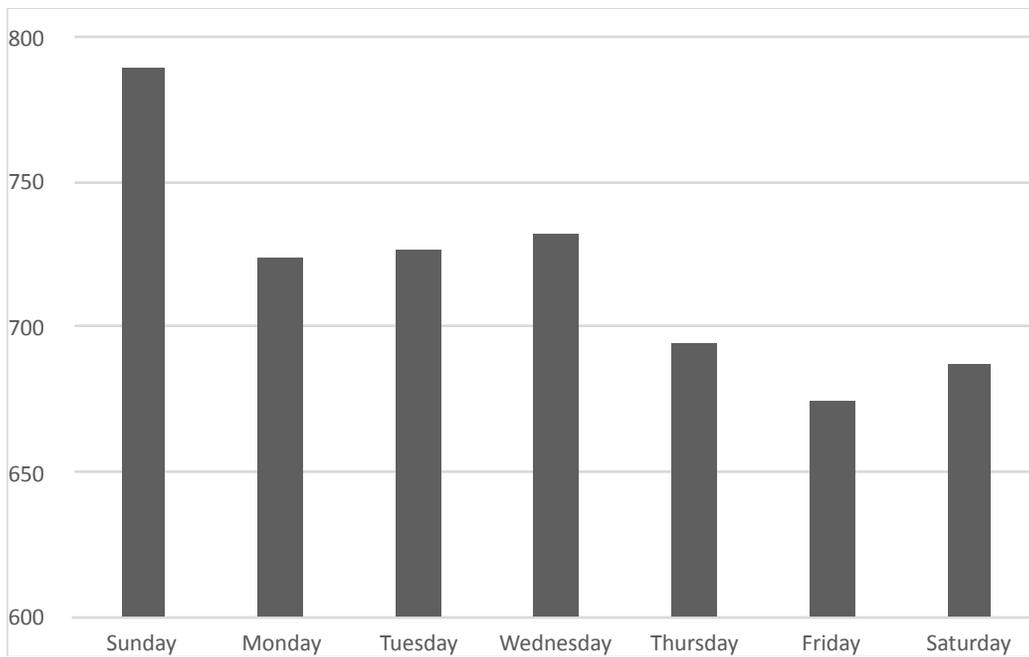


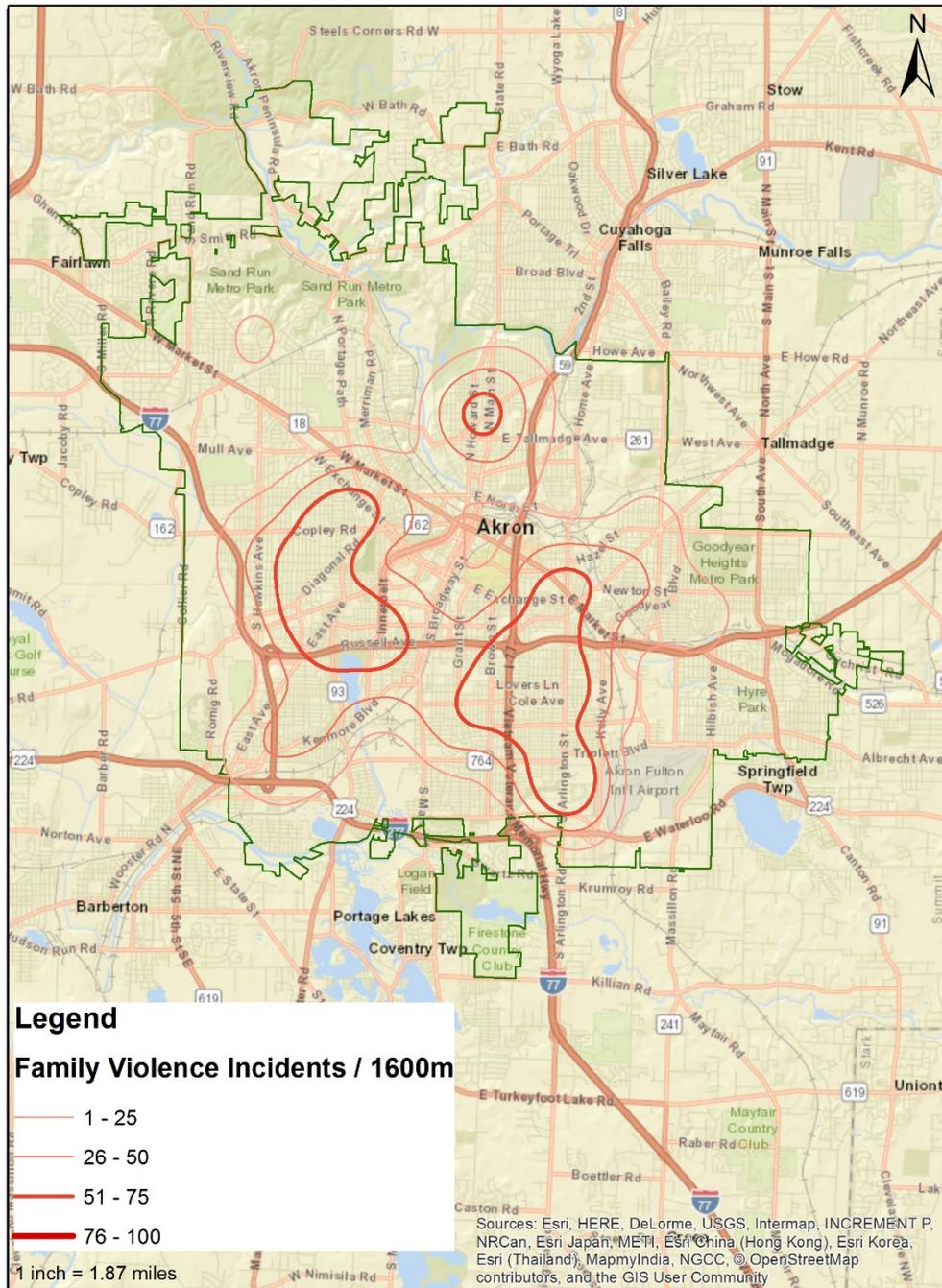
Figure 15. Offenses by Day



Geographic Patterns

Of the 5,027 recorded offenses, 4,988 (99%) had a mappable address for the location of the incident.

Figure 16. Density of Offenses¹¹

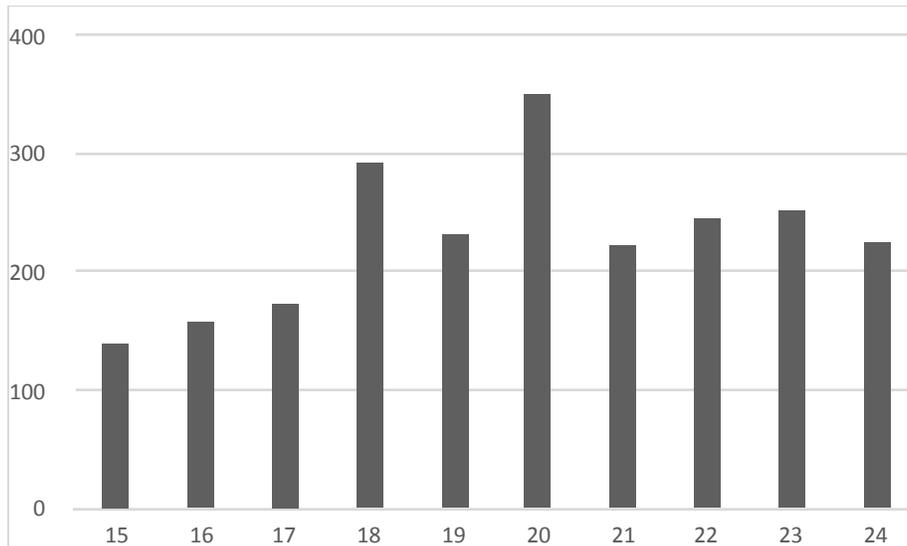


MENACING

Demographics

For the study period, there were 2,287 recorded offenses of menacing, with males accounting for 65% and females for 35% of suspects.

Figure 17. Age of Suspects



Temporal Patterns

Figure 18. Offenses by Month

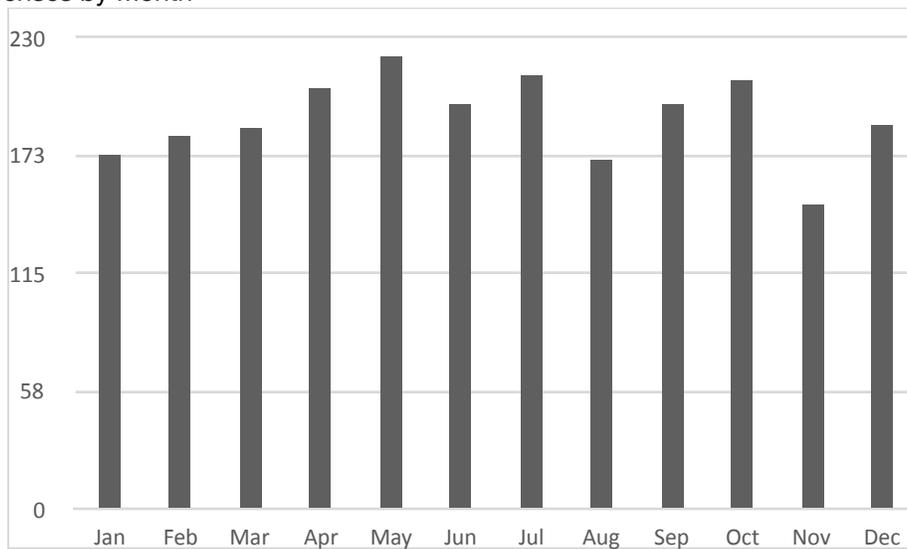
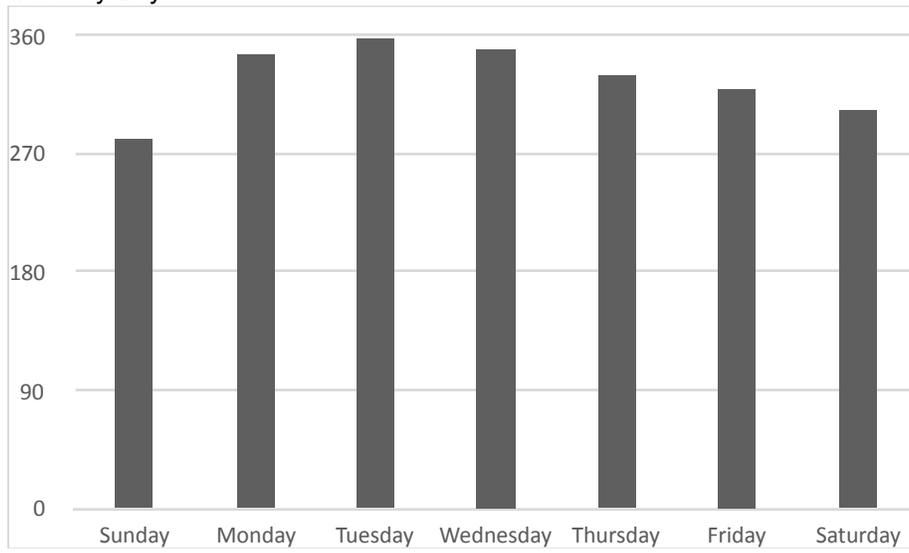


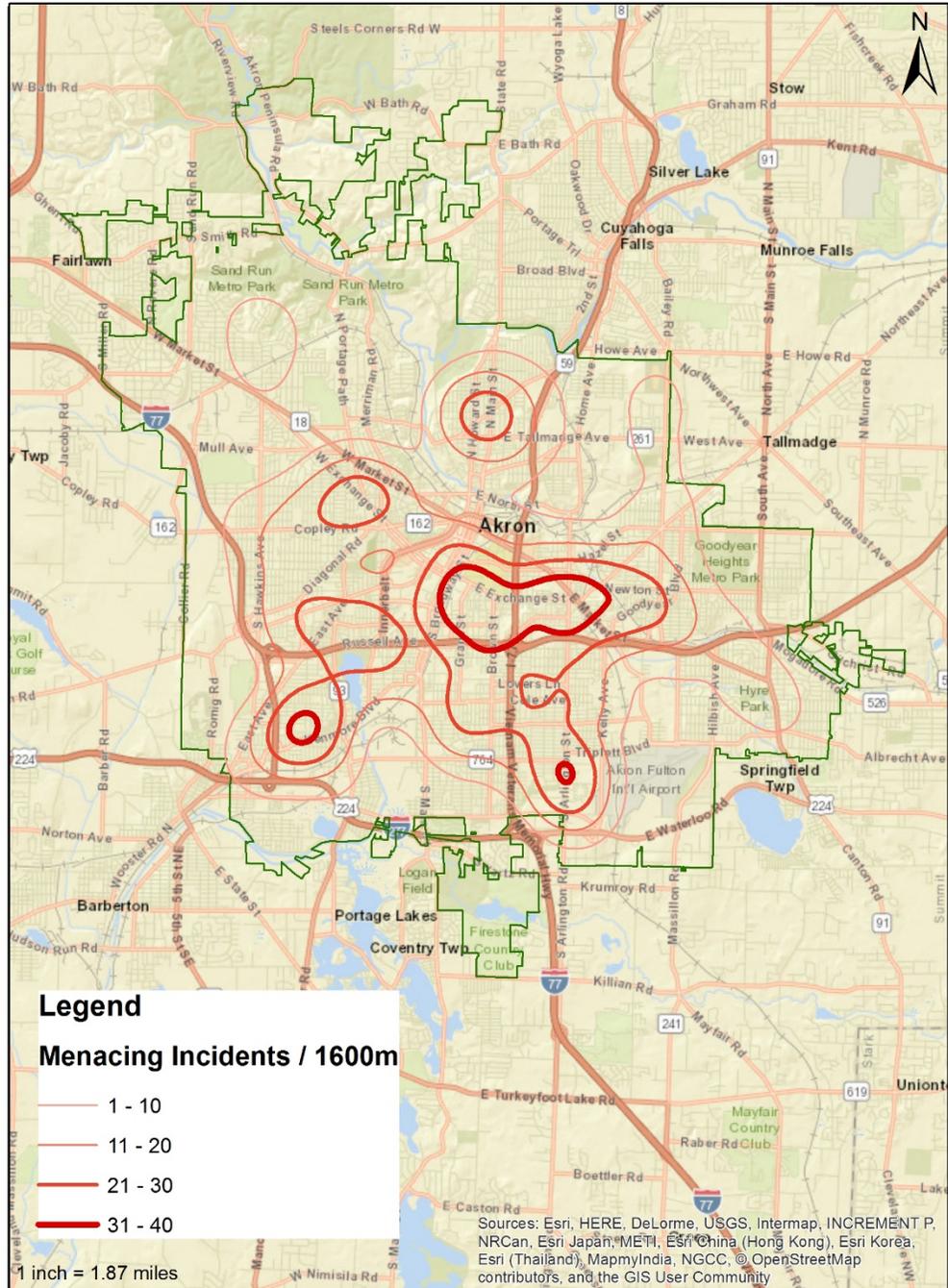
Figure 19. Offenses by Day



Geographic Patterns

Of the 2,287 recorded offenses, 2,267 (99%) had a mappable address for the location of the incident.

Figure 20. Density of Offenses

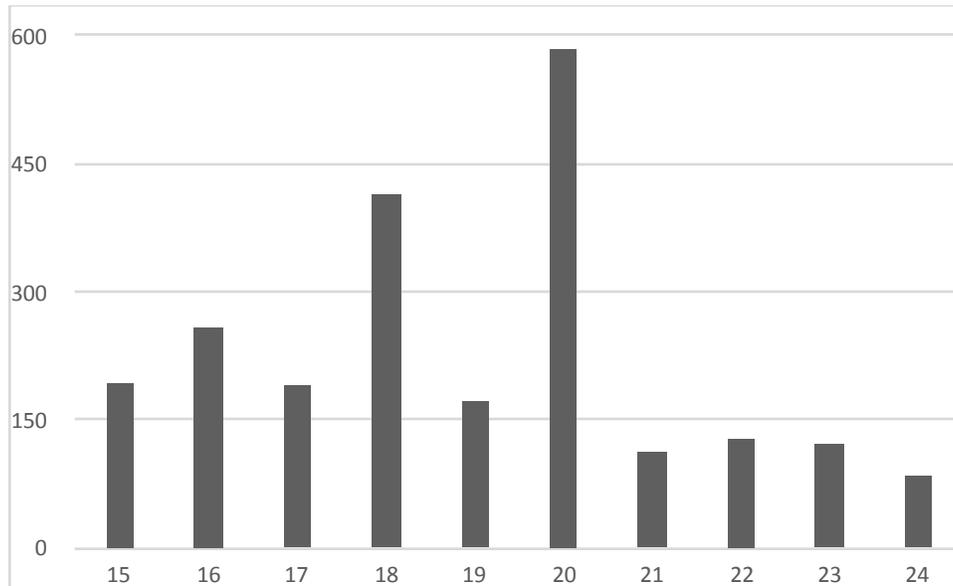


ROBBERY

Demographics

For the study period, there were 2,253 recorded robbery offenses, with males accounting for 90% of suspects and females for 9.5%. In addition, 0.5% of the suspects had a reported gender as unidentified.

Figure 21. Age of Suspects



Temporal Patterns

Figure 22. Offenses by Month

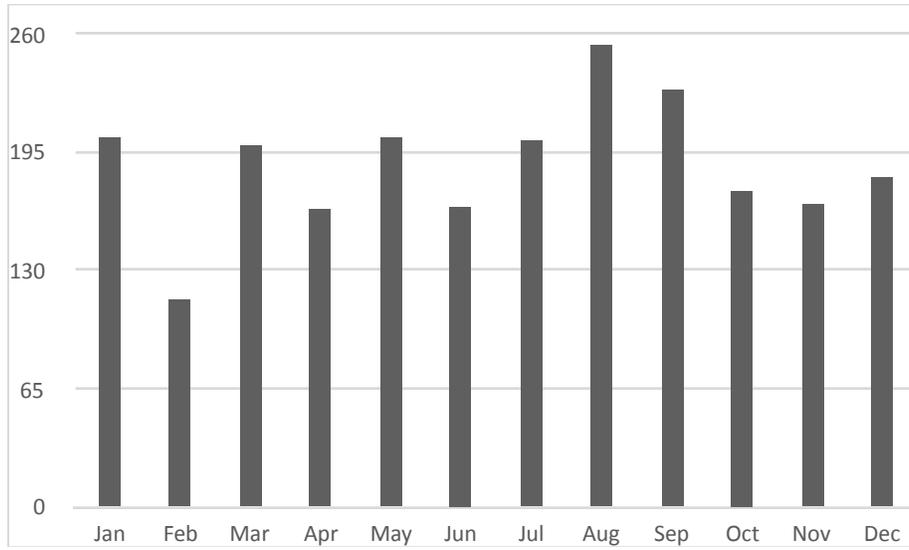
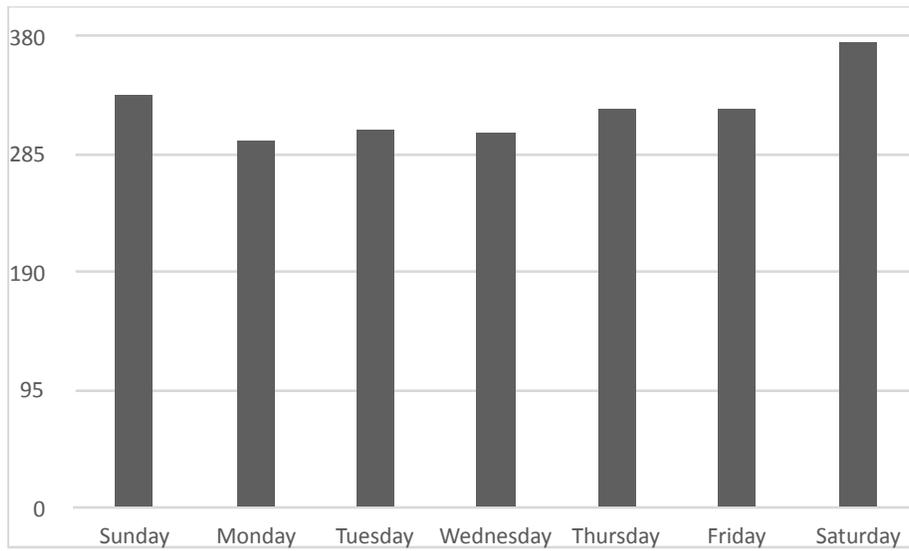


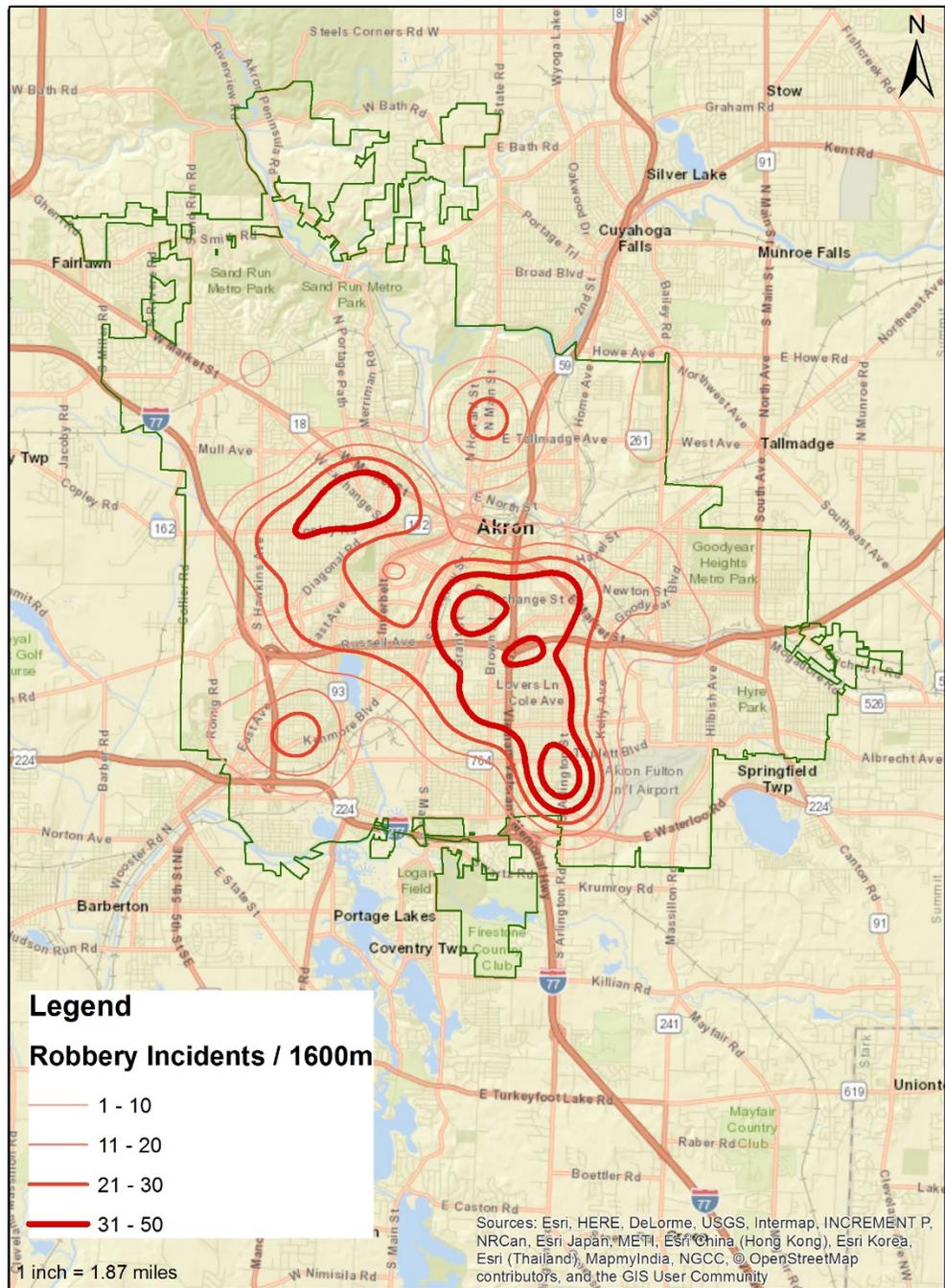
Figure 23. Offenses by Day



Geographic Patterns

Of the 2,253 recorded offenses, 2,202 (98%) had a mappable address for the location of the incident.

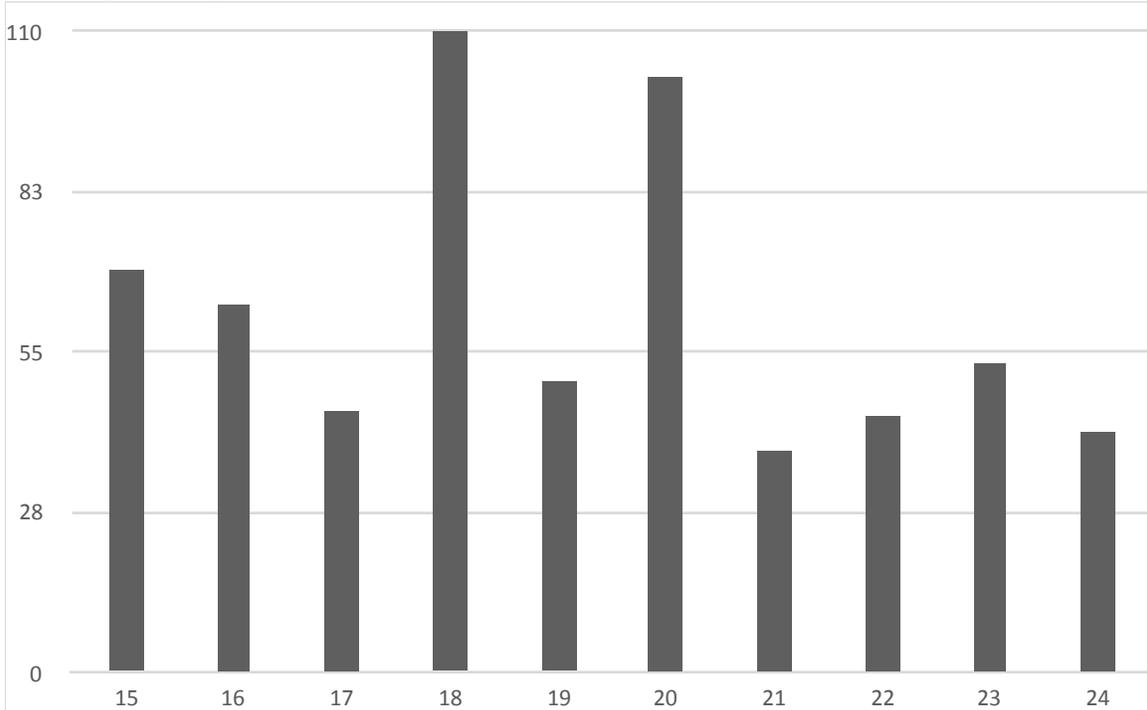
Figure 24. Density of Offenses



SEXUAL¹²Demographics

For the study period, there were 615 recorded sexual offenses. For these offenses, males account for 95% of the suspects and females for 5%.

Figure 25. Age of Suspects



Temporal Patterns¹³

Figure 26. Offenses by Month

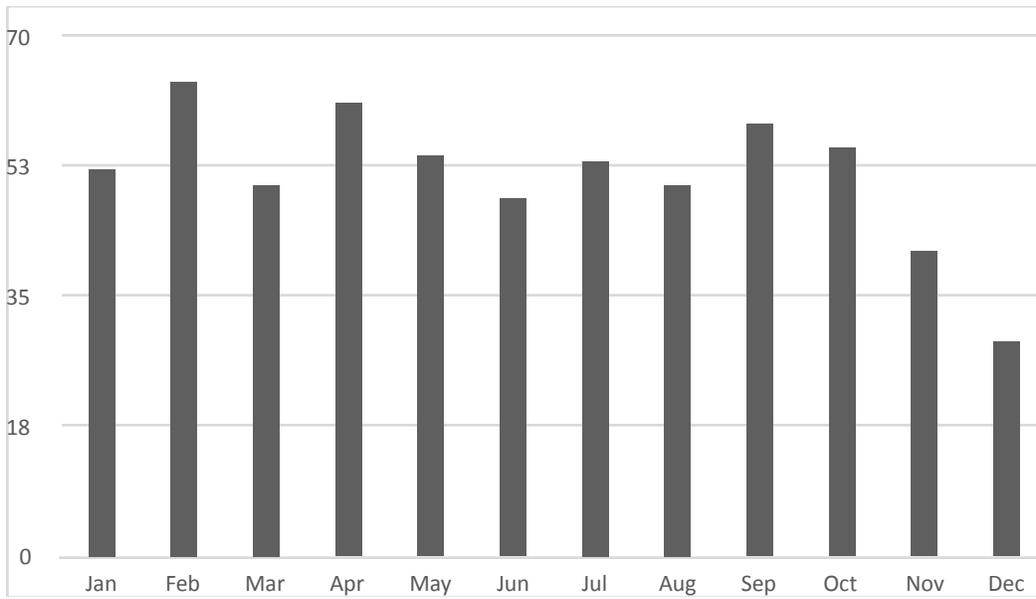
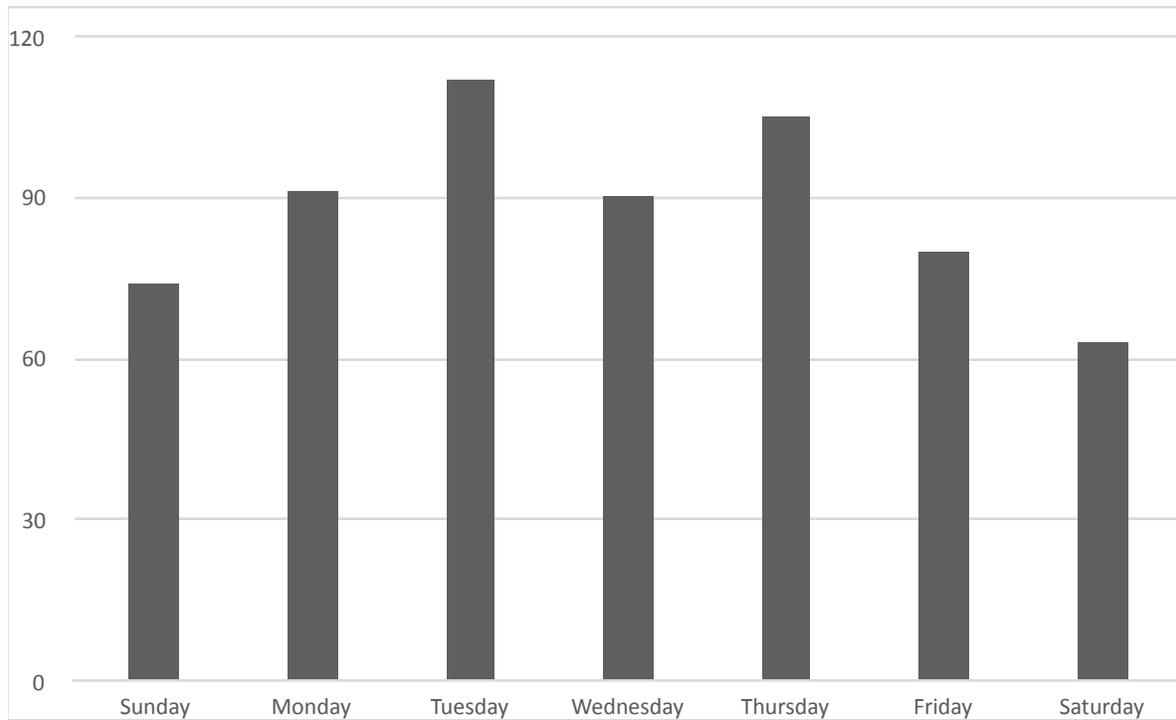


Figure 27. Offenses by Day

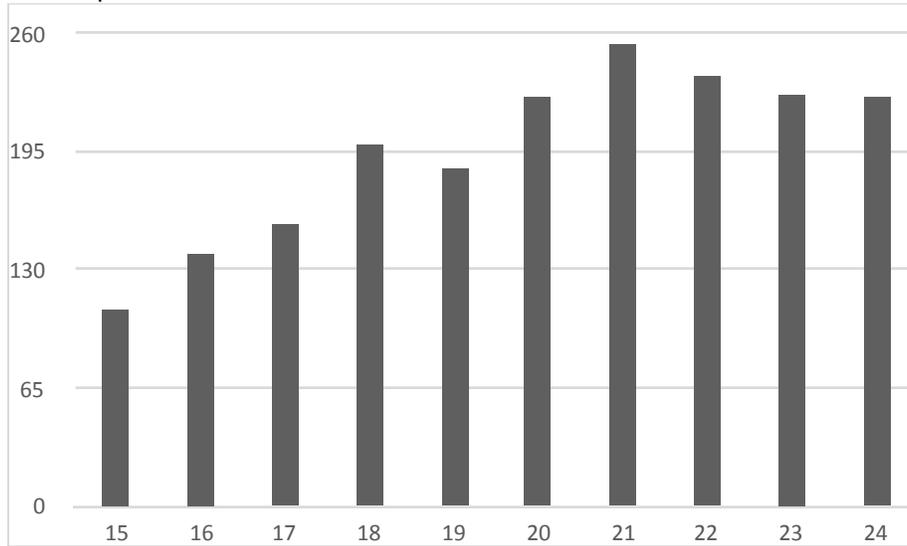


WEAPONS LAW VIOLATIONS

Demographics

For the study period, there were 1953 recorded weapons law violations. Of these, males account for 92% of the suspects and females for 8%.

Figure 28. Age of Suspects



Temporal Patterns

Figure 29. Violations by Month

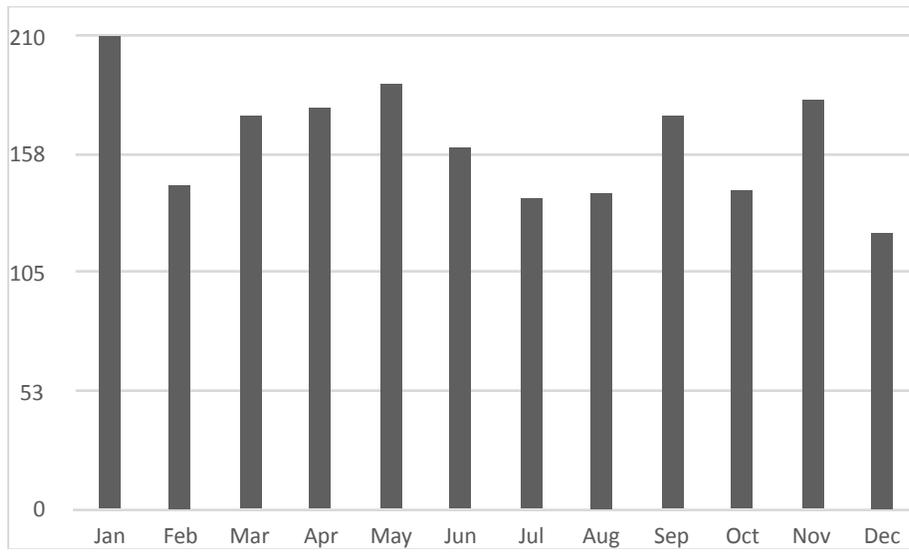
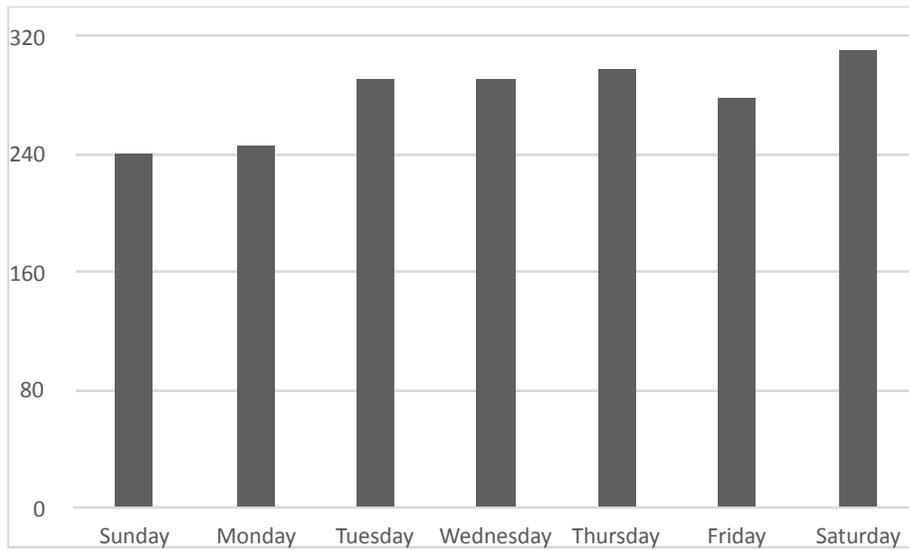


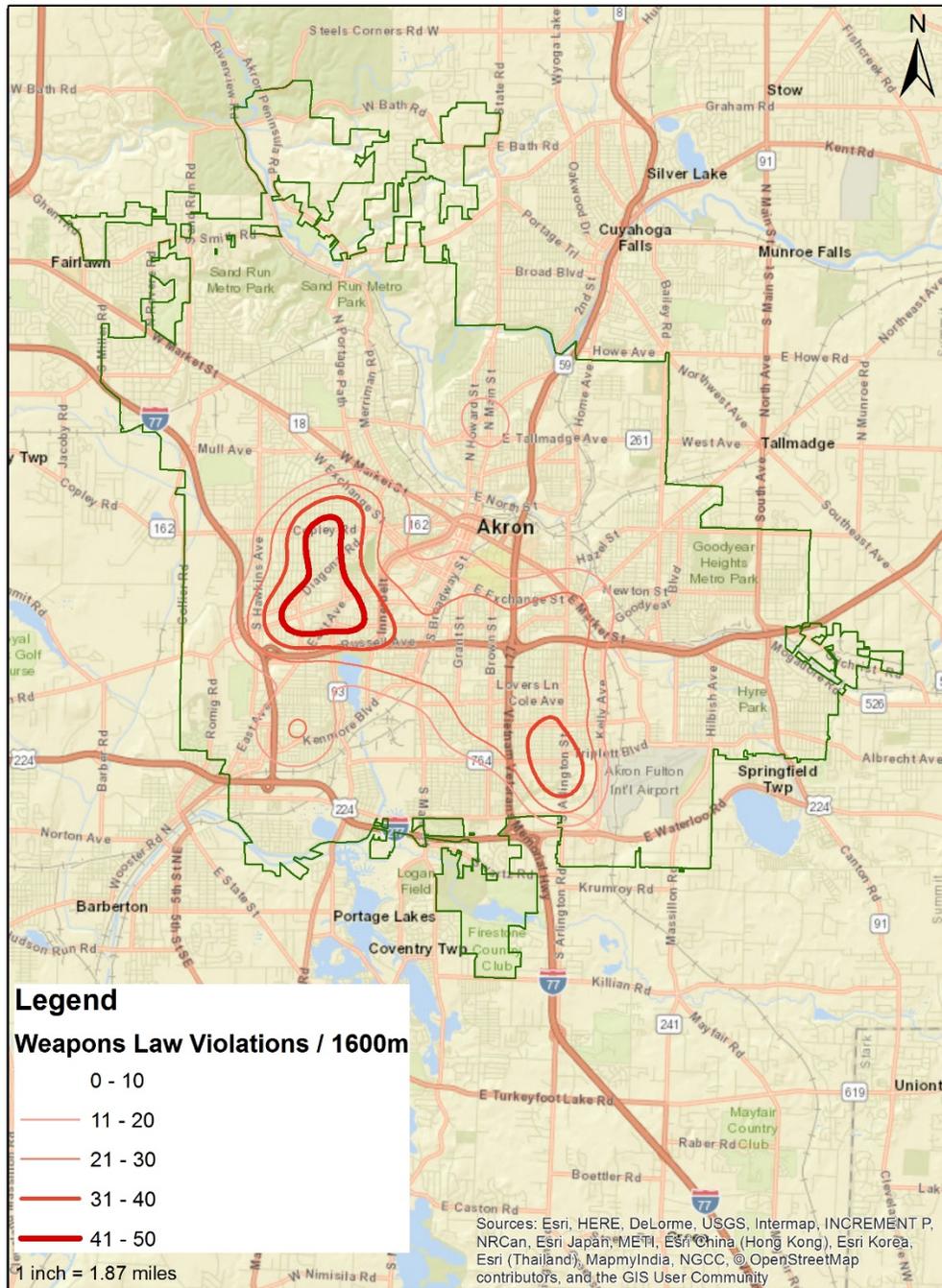
Figure 30. Violations by Day



Geographic Patterns

Of the 1953 recorded violations, 1895 (97%) had a mappable address for the location of the incident.

Figure 31. Density of Offenses



CALLS FOR SERVICE: SHOTS FIRED

Demographics

Demographic characteristics are not available for these data.

Temporal Patterns

Figure 32. Violations by Month

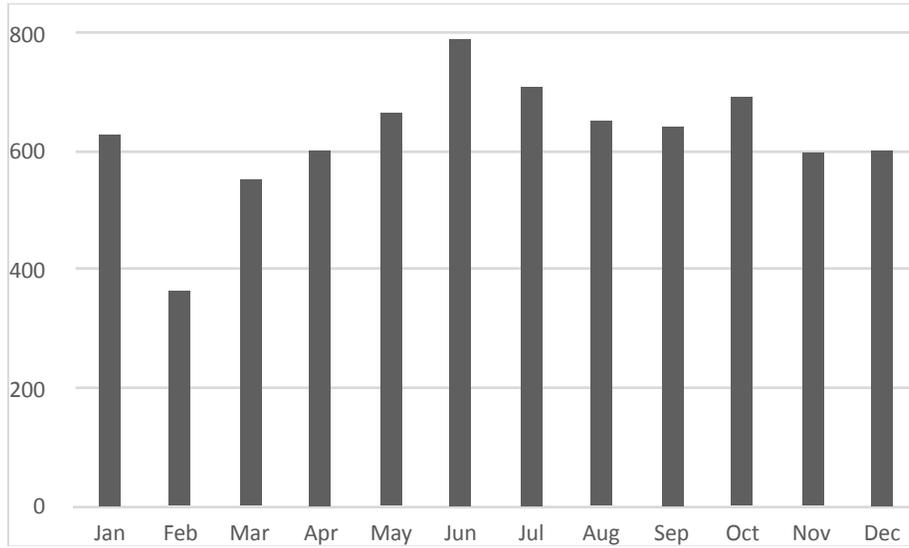
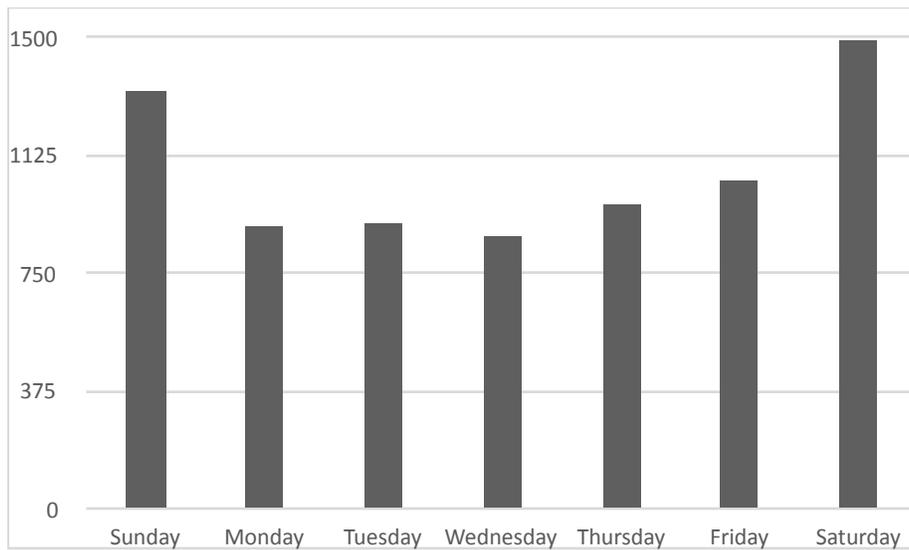


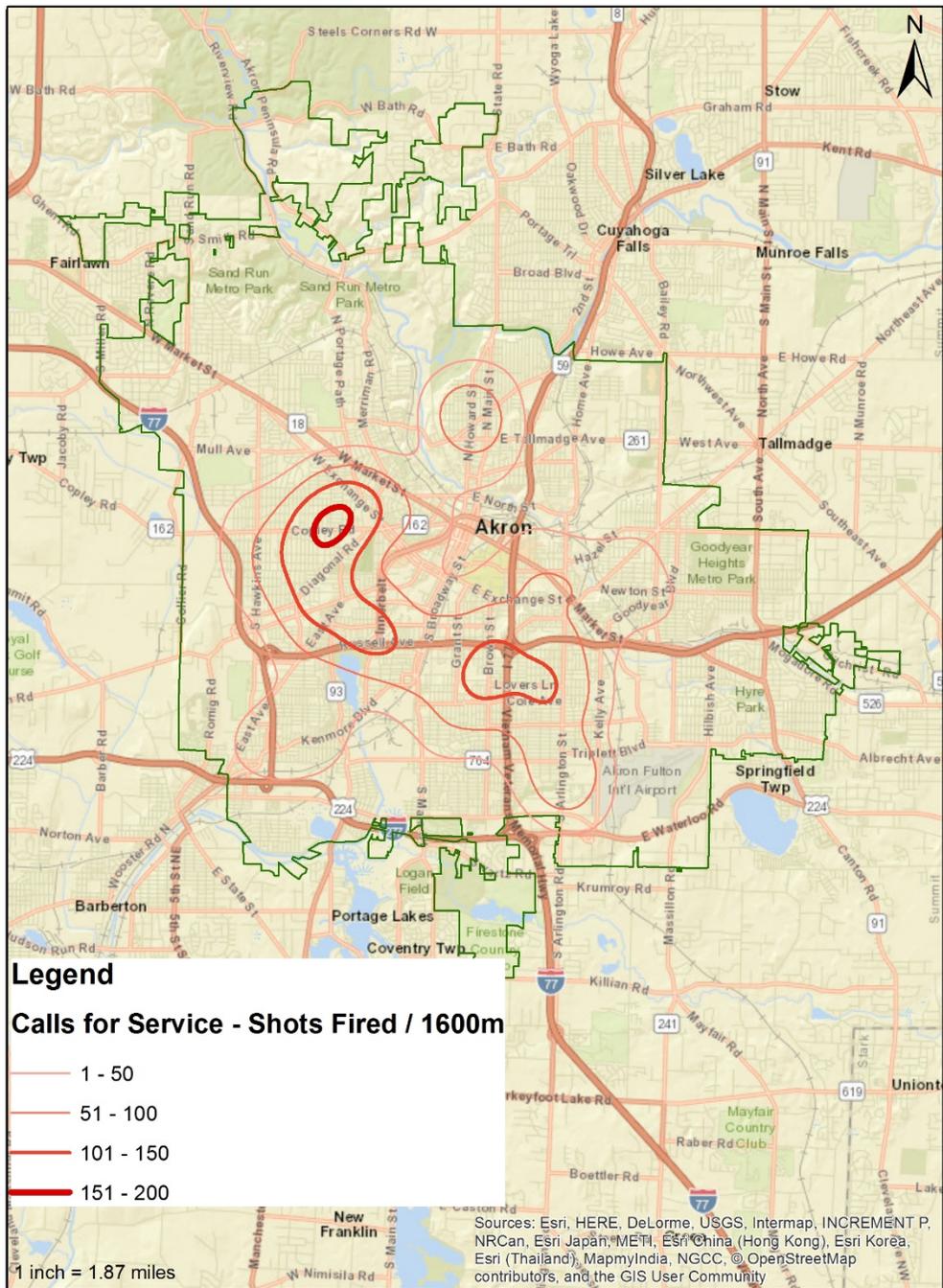
Figure 33. Violations by Day



Geographic Patterns

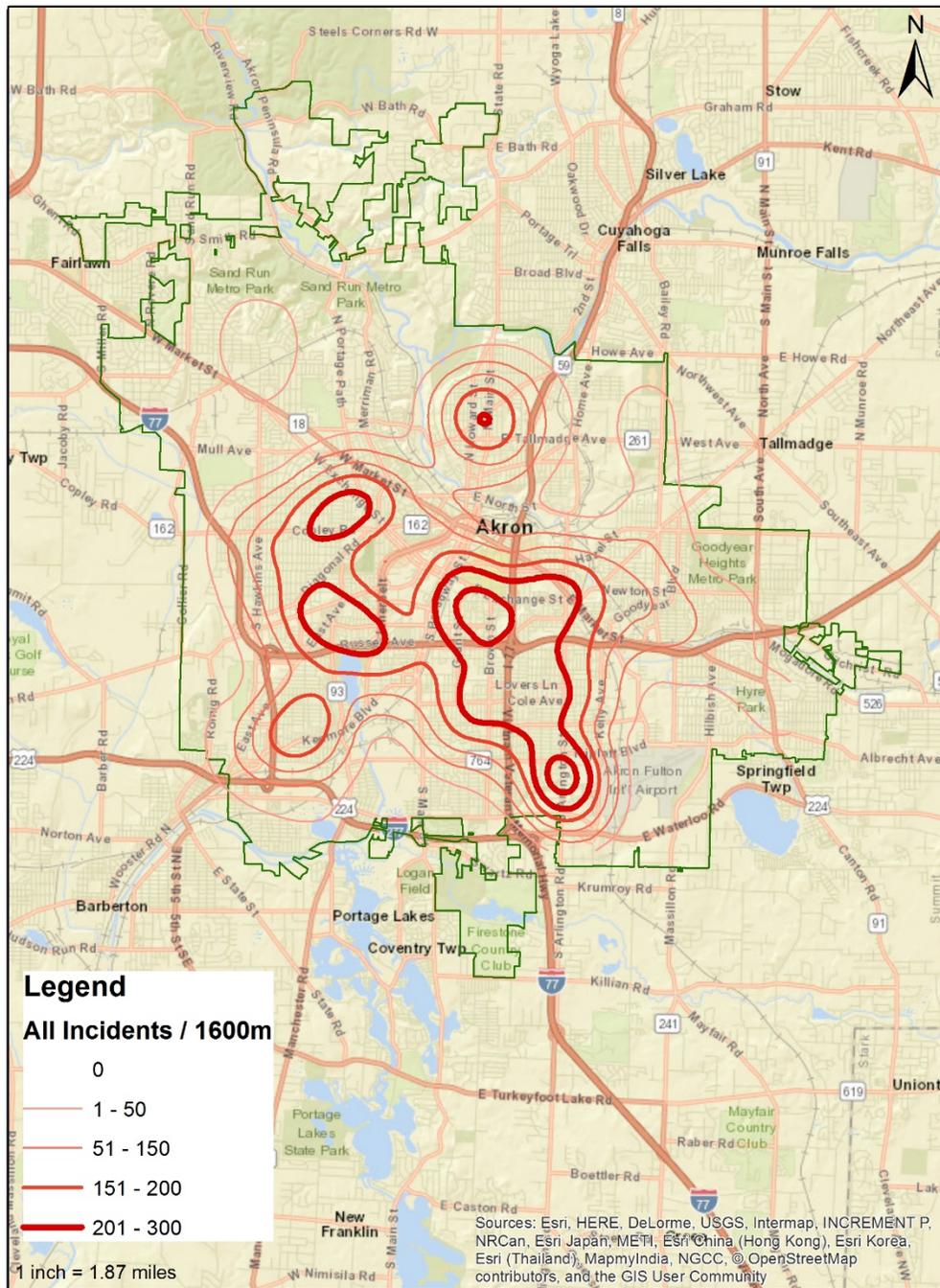
Of the 7486 recorded offenses, 7360 (98%) had a mappable address for the location of the incident.

Figure 34. Density of Offenses



SUMMARY

Figure 35. Geographic Concentration of Offenses based on Suspect Data for: Assault, Felonious Assault, Discharge Firearm, Family Violence, Menacing, and Robbery



APPENDIX C

Summary of Baseline Data

- Based on suspect data, the number of offenses generally increases with age. For assault, felonious assault, and menacing, the increase is modest, whereas it is more pronounced for discharge of firearm and family violence. Alternatively, sexual and robbery offenses display an overall decline with age in the study population. Though there appears to be some anomalies within these patterns, most notably for 18y and 20y, these may be attributed to a small number of incidents that generated multiple offenses, such as a 20 year old who may have attempted to rob 4 victims at once. Additional investigation of these data is needed to explain these spikes. Overall, the trends in age of suspects are instructive for intervention activities as they point to the need to specifically address issues of firearm use and family violence proactively with teens before they leave school (become involved in intimate relationships and become fathers), and also with young men who account for the majority of these suspects. Furthermore, though data on sexual offenses indicates that these decline with age, it needs additional investigation to determine its quality as an evidence base for intervention; robbery offenses also decline, especially from 21y and therefore teens should be the focus age for intervention.
- Based on the suspect data, the number of offenses vary by type over the year. Some, such as assaults, align with existing research that often supports the relationship between increasing temperatures and crime, and with youth not in school for summer break and crime. Felonious assaults are also generally lower in winter, with an anomalous spike in January and sexual offenses are lower in November and December, but lag times in reporting raise uncertainty in the temporal pattern of this particular dataset. Alternatively, other types of offenses in this study display different monthly or seasonal patterns. Family violence is relatively stable across the year with only a slight decline in winter months, as is menacing which demonstrates a modest increase from winter to spring. Robbery has an uneven monthly pattern, but with a notable increase in August and September; discharge of firearm is also uneven with a drop in July. The monthly or seasonal patterns in these data are instructive for intervention in that some types of offenses can be targeted before their peaks, specifically addressing assaults prior to spring and winter increased likelihood of occurrence.
- In addition to monthly or seasonal patterns, it can also be informative to understand the daily patterns of specific offense types. As noted above, the reporting uncertainties regarding sexual offenses result in temporal patterns that may not accurately reflect when these events occur, and therefore these data are not interpreted in this report. All other offense types display daily patterns that can inform intervention and prevention activities. Assaults are highest on weekends, reaching their maximum on Sundays before a marked decline on Mondays. Felonious assaults are more variable during the week, but again display increases at the weekend, with the maximum on Sundays. Discharge firearm offenses peak on Sundays as well, but this is only a slight increase over Tuesdays; Thursdays are markedly low for this offense type. By contrast, family violence only shows moderate daily variation, but with a clear spike on Sundays. Likewise, robbery has a similar weekday variation with a spike on the weekend. Menacing displays a contrasting pattern in that it is highest within the week and lowest on weekends, and notably lowest on Sundays.
- Finally, the suspect data also present spatial patterns that can contribute to geographically targeted intervention and prevention activities. Sexual offenses are not mapped for previously stated reasons and to protect individual privacy of victims. Assault, felonious assault, discharge firearm, and robbery are concentrated in what may be described as a “crescent” stretching from west Akron, south through to the Akron Fulton airport area, with two additional areas of high

density in the extreme southwest of the city and around the North Hill community. Family violence offenses follow a similar pattern, but these extend further to the north, just east of downtown as well. Menacing offenses are concentrated in these areas too, but are more widespread and cut through downtown. These maps display general areas in need of focused intervention and prevention activities, keeping in mind that what causes these outcomes in one area may be different than what causes them in another. This caveat points to the need to investigate causal mechanisms within each area of increased concentration and use this evidence to develop place-based plans for youth violence reduction.

APPENDIX D



Discussion with Youth in Detention: March 17, 2018
Youth Violence Prevention

Facilitators: Crystal Jones, Taba Aleem

Overview: The original plan had been to conduct discussion circles with 10-12 young men in two halls in the Detention Center. According to an apparently new policy, the boys' participation could not be made mandatory. Therefore, a total of six boys chose to talk in depth to the facilitators. This ended up being very beneficial because it created a safe space for deeper sharing by the boys. The session began with a showing of a short 13 minute video, "Aleah", which depicted violence with youth as both victim and perpetrator. This was followed by a discussion facilitated by the three questions below.

Demographics:

Gender: All males

Ages: 16 (1)
 17 (5)

Zip Codes: 44305 (2)
 44306 (2)
 44307 (1)
 Out of State (1)

1. *What would have prevented you from ending up here in detention? What resources, support, etc. did you need?*
 - Stop hanging with wrong people
 - I would be bored if I stopped hanging with my current friends
 - If I grew up in a house with a big yard, some land, more space
 - Bad decisions led me to end up in the Detention Center
 - I ended up in the Detention Center due to an armed robbery; I robbed to eat
 - I'm in the Detention Center because I was accused by friends of being involved in a crime

2. *What do you need to prevent you from ending up BACK here in detention—to make sure this is your LAST time here and that you don't end up in adult prison someday?*
 - I like video gaming and listening to music
 - I like outdoor work, landscaping, raking leaves, and helping my grandmother with yard work
 - I want my kids to have better than I've had
 - I've taken welding classes in high school and I would like to work as a welder
 - I like to rap and would like to get signed to a record label
 - I can create the lyrics but need help with shooting video and that can cost \$100 - \$250 per song
 - Would like to have a job with starting pay at least \$9.50 - \$10.00 per hour
 - In my future, I think that I would enjoy working as a landscaper or roofer
 - I'm interested in a job, school and sports

- I like to play basketball
- I'm a handy man and I'm good at putting things back together and working on cars
- Mechanical engineering might be a good choice for me
- I like drawing, gardening and landscaping
- I would benefit from having a mentor

3. *What do you think should be included in a plan to reduce youth crime?*

- I go to counseling, anger management, gun safety, and CPT (not sure whether the youth was referring to the Court's Thinking for a Change or Child Responsibility Project)
- My mentor helped me to make improvements by using rewards/incentives
- I've never thought about a dream job
- I've never thought about what I might be doing in 5 years
- I'm interested in a career as a rapper and music producer (When asked if he has used the recording studio at the Tech Zone within the Akron Summit County Library, he claims the equipment like the microphones were cheap and do not produce the sound he wants).

APPENDIX E

Youth Violence Discussion Circles

December 9, 2017

Location: Second Baptist Church

2-4 p.m.

Question 1: What is your overall thinking about what Tupac shared in the video segment?*

Circle 1

- Tupac was trying to respond to/answer/address what the perception of the young black male was at that time.
- What Tupac said at that time (20 yrs. ago) was timely even by today's standards/events.
- What Tupac said leveled the playing field.
- Tupac's statements were true because men want to protect themselves
- Tupac's words re: guns (violence) and the media's double standard; his anger was real and thoughtful but was taken out of context
- We all want to live and not die
- Love Tupac and his words were true – Black men are not accepted no matter what he does – which adds to the anger that Black men have
- ...” Don't want to kill but we don't want to die...” - can relate to quote as she wants to leave a better legacy for family
- Tupac's words were/are true
- Dysfunctional society is a true diagnosis but does not give a solution to the problem; need better policies to end violence and not contribute to it

Circle 2

- We all need protection
- Ironic what he said in the 80's is true today
- So familiar 20 years later it's the same thing
- We want the same things as white people want but they look at our community differently
- Media portrayal – make you wonder what is the real motivation of the media
- Media tries to distract us from the real issues
- Media's purpose namely within the 24-hour cycle is to sell products
- Media has the power to create perception and perception becomes reality for many

- Perception influences one's thoughts and way of life
- **Young people – How does the media's perception of you affect you in school?**
 - It doesn't change how they treat each other when celebrities are beefing; it does not affect how we treat each other
 - Teachers are nice and we do fun stuff

***Question 1 was based on a 1994 interview of Tupac Shakur by Ed Gordon. Segments of the video were shown at the Community Conversation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S73X6YXK5pA>**

Have you personally lost someone to violence?

- With homies in a car...had been beefing with homies...case cold and unsolved.
- No not touched by violence
- Cousin killed with friend
- Witnessed 2 murders/adopted brother's neighbor affected
- Son killed
- No, but worked with young people who have caused the loss
- No but lost clients to violence
- Grandmother, cousins

Circle 3

- Didn't like Tupac then
- Said things believed now
- Want to go back and revisit
- Pass to get into society
- Tupac loved himself first – loved the people
- Loved Tupac-- he was a genius
- Money for wars, none for the poor
- Ahead of his time
- Not afraid to speak on media
- Could have damaged career
- Tupac brought others to do it
- Tupac should have been named Real Deal
- Not afraid to speak out

- Tupac praised after death
- “Bring the pain” voice for the voiceless
- Speaking true facts
- Would be less violence
- Appreciate Tupac using arts & culture to put out knowledge
- Was nonviolent but taken out violently
- What are our alternatives?
- They silence poor

Circle 4

- Importance of guidance & influence
- Media (its influence on perception)
- Environment and trauma of environment
- Fear & acceptance ...rooted the anger – youth & homeless population
- White privilege (may disallow fear)?
- Importance of speaking to “real issues”... getting truth out is a means to a better existence
- Coming together = powerful things
- Importance of family

Question 2: Open Round Discussion/What should be done about the violence?**Circle 1**

- Black on Black crime: lack necessary nurturing – Black males need to take care of their children
- Set (high) expectations for children and for each other. Go back to the days where we looked out for each other. Values also need to be incorporated (no matter if it is one or two parent home).
- Current culture is not for us and does not benefit people of color – so what do we do as we’re stuck here?
- No matter who is in the home, how do we make positive programs accessible?
- Incorporate principles in the families
- We need finances made available to us
- We have the money (funds) but it needs to be re-distributed (research: \$15 million to churches weekly)

- Children should be raised with some type of spirituality in their lives. Also parenting classes are needed with a support group being made available during times of need (resources).
- We need to have our own and not rely on others
- Share successful information so that “it” works for us all (draw upon the good).

Circle 2

- Educating our community – parenting
- Settle differences – conflict resolution & atonement
- The acceptance of responsibility when you’re the cause of the offense/loss
- Encourage people to work it out – mediation, Peace Circles
- Listen more to young people to hear what they have to say – young people want to be heard – more listening circles
- Creating more opportunities for social interactions, ex. dances & other fun occasions
- Young people need resources and stable environment to grow
- Meeting of basic needs
- Community resources, mentoring, livable wage jobs for young people
- Communicate better
- Opportunities for people to express themselves – remembering to return to community and share and be a resource for others that are trying to do better
- People being willing to listen to each other – misunderstanding can be the ongoing cause of why people are not getting along
- Sharing – Take time to listen – try to be more sensitive when your priorities are not understood & change how we are communicating
- Getting the community more engaged and buying into what we are trying to do – so they can have a chance to be at the table

Circle 3

- Black person not criminal for having gun
- We think arming ourselves is bad
- Show kids how to use/respect guns
- Some young people don’t respect life or love self
- Hate kills the hater
- We have to teach forgiveness to stop cycles – return, remain, regain
- Boys growing up without dad or in jail
- Allowing others coming and saying what we should do

- Men/fathers need to be involved
- Time to change self/thinking
- Some crimes are mental health related
- Deal with mental health in courts when necessary
- Legislate change so prosecution doesn't have control (grand jury process)
- Show people and kids you care
- Teach early (parents teach them early)
- Alternatives to jail
- Neighborhood funding
- Change mindset (celebrate positives)
- Old building/new ideas
- Teach kids high paying job skills
- Work with moms & pregnant women

Circle 4

- Control of environment
- Acceptance – (managing our circumstances)
- Raising men? (environment)
- Trauma – witness to violence
- Confusion produces anger – everyone is “scared”
- Maturity (how does it happen?)
- Environment – how can you impact yours to be better? Growth, change, improve me!, understanding
- Hopeful
- Each One Teach One

APPENDIX F

Resources Serving Youth or Young Adults in the Akron Area



Resource	Purpose/Services Provided	Population Served
Akron After School	Math and reading support, enrichment activities	Elementary, middle school
Akron Alternative Academy – Pupil Adjustment Program (PAP)	To enable students to secure APS High School diploma outside traditional classroom setting	High school students Ages 16-21
Akron Urban League	Improving life through self-reliance and social empowerment	All ages
Akron Digital Academy-Remove-no longer a separate non-profit. The computer room was absorbed in the Akron County Public Library system.	Customized to meet unique educational, social and emotional needs of each student	Grades 6 – 12
Akron Digital Dropout Recovery Program-Remove	Re-enrollment	Ages 18 - 22
Alchemy, Inc.	Development of urban adolescent males through mentoring and the telling, discussion, and analysis of mythological stories and fairy tales told to the beat of an African drum	Urban boys and young men
Asian Services in Action (ASIA)	Access to culturally and linguistically appropriate information, health and social services	Immigrant and refugee youth
Because He Cares	Provides opportunities for children and youth to participate in a variety of recreational, cultural, social and civic activities.	Ages 7-18
Big Brothers Big Sisters	One-to-one mentoring	Ages 6 – 24 – Only can confirm through age 21

Resource	Purpose/Services Provided	Population Served
City of Akron Peace Makers	Youth civic and anti-crime programming; leadership development	High school students – grades 9 th -11 th
Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG)	Support services for students at risk of dropping out of school	9 th graders at Buchtel, East, Kenmore, North
Dream Team Boxing & Learning Center	Youth mentoring, training and psychological development, sports and recreation	
EMS (Education Motivation Success, Inc.)	Services to support high school graduation leading to college enrollment, employment, or armed services	
Fadia	Services to support high school graduation and college and career readiness	Ages 11-18
Fame Fathers	To Increase number of children with involved, responsible fathers and significant males	
Family Resource Center (Juvenile Court)	Case management services to troubled youth and their families	
Fathers & Sons of NE Ohio	To help men remove barriers to achieving personal development and practicing responsible fatherhood	Single fathers and children
First Faith Development Corp	Faith-based community outreach to aid and encourage youth throughout formative years	
First Glance	Kenmore neighborhood youth center providing assistance, education, life skills for at risk youth	Teens and young adults
God's Chosen One's Young Men and Women's Organization – Remove? – website blocked	Faith-based youth support	
i.C.A.R.E. Mentoring	One-to-one mentoring	K-12 APS students
Jobs for Ohio's Graduates (JOGS)	Summer employment and high school based support programming	High school students – ages 16 -24
Junior Achievement of North Central Ohio	Youth workforce readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy	K - 12

Resource	Purpose/Services Provided	Population Served
Life Skills	Alternative options to secure high school diploma	High school students
Magic Mentors (Catholic Charities)	To create and supervise long-term relationships between adults and at-risk youth	School-age youth
Man 2 Man	To provide fathers with skills to bond with their children	Fathers and children
Minority Behavioral Health Group	In house and school-based behavioral health services; prevention and mental health education	Youth and adults
Ms. Julie's Kitchen ???	Vegan preparation of local produce	
Nation of Islam Minister Stephen Muhammad	Community Conversations	Young black males
National Youth Advocate Program	Workforce development for young adults	Young adults in foster care or emancipated
Oasis Outreach Opportunity, Inc.	To create an incubating space to support at-risk youth through artistic, recreational and spiritual activities	Ages 12-24
Ohio Guidestone Community Solutions Organization	Behavioral health treatment services, skill building programs and prevention opportunities	Children and families
Ohio Dept. of Job and Family Services - Next Step Program Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) and Wage Pathways Program	Workforce development	Ages 14-21 SYEP – 16-24 Wage – 18-23
100 Black Men Mentoring Program	Mentoring	Grades 4-12
Pastoral Counseling Services	Professional therapeutic and community support services	All ages
Peace, Justice & Equality (PJE) Restorative Justice Program Summit County Juvenile Court	Peace Circles – School based, community based, and Juvenile Court diversionary program	Youth up to age 18
Phoenix School (YMCA)	Behavioral modification management services to youth referred by Summit County Juvenile Court or local public school districts	Grades 4-12

Resource	Purpose/Services Provided	Population Served
Project GRAD	Support services, programs and scholarships for students in Akron's Buchtel Cluster schools	K - 12
Project Learn	Free adult and family literacy programs, GED tutoring	Adults
Project Rise – Akron Public Schools	Supplemental education services to children and youth experiencing homelessness	APS students
Proyecto Raices (Recognizing and Integrating Culture, Education and Service)	Educational and social support to children of Latino/Hispanic families residing in the Akron area	Hispanic Children of Summit County
Reach Opportunity Center	Community based education and support center	All ages
Rooted Akron (Big Love Network)	Local business providing methods to increase self-help, health and healing, e.g. yoga, reiki	All ages
Safe Landing for Boys and Girls Street Outreach	Resources to prevent homelessness and promote stability	Ages 11-17
Second Chance Youth Mentoring Program (Ohio Dept. of Youth Services)	Assist youth with employment, education, behavior, life skills, etc. through mentorship	
Shelter Care Inc.	Residential treatment program for children who manifest emotional, behavioral, or family adjustment type problems.	Ages 6 - 18
SOAR – Leap Program (Student Outreach Alternative Resource)	Works with Akron Public Schools to give students the opportunity to return to school and prosper	Ages 4 - 22
South Street Ministries	Offers a variety of youth enrichment programs including Girls Studio for adolescent girls, Open Gym for youth 6 th thru young adult, Football for adolescent males (6 th -12 th), and Bike Shop for youth ages 3-19. Provides reentry support groups for adults.	Ages 3-19
South Akron Youth Mentoring (SAYM)	Faith-based mentoring program	Ages 5 – 19 in S. Akron Arlington Street Corridor

Resource	Purpose/Services Provided	Population Served
Students with a Goal/Akron (SWAG)	Support services for youth who have fallen through the cracks at home and school	Middle and high school students
Summa Health Behavioral Health Institute	Mental Health	Ages 18+
Summa Health Traumatic Stress Center	Mental Health	Ages 18+
The Bigger Picture/ Performing Arts	Multifaceted theatrical production held in collaboration with Miller South to raise awareness of arts education	
The Improvement Movement (Mike Wilson 330-400-6126)		
UMADAOP/COTY	Alcohol and substance abuse education, awareness and early intervention techniques, personal development, leadership skills, training and recreational events.	Ages 6 - 17
Urban Ounce of Prevention	Building Dreams Mentoring Program; New Bridges Program promotes growth, learning and character building; Enrichment activities	Ages 8 – 18 7-17
Urban Vision	Education, spiritual and recreational programs	North Hill children and families

APPENDIX G

YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PHASE April 1, 2019

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, youth violence is one of the leading causes of death and nonfatal injuries in the United States.¹ In 2017, the City of Akron recognized the need to take aggressive and coordinated action to prevent the commission of violent crimes. With that in mind, a passionate group of community members, public health professionals, and city officials formed a Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee to develop a strategic plan for youth violence prevention in the City of Akron and Summit County.

In 2018, the Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee completed Akron/Summit County's Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan. The plan used historical violent crime rates, crime mapping, readily available peer reviewed literature, and an inventory of local resources to closely examine the violent crime in Akron. The Akron/Summit County Plan concluded that those with the greatest need for intervention and support were children and young adults between the ages of 15 and 24. The Plan also identified and proposed 8 different Strategic Approaches to remedy gaps and coordinate efforts in Akron's continuum of comprehensive support services for those youth.

The immediate next step is to develop a detailed plan for the realistic implementation of the 8 Strategic Approaches. This document is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of the causes and effects of youth violent crime, but rather a blueprint for coordinated, collaborative action—with roles for multiple stakeholders, including government officials, businesses leaders, nonprofit agencies, concerned citizens, parents, and the youth themselves.

¹ Wilkins, N., Tsao, B., Hertz, M., Davis, R., Klevens, J. (2014). Connecting the Dots: An Overview of the Links Among Multiple Forms of Violence. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Oakland, CA: Prevention Institute.

A. Summary of Akron's History of Youth Violence²

In December 2011, 11 homicides occurred in a two-week period that is often referred to as the “awful week of murders.” All the deaths during this time were the result of gun violence, and several of the deceased were under the age of 25. The murders inspired community members to begin the Stop the Violence Movement, which was formed as a way for the community to work through its grief together. Following that awful week, 250 community members came together and decided that something needed to be done.

In early 2012, a grassroots coalition called Save a Life (SAL) was formed in order to find ways to help end violence in Akron. In February 2012, with sponsorship by Akron Summit Community Action, Inc., SAL hosted a public screening and discussion of the critically acclaimed documentary, “The Interrupters.” At the end of the screening the organizers helped create an action report that suggested how to best address the violence in Akron. Although a good start, progress stalled for various reasons soon after.

In 2013, Healthy Connections Network and the Minority Health Roundtable made gun violence a top priority, but were not able to make much initial progress. After two years of searching for direction, they decided to hold a public forum to specifically address gun violence within the community. The forum, held on April 25, 2015, featured discussion circles focused on how gun violence affects health and wellbeing. In total, over 100 people came together to discuss the personal impact gun violence was having on their lives. Despite the progress, some community members felt that the forum was too much talk and not enough action. This sentiment was not without merit, as next steps again proved elusive.

The election of Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan, who took office January 1, 2016, provided a catalyst for change and brought new leadership and attention to the problem of gun-related youth violence. The Mayor asked Chief of Staff James Hardy and Deputy Mayor for Public Safety Charles Brown to work with Councilwoman Veronica Sims and the core group that had organized the April 2015 forum to determine what steps next steps were feasible. From this directive came the Akron Youth Violence Steering Committee (the Committee), to guide a process for addressing youth violence prevention.

In 2017, after holding listening sessions for residents to raise their concerns with him, Mayor Horrigan made community safety a priority. The Mayor's Office identified funding through a grant from the Ohio Department of Public Safety and the Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) to hire a consultant to facilitate community engagement and lead the Committee in the drafting of the strategic plan to address Akron's youth violence issues.

The Youth Violence Prevention Preliminary Strategic Plan (“Strategic Plan”) is the result of the hard work and dedication of every passionate person who has touched this community initiative.

B. Summary of the 8 Strategic Youth Violence Prevention Approaches

In the Strategic Plan, the Committee recognized that community members, organizations, and agencies are already actively working to reduce youth violence. However, these important efforts are not well-coordinated. Indeed, many actively involved community members are unaware of the good work

² Substantial portions of this summary were originally published in the Youth Violence Prevention Plan (Research and Development Phase)

that is being done by others. Effective collaboration and information-sharing are essential to transform the disjointed efforts of many into a cohesive effort to achieve a measurable outcome.

The Committee set a goal of reducing youth violence in Akron by 20% by the year 2024. To achieve this goal, the Committee recommended the implementation of 8 strategies to combat the problem of youth violence.³ These strategies are:

1. Providing more mentoring opportunities;
2. Maximizing recreational activities available during discretionary time;
3. Providing increased re-entry support for young people exiting the criminal justice system;
4. Strengthening positive relationships between community members and the police;
5. Increasing access to mental health and substance abuse support and treatment;
6. Reducing street violence involving guns;
7. Improving community awareness and involvement; and
8. Developing greater institutional infrastructure to support this work.

The next step is the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

A. Oversight of Implementation

At the implementation stage of the Strategic Plan, the oversight of the process will shift to the Summit Coalition for Community Health Improvement (SCCHI), a coalition of government, community, and institutional leaders focusing on improving population-level health outcomes in Summit County. Summit County Public Health (SCPH) staffs SCCHI, and will provide ongoing support for implementation, including identifying an SCCHI point person for each strategy. SCCHI meets monthly at SCPH.

B. Identification of Leaders for Each Strategy

For each of the 8 recommended strategies, the Committee identified two co-leaders to convene a workgroup of community stakeholders. One co-leader will be an institutional leader in the Akron community with expertise working in a specific strategic area. The second co-leader will be a trusted community partner, typically a community organization, that has also been engaged in that same strategic space.

The charge of the workgroup will be to develop a work-plan, timeline, and action steps to achieve objectives consistent with the overarching goal of the Strategic Plan. The Committee also anticipates that the workgroup participants will adopt or refine the core objective associated with each strategy. The core objective describes the focus of their work. Its achievement will be a measure of their success. All core objectives will be tied directly to the overarching goal of reducing youth violence through prevention, intervention, deterrence, and enforcement.

³ For a more extensive description of these strategies, see Strategic Plan

Co-leaders will lead the workgroup through completion of the action steps, reporting their progress a quarterly basis at SCCHI meetings. These co-leaders will commit to their leadership role by signing an agreement,³ which will be in effect for a 12-month period. The structure through which this work continues will be dependent on the assessment of progress, including successes and challenges, during that first year.

C. Targeted Youth, by Risk Level

For the purposes of coordination, organization, and focus in implementation, the Committee finds it useful to describe the target group, youth age 15-24, according to their “risk level,” i.e., Stable Youth, At-Risk Youth, Violent Youth, and Returning Citizens. These categories are defined as follows:

- **Stable Youth:** Low risk youth who need sustained guidance, mentorship, and support to stay on a positive life track.
- **At-Risk Youth:** Moderate risk youth who need direct intervention to abstain from dangerous and unhealthy associations. Often youth who have been exposed to violence themselves.
- **Violent Youth:** High risk youth who are often affiliated with a street gang. These youth need drastic and immediate intervention from law enforcement/community partners.
- **Returning Citizens:** Youth who have been exposed to the juvenile justice system and require support and intervention to prevent recidivism.

D. Framework for Each Strategy

For each of the 8 recommended strategies, the Committee offers the following elements: the institutional and community co-leaders; possible target demographics; proposed core objective (for the workgroup to adopt or refine); and a short, non-exhaustive list of possible community stakeholders to include in the workgroup. See Chart Appendix 2 for a visual representation of how these elements and strategies fit together.

1. Strategic Approach One: Mentoring

- a)** Co- Leaders: United Way of Summit County; Kiononia Education and Family Foundation
- b)** Target: Stable Youth, At Risk Youth, Violent Youth, Returning Citizens
- c)** Core Objective (proposed): To create caring and supporting relationships between youth and identified individuals to prevent and reduce delinquent behavior.
- d)** Potential workgroup participants: I Care Mentoring; Big Brothers Big Sisters; Students with a Goal; Urban Ounce of Prevention; Summit 211.

⁴ The agreement will take the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU template is included as Appendix 1 to this document.

2. Strategic Approach Two: Recreation and Discretionary Time

- a)** Co- Leaders: City of Akron; Summit County; The WOMB
- b)** Target: Stable Youth, At Risk Youth, Violent Youth, Returning Citizens
- c)** Core Objective (proposed): To provide youth with opportunities for safe, pro-social engagement to prevent and reduce delinquent behavior.
- d)** Potential workgroup participants: Akron After School Program; City of Akron Parks and Recreation Department; Akron Summit County Public Library; Metroparks; YMCA; ASIA Inc.

3. Strategic Approach Three: Re-entry support

- a)** Co- Leaders: Summit County Juvenile Court; Summit County
- b)** Target: At Risk Youth, Violent Youth, Returning Citizens
- c)** Core Objective (proposed): To support youth who are released from incarceration (from juvenile detention as well as adult prison) to help them get their lives back on track and avoid recidivism.
- d)** Potential workgroup participants: Summit County Department of Jobs and Family Services; University of Akron School of Law Expungement and CQE (Certificate of Qualification for Employment) clinics.

4. Strategic Approach Four: Police-Youth Relations

- a)** Co- Leaders: City of Akron; Akron Public Schools; Fallen Fathers
- b)** Target: Stable Youth, At-Risk Youth
- c)** Core Objective (proposed): To build and improve relationships of trust between youth.
- d)** Potential workgroup participants: Akron Police Department; Akron Organizing Collaborative

5. Strategic Approach Five: Mental Health and Substance Abuse Supports and Treatment

- a)** Co- Leaders: Akron Children's Hospital; Summa Health System; Minority Behavioral Health Group
- b)** Target: At Risk Youth, Violent Youth, Returning Citizens
- c)** Core Objective (proposed): To offer support services to youth who are struggling with the impacts of trauma, mental health concerns, and substance abuse.
- d)** Potential workgroup participants: Summa Health Behavioral Health Institute; Child Guidance & Family Solutions; Urban Ounce of Prevention; UMADAOP; Greenleaf Family Center; Community Health Center

6. Strategic Approach Six: Gun Violence Reduction

- a)** Co- Leaders: City of Akron; Akron Public Schools; Fallen Fathers
- b)** Target: Violent Youth
- c)** Core Objective (proposed): To reduce gun violence perpetrated by violent groups.⁵

⁵ See Appendix 3 for additional information on a "focused deterrence" model in use in several Ohio communities. The workgroup developing and implementing strategies to reduce gun violence should consider this approach as it develops its workplan.

- d) Potential workgroup participants: Akron Police Department; Akron Organizing Collaborative

7. Strategic Approach Seven: Community Awareness and Involvement

- a) Leader: Project Ujima, Inc.⁶
- b) Target: Stable Youth, At Risk Youth, Violent Youth, Returning Citizens
- c) Core Objective (proposed): To develop processes and structures to promote awareness; to generate sustained community participation in the collective work of preventing and responding to youth violence in Akron.
- d) Potential workgroup participants: Minister Steven Mohammed; Neighborhood Dads; Council of Block Clubs

8. Strategic Approach Eight: Capacity and Infrastructure Development

- a) Co- Leaders: City of Akron, Summit County Public Health, Project Ujima, Inc.
- b) Target: Stable Youth, At Risk Youth, Violent Youth, Returning Citizens
- c) Core Objective (proposed): To build infrastructure for sustainability of integrated implementation and evaluation of the Strategic Plan; to develop mechanism for collaboration among partners in priority-setting, decision-making, continuous data sharing, monitoring, and evaluation
- d) Potential workgroup participants: SCCHI Policy Committee

III. SUSTAINABILITY

Summit County Public Health (SCPH) and Summit Coalition for Community Health Improvement (SCCHI) have committed to fostering implementation of the Strategic Plan. Community partners have agreed to lead strategic efforts for a 12-month period. During that period, the Policy Committee of SCCHI is expected to oversee the implementation process. SCCHI will be particularly focused on advancing the core objective of the eighth approach - Capacity and Infrastructure Development. In the future, the SCCHI and SCPH may consider the feasibility of creating a centralized body or office to guarantee and oversee plan implementation and future re-evaluation of the Strategic Plan for possible modification.

To fund these efforts, the City of Akron, SCPH, and other leaders will seek opportunities to apply for relevant grants or otherwise secure funds to support implementation. Apply for grants as collaborative partners is one strategy that may prove more successful than individual applications. In addition, SCPH may identify funds available through the U.S. Department of Justice, Ohio Department of Public Safety, National Institute of Health, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, or other federal or federal agencies that target some of the work contemplated by this Implementation Plan.

⁶ Because Project Ujima holds space in the community as both a grassroots community-based organization, and as an emerging community leader, it will be taking the lead for this strategy without a co-leader. In the future, an appropriate co-leader may be added.

IV. **CONCLUSION**

The time to move to implementation is now. The City of Akron and Summit County Public Health anticipates releasing both the Strategic Plan and the Implementation Plan before the end of April 2019. The Committee has met with the proposed co-leaders and is moving forward with execution of the Memorandum of Understanding. The timeline for initiating workplans is Spring 2019.

Over the course of implementation, SCCHI will monitor, guide and facilitate. In addition, transparency is highly valued. SCCHI will be working with each co-leader to identify ways to keep the greater Akron community informed about progress. Any community member interested in learning more or becoming involved may contact Elizabeth Foster at efoster@schd.org Summit Coalition for Community Health Improvement, at Summit County Public Health.

Works Cited

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Appendix G1

Youth Violence Prevention Plan Implementation Plan														
* COMMUNITY OR INSTITUTION LEADER	Stable Youth (Low Risk)		At-Risk Youth (Moderate Risk)		Violent Youth (High Risk)		Returning Citizens (High Risk)		Community Support (Sustainability)		Health Support (Sustainability)		Educational Support (Sustainability)	
STRATEGIC APPROACHES	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNER	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARNTERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
Mentoring	* UNITED WAY	1							* UNITED WAY	1			* UNITED WAY	1
	* KIONONIA	1	* KIONONIA	1									* KIONONIA	1
	MAN 2 MAN	1	MAN 2 MAN	1	MAN 2 MAN	1	MAN 2 MAN	1						
	BIG BROS BIG SIS	1												
	URBAN OUNCE	1												
	SUMMIT 211	1												
	STUENTS W/A GOAL	1												
	I-CARE	1												

Youth Violence Prevention Plan Implementation Plan														
* COMMUNITY OR INSTITUTION LEADER	Stable Youth (Low Risk)		At-Risk Youth (Moderate Risk)		Violent Youth (High Risk)		Returning Citizens (High Risk)		Community Support (Sustainability)		Health Support (Sustainability)		Educational Support (Sustainability)	
STRATEGIC APPROACHES	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNER	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARNTERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
Rec/Discretionary Time	* CITY OF AKRON	2												
	* MBK (WOMB)	2					* MBK (WOMB)	2	* MBK (WOMB)	2			* MBK (WOMB)	2
	APD	2	APD	2	APD	2	APD	2	APD	2				
	AKRON P&R	2												
	AKRON METRO PARKS	2												
	AKRON AFTER SCHOOL	2												
	AKRON SUMMIT LIBRARY	2												
	YMCA	2												
	ASIA INC	2												
	PJE	2	PJE	2	PJE	2	PJE	2						

Youth Violence Prevention Plan Implementation Plan														
* COMMUNITY OR INSTITUTION LEADER	Stable Youth (Low Risk)		At-Risk Youth (Moderate Risk)		Violent Youth (High Risk)		Returning Citizens (High Risk)		Community Support (Sustainability)		Health Support (Sustainability)		Educational Support (Sustainability)	
STRATEGIC APPROACHES	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNER	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
<u>Re-entry Support</u>							* SCJC	3	* SCJC	3				
							* SUMMIT COUNTY		* SUMMIT COUNTY					
							SCJFS	3	SCJFS	3				
							AOC	3	AOC	3				
							U.A. LAW	3	U.A. LAW	3				
							KIONONIA	3	KIONONIA	3				
							REC BUREAU	3	REC BUREAU	3				
<u>Police-Youth Relations</u>	* APD	4	* APD	4	* APD	4	* APD	4	* APD	4			* APD	4
	* APS	4	* APS	4	* APS	4	* APS	4	* APS	4			* APS	4
	* FALLEN FATHERS	4	* FALLEN FATHERS	4	* FALLEN FATHERS	4	* FALLEN FATHERS	4	* FALLEN FATHERS	4			* FALLEN FATHERS	4
	AOC	4	AOC	4	AOC	4	AOC	4	AOC	4			AOC	4

Youth Violence Prevention Plan Implementation Plan														
* COMMUNITY OR INSTITUTION LEADER	Stable Youth (Low Risk)		At-Risk Youth (Moderate Risk)		Violent Youth (High Risk)		Returning Citizens (High Risk)		Community Support (Sustainability)		Health Support (Sustainability)		Educational Support (Sustainability)	
STRATEGIC APPROACHES	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNER	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
<u>Mental Health/ Substance Abuse</u>											* AKRON CHILDRENS	5		
											* SUMMA HEALTH	5		
											* MBHG	5		
											SUMMA STRESS	5		
											URBAN OUNCE	5		
											GREEN LEAF	5		
											UMADOP	5		
											SUMMA BEHAVIOR	5		

Youth Violence Prevention Plan Implementation Plan														
* COMMUNITY OR INSTITUTION LEADER	Stable Youth (Low Risk)		At-Risk Youth (Moderate Risk)		Violent Youth (High Risk)		Returning Citizens (High Risk)		Community Support (Sustainability)		Health Support (Sustainability)		Educational Support (Sustainability)	
STRATEGIC APPROACHES	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNER	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARNTERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
<u>Gun Violence Reduction</u>			* APD	6	* APD	6	* APD	6	* APD	6				
			* CITY OF AKRON	6	* CITY OF AKRON	6	* CITY OF AKRON	6	* CITY OF AKRON	6				
			* APS	6	* APS	6	* APS	6	* APS	6				
			* FALLEN FATHERS	6	* FALLEN FATHERS	6	* FALLEN FATHERS	6	* FALLEN FATHERS	6				
			VIOLENCE INTERRUPTERS	6	VIOLENCE INTERRUPTERS	6	VIOLENCE INTERRUPTERS	6	VIOLENCE INTERRUPTERS	6				
			STOP THE VIOLENCE	6	STOP THE VIOLENCE	6	STOP THE VIOLENCE	6	STOP THE VIOLENCE	6				
			AKRON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	6	AKRON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	6	AKRON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	6	AKRON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	6			AKRON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	6

Youth Violence Prevention Plan Implementation Plan														
* COMMUNITY OR INSTITUTION LEADER	Stable Youth (Low Risk)		At-Risk Youth (Moderate Risk)		Violent Youth (High Risk)		Returning Citizens (High Risk)		Community Support (Sustainability)		Health Support (Sustainability)		Educational Support (Sustainability)	
STRATEGIC APPROACHES	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNER	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARNTERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
<u>Community Engagement</u>	CITY OF AKRON	7	CITY OF AKRON	7	CITY OF AKRON	7	CITY OF AKRON	7	CITY OF AKRON	7			CITY OF AKRON	7
	* PROJECT UJIMA	7	* PROJECT UJIMA	7	* PROJECT UJIMA	7	* PROJECT UJIMA	7	* PROJECT UJIMA	7			* PROJECT UJIMA	7
	AOC	7			AOC	7	AOC	7	AOC	7			AOC	7
	SCTICC	7									SCTICC	7		
<u>Capacity & Infrastructure</u>	* LEGAL AID	8	* LEGAL AID	8	* LEGAL AID	8	* LEGAL AID	8	* LEGAL AID	8	* LEGAL AID	8	* LEGAL AID	8
	* CITY OF AKRON	8	* CITY OF AKRON	8	* CITY OF AKRON	8	* CITY OF AKRON	8	* CITY OF AKRON	8			* CITY OF AKRON	8
	* SCPH	8	* SCPH	8	* SCPH	8	* SCPH	8	* SCPH	8	* SCPH	8	* SCPH	8
	SCCHI COMMITTEE	8	SCCHI COMMITTEE	8	SCCHI COMMITTEE	8	SCCHI COMMITTEE	8	SCCHI COMMITTEE	8	SCCHI COMMITTEE	8	SCCHI COMMITTEE	8
	APD	8	APD	8	APD	8	APD	8	APD	8				

	LEAD INSTITUTION PARTNER	DIRECT CONTACT	LEAD COMMUNITY PARTNER	DIRECT CONTACT
MENTORING	United Way of Summit County		Kiononia Education and Family Foundation	
RECREATION	City of Akron		The Womb	
	Summit County			
RE-ENTRY SUPPORT	Summit County Juvenile Court		TBD	
	Summit County			
POLICE-YOUTH RELATIONS	City of Akron		Fallen Fathers	
	Akron Public Schools			
HEALTH SUPPORT	Akron Childrens Hospital		Project Ujima, Inc.	
	Summa Health +B14System			
	Minority Behaviora Health Group			
GUN VOLENCE REDUCTION	City of Akron		Fallen Fathers	
	Akron Public Schools			
COMMUNTY AWARENESS	TBD		Project Ujima, Inc.	
CAPACITY & DEVELOPMENT	City of Akron		Project Ujima, Inc.	
	Summit County Public Health			

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3	OBJECTIVE 4
To create caring and supporting relationships between youth and identified individuals to prevent and reduce delinquent behavior.	To provide youth with opportunities for safe, pro-social engagement to prevent and reduce delinquent behavior.	To support who youth who are released from incarceration (from juvenile detention as well as adult prison) to help them get their lives back on track and avoid recidivism.	To build and improve relationships of trust between youth.
OBJECTIVE 5	OBJECTIVE 6	OBJECTIVE 7	OBJECTIVE 8
To offer support services to youth who are struggling with the impacts of trauma, mental health concerns, and substance abuse.	To reduce gun violence perpetrated by violent groups.	To develop processes and structures to promote awareness; to generate sustained community participation in the collective work of preventing and responding to youth violence in Akron.	To build infrastructure for sustainability of integrated implementation and evaluation of the Strategic Plan; to develop mechanism for collaboration among partners in priority-setting, decision-making, continuous data sharing, monitoring, and evaluation

Appendix G2

FOCUSED DETERRENCE

A. Introduction

The U.S Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice “has identified several violence intervention tactics that, if implemented properly, successfully disrupt and/or prevent potential offenders from [committing violent crime].”¹⁴ The most successful violence intervention tactics include the “suppression” of violent offenders and “deterrence” of potentially violent offenders. Used together, these violence intervention tactics are commonly referred to as “Focused Deterrence.” Id.

Focused Deterrence is a data driven crime prevention strategy that can quickly reduce violent crime within a target area.¹⁵ One of the first practical implementation of Focused Deterrence was Boston’s Project Ceasefire. Id. Project Ceasefire used the “carrots and sticks” approach to shape and mold the behavior of potentially violent offenders. See National Institute of Justice. (2018). An example of a “stick” would be “threatening federal prosecution for illegal possession – not use – of a weapon.” Id. An example of a “carrot” would be free access to social services such as job placement and counseling.” Id. Project Ceasefire became the model program for Focused Deterrence after its initial success. See Braga et al.

Modern focused deterrence strategies have used “target demographics” to effectively deliver social services and violence reduction messages to different groups of individuals.¹⁶ Each group is marked by a different “risk level” that differentiates that groups inherent characteristics, strategic approach to be used, tactical priority. Each risk level is comprised of individuals with unique needs that must be addressed quickly and effectively. For example, the needs and strategic approach that one uses for a stable 5th graded in public school is going to be markedly different from the needs and strategic approaches that used for a 24-year chronic violent offender.

B. Statewide Initiatives

Ohio has gradually adopted their own focused deterrence-based violent crime reduction strategies. In 2007, the Ohio Department of Public Safety helped create Cincinnati’s Community Initiative to Reduce Violence. Cincinnati CIRV’s program used Project Ceasefire’s focused deterrence approach, added more community engagement and created stronger partnerships with social service providers. Cincinnati’s focused deterrence program was so successful that Cincinnati is now a “leadership city” that provides guidance for the National Network for Safe Communities (NNSC).¹⁷ The primary purpose of the NNSC is to support jurisdictions around the county implementing focused deterrence crime reduction strategies.”

After several years of promising results, OCJS, NNSC and The Ohio Department of Public Safety helped implement several more Focused Deterrence programs (commonly known as “CIRV” programs) in cities across Ohio¹⁸. Each program is structured differently, and each program comprises of a different mix of community members, non-profit organizations, and social service providers, however, each program has

demonstrated the ability to meaningfully reduce violent crime. Focused Deterrence can effectively address the most pressing needs of the Akron community by developing a centralized crime reduction implementation plan with clear targets, clear communication, and clear goals.

C. Evidence of Success

Cincinnati's Focused Deterrence program has demonstrated strong evidence of violence reduction since its inception in 2007. According to the first initial evaluation of Cincinnati's Community Initiative to Reduce Violence, from 2007-2010, Cincinnati saw a 34%¹⁹ decrease in Gang/Group related homicides and a 21.3% decrease in firearm related incidents. Engel et al. By all measures, these results "indicate that the specific types of violence that the CIRV strategy was designed to impact experienced reductions that were unlikely due to random chance". Id.

Cincinnati's Community Initiative to Reduce Violence inspired Youngstown, Ohio to create its own initiative. Youngstown's focused deterrence violence reduction initiative also shows significant early promise. According to Youngstown's initial evaluation, from 2012-2014, Youngstown saw a 26% reduction in homicides.²⁰ It would seem that Focused Deterrence approaches to violence reduction initially demonstrate effective violence reduction in comparable cities to Akron, Ohio.

D. Concerns

While most of the available research suggests that focused Deterrence can produce statistically significant reductions in violence, the researchers cannot determine exactly how or why it works. See Engel et al. One study, that sought to measure the effectiveness of focused deterrence concluded that the addition of social services didn't have any statistically significant effect on violence reduction whatsoever. Id. It would seem that the exact violence reducing mechanism or procedure of focused deterrence remain a mystery.

Furthermore, the successful implementation of a focused deterrence strategy requires a significant amount of coordination. The police department, the prosecutor's office, and the local judiciary must coordinate the enforcement of any focused deterrence initiative. For example, if the police target someone for intervention, but that individual refuses intervention and commits a violent crime, the prosecutors and the judges need to be aware of that so they can charge and sentence that individual accordingly. Without the threat (and actual implementation) of serious criminal consequences focused deterrence has no fidelity.

E. Conclusion

Looking forward to the implementation phase of Akron's Youth Violence Prevention Plan, the workgroup charged with developing an implementation workplan to reduce gun violence (strategy #6) may wish to carefully examine the "best practices" from Cincinnati and Youngstown CIRV programs to accomplish their strategic initiatives. While focused deterrence isn't guaranteed to reduce the youth violence in Akron, this model has enjoyed some success in other Ohio communities and may offer the same in Akron.

References

- ¹ David-Ferdon, C., Vivolo-Kantor, A. M., Dahlberg, L. L., Marshall, K. J., Rainford, N. & Hall, J. E. (2016). A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- ² For example, the ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) questionnaire is administered to at-risk youth entering the juvenile justice system by way of admission to the Summit County Detention Center. In the 4th quarter of 2017, 143 at-risk youth completed the ACE questionnaire. The average # of ACE categories that were reported was 4 (out of 10), and the scores ranged from 0 all the way to 10. Almost 40% of these children and adolescents, who ranged in age from 11 – 19, had ACE scores of 5 or higher. For more about ACE, see https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about_ace.html
- ³ <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/mentoring/benefits-mentoring-young-people>
- ⁴ <http://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM>, America After 3 PM
- ⁵ Center for Court Innovation. 2015. “Guide for Improving Relationships and Public Safety through Engagement and Conversation.” *Police-Youth Dialogues Toolkit*, Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.
- ⁶ American Psychological Association. (2013). Gun violence: Prediction, prevention, and policy. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/pubs/info/reports/gun-violence-prevention.aspx>.
- ⁷ <http://www.clevelandpolicefoundation.org/handgun-buyback>
- ⁸ David-Ferdon, C., Vivolo-Kantor, A. M., Dahlberg, L. L., Marshall, K. J., Rainford, N. & Hall, J. E. (2016). A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- ⁹ Webster, D. W., Whitehill, J. M., Vernick, J. S., & Curriero, F. C. (2013). Effects of Baltimore’s Safe Streets program on gun violence: A replication of Chicago’s CeaseFire program. *Journal of Urban Health*, 90(1), 27–40. Butts, J. A., Roman, C. G., Bostwick, L., & Porter, J. R. (2015). Cure violence: A public health model to reduce gun violence. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 36, 39-53
- ¹⁰ All maps were created with ArcGIS 10.4. Kernel Density Estimation (KDE) using a 1600m radius was performed to create the hot spot maps. This area was utilized to show geographic areas of concentration while protecting individual privacy
- ¹¹ Note that the highest concentrations of family violence (76-100 incidents / 1600m) are concentrated within the two hot spots around the East Ave. area to the west and the Arlington Rd. area to the east. They are not shown on the map to protect the privacy of individual families
- ¹² Due to the relatively low numbers of incidents, and to protect the privacy of victims, these data are not presented as a map in this report
- ¹³ Note that it is common for a temporal lag to exist between a sexual assault and when the assault is reported to the police. Therefore, these data should be interpreted with caution
- ¹⁴ National Institute of Justice. (2018). *Tactics That Can Reduce Gun Violence* | National Institute of Justice. [online] Available at: <https://nij.gov/topics/crime/gun-violence/prevention/pages/tactics.aspx> [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018].
- ¹⁵ Braga, Anthony A., et al. “Problem-Oriented Policing, Deterrence, and Youth Violence: An Evaluation of Boston's Operation Ceasefire.” *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, vol. 38, no. 3, Aug. 2001, pp. 195–225.

¹⁶ See; "CIRV Youngstown." *CIRV Youngstown*, www.cirvytown.org.

¹⁷ Engel, Robin S., et al. "Reducing Gang Violence Using Focused Deterrence: Evaluation the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV)." doi: 10.1080/04418825.2011.619559.

¹⁸ Youngstown, Cincinnati, Dayton, Toledo, and Canton all have CIRV programs.

¹⁹ A statistically significant decrease.

²⁰ Jackson-Leftwich, Cryshanna A., (2015). "The City of Youngstown Community Initiative to Reduce Violence: 2012-2014 Performance Review"

