



City of  
**San Bernardino**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **City of San Bernardino awarded \$3.8 million for its Violence Intervention and Prevention Program**

San Bernardino, Calif. – The California State and Community Corrections Board have awarded a \$3.8 million grant to the City of San Bernardino to fund its Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (VIP). The funding will help support and expand this anti-gang violence program for an additional three years.

San Bernardino's VIP program, now in its third year, is a partnership between the City, its police department, Loma Linda University Medical Center, and community organizations such as H.O.P.E Culture, Young Visionaries Youth Leadership, and the Urban Peace Institute. The program is modeled after other community violence intervention programs, which prevent gang gun violence and de-escalate tensions through personal interactions with hard core gang members and at-risk youth in ways that law enforcement cannot.

“The Violence Intervention and Prevention Program is not a replacement for law enforcement. It is an added element,” said VIP Program Director David Miranda. “Respected members of the neighborhoods are addressing community safety. Addressing violent crime. Addressing recidivism by different means than the police. ”

With the new funding from the State and Community Corrections Board, San Bernardino plans to add one additional community partner and several healthcare partners to the program. The funding will also grow outreach capacity in the summer months and keep wages competitive for the community-based outreach workers.

VIP's community-based outreach workers are often former gang members themselves, using their personal connections and neighborhood credibility to prevent violence. In many cases, they respond to crime scenes or local hospitals shortly after violence occurs. Outreach workers respond to critical situations twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

According to City Council Member Damon Alexander, “The VIP Program is important because of the close coordination of the trauma unit, the culturally relevant violence interventions, and prevention strategies of individuals and families. Through this approach, our program has curbed violence and often stopped conflict from escalating from a verbal disagreement to something more serious.”

San Bernardino crime statistics indicate the program is working. While violent crime in San Bernardino, like many other cities, has risen in recent years, year-to-date gang related homicides has remained flat and gang related shootings are down dramatically, dropping from 151 to 129 to 86 in 2020, 2021, and 2022.

“In addition to stepped up police enforcement, we believe the VIP program has contributed to San Bernardino’s decline in gang shootings,” added Miranda. “Our interventions have helped calm tensions and prevented retaliations.”

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