Project Safe Neighborhoods
Strategic Action Plan

Northern District of Georgia

I. Planning Phase

A. Partnerships for Planning Phase

1) Who do we need to be involved in the planning phase (see Appendix A)?

The agencies and organizations involved in the planning phase are listed in Appendix A, attached hereto.

The planning strategy process was led by the United States Attorney's Office and is based heavily upon the USAO's prior experience with multiple PSN initiatives. The USAO team worked collaboratively with the research partner and the PSN Steering Committee to gather the necessary data from partner law enforcement agencies, talk with community, faith, education, and reentry representatives, and develop an initial strategic plan.

The strategic plan was presented to the members of the Steering Committee, who gave input and suggestions. The Steering Committee determined a split of the formula grant funds to be 50% for suppression, and 40% for prevention/reentry (with 10% for the fiscal agent).

Because of the importance of having an experienced and competent research partner to development and implementation of a PSN strategy, the USAO paid for a research partner out of its own budget funds. That agency - Applied Research Services, Inc. – is an integral part of the planning process for the Northern District of Georgia.

B. Problem Analysis to Develop Targeted and Prioritized Enforcement Strategies

1. What are the most serious violent crime problems in our district?

At present, it appears that gang activity and repeat offenders drive violent crime in parts of Clayton County and the City of McDonough (Henry County), while gangs/street crews and drug crime are driving much of the violence in LaGrange (Troup County) and English Avenue. More broadly, we confirmed that chronic repeat offenders continue to commit violent crimes throughout the District. Domestic violence is a significant problem in all parts of the District.

2. What types of data (see Appendix B) do we have to analyze the violent crime problem?

To begin identifying what is driving violence in the NDGA, we undertook a District-wide assessment to pinpoint locations with serious violent crime problems. Specifically, the USAO conducted a District-wide law enforcement survey and reviewed responses from multiple police departments and sheriffs' offices. This provided us with street level intelligence.

The USAO also contracted with Applied Research Services, Inc. (ARS) in late 2017 to conduct a county-by-county comparison of violent crime data from 2014 to 2017. That assessment showed that, while violent crime inside the City of Atlanta has somewhat decreased, certain smaller cities and surrounding counties are experiencing an uptick. By way of example, although arrests for violent felonies markedly decreased in the main metro Atlanta counties (Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, and Gwinnett), contiguous counties did not experience that decrease in violent crime (i.e., Henry County). Some (Clayton, Cherokee, Douglas) actually saw an increase in violent felony arrests. A similar pattern appeared in some of the smaller cities around our District where local law enforcement also anecdotally reported higher levels of juvenile, gang and gun-related violence, as well as domestic violence.

C. Results of the Problem Analysis – What Do We Believe Are the Key Drivers of Our Violence Problem?

1. What is the target area(s) for your PSN initiative (region, city, police district(s), neighborhood(s))?

For the reasons listed above, the USAO-NDGA's PSN strategy expands beyond the city of Atlanta to areas in the District where violent crime is having an outsized impact. We have six Target Enforcement Areas (TEAs):

- Calumet Community in LaGrange (Troup County)
- Blacksville and Sable Chase Neighborhoods in McDonough (Henry County)
- Crystal Lake and Wesley Park Neighborhoods (unincorporated Clayton County)
- English Avenue Neighborhood (City of Atlanta) (The USAO has an existing PSN Task Force in place for the English Avenue neighborhood stemming from the ongoing Drug Market Intervention initiative that began in mid-2015.

2) **What did your problem analysis identify as the key drivers of violent crime in your target area(s)?**

The TEAs all have increasing gang activity.

II.   Implementation Phase

A. *Goal Identification – Provide a statement of the PSN team's goal(s) in addressing violent crime in the target area(s).*

The goals of the GAN PSN strategy are to: 1) mitigate gun and gang violence within the six target enforcement areas as well as in the District overall; 2) implement the complete and full exchange of information among law enforcement agencies regarding violent gang activity that is occurring in the District; 3) instill meaningful and proven anti-gang and anti-violence measures; 4) increase the federal prosecution rate of the most violent offenders and gang members within these communities; 5) implement effective prevention and reentry strategies to break the cycle of crime and to keep youth from becoming involved in crime; and 6) ultimately provide a positive qualitative impact on the District at large and in the individual TEAs.

B. *Targeted and Prioritized Enforcement Strategies to Address the Drivers of Violent Crime*

1) **What targeted and prioritized people-, place-, or combined enforcement strategies will your PSN team employ to address these violent crime drivers (see Appendix D)?**
In light of the success of the Violent Repeat Offender (VRO) initiative in the Atlanta Division, the USAO expanded this people-based PSN strategy into the Rome, Gainesville, and Newnan Divisions. In addition, the VRO initiative will prioritize domestic violence offenders who may face more certain and appropriate punishment in the federal system, including federal prosecutions for

illegal firearm possession.

Additional AUSAs have been located in Division Offices to be more accessible to local and state law enforcement and to initiate more federal prosecutions from those areas of the District. Local prosecutors may be co-designated as Special Assistant U.S. Attorneys to prosecute cases federally. Federal law enforcement partners are also being encouraged to take on additional Task Force Officers (TFOs) in these new areas.

To ensure local and state police officers can identify offenders for potential federal prosecution, the USAO developed and has begun to conduct training (and will continue to do so in all TEAs and VRO sites) throughout the Division in partnership with local District Attorney's offices. In these trainings, local and state law enforcement learn about the goals of the PSN program, federal statutes, federal sentencing issues, and other topics that equip them to spot potential crimes that could result in federal prosecution, as well as best practices for obtaining evidence to support federal prosecutions.

In addition, the USAO has identified certain neighborhoods for localized and strategic intervention. These target enforcement areas (TEAs) are "hot places" for violent crime where the USAO has identified law enforcement and community stakeholders who can and wish to participate in a PSN Task Force to address the problem. Local, state, and federal law enforcement and prosecutors will conduct bi-weekly or monthly meetings led by an Assistant U.S. Attorney to discuss violent crime "trends" and to identify targets for investigation and prosecution. In addition, each PSN Task Force will develop its own strategy for implementing PSN goals in its TEA, including identifying funding needs for the TEA. For example, each PSN Task Force might decide whether to implement "offender notification" meetings to deter continued violence by presenting chronic offenders with the choice between support for changing their behavior or coordinated law enforcement action if they choose not to change.

2) **What data or information will initially be used to determine a list of the most violent offenders (see Appendix B)?**
   The VRO program is a data-driven initiative targeting specific offenders who are currently active in criminal activity by using objective measures, including criminal history; temporary restraining orders; and number and recency of arrests; as well as subjective criteria, such as confidential informants; citizen reports; tips; officer knowledge; and other anecdotal information (i.e., "word on the street"). The TEAs will use 911 calls and incident reports, as well as officer knowledge, to guide their implementation of the PSN strategy.

3) **Are there additional partners we will need to implement these strategies (add to partners identified in Appendix A)?**
   Not at this time.

C. *Prevention Strategies to Complement Enforcement*

1) **What focused people-, or place-based prevention strategies will we deploy to complement our targeted and prioritized enforcement strategies (see Appendix E)?**

The USAO has developed a program with the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice to implement a Credible Messenger initiative to intervene with high-risk juveniles who will be released to PSN TEAs and other areas within the District with high rates of violence. The Credible Messenger Model focuses on partnerships with unique individuals who can relate to and build trusting relationships with incarcerated young adults and their families. Credible Messengers engage and motivate these young people in ways that other stakeholders cannot. Credible Messengers are neighborhood leaders, experienced prevention and reentry specialists, and individuals with relevant life experiences (often including their own involvement with the criminal justice system) who coach, guide, mentor, facilitate and advocate for youth and young adults who are incarcerated for gun-related and gang-related crime. The Credible Messenger Model is an evidence-based prevention strategy that has rendered significant reductions in shootings and killings (41 - 73%), re-arrests (33%), and attitudes supporting violence (14%). Overall, Credible Messenger Models have not only deterred crime, but also reinforced pro-social behaviors and improved relationships between stakeholders and community members, as well as increased engagement with social programs and services and compliance with court mandates.

In addition, the PSN strategy includes in-school violence prevention through implementing Pain of Prison System (POPS the Club) programs in PSN TEAs and VRO sites. POPS the Club programs serve middle and high school students who have incarcerated loved ones. Students will receive individualized case management services to connect the student with support services within the school and in the greater community, coordinated meetings with parents and guardians, long-term mentoring, and financial assistance (if appropriate).

The Credible Messenger Model also is being implemented in adult prison facilities to reach returning adults. In addition, the Offender Alumni Association, a grass-roots movement modeled after the concept of AA and NA, offers peer-to-peer support in strengthening family relations, community revitalization, engaging inmates behind the wall, and removing the stigma associated with being a convicted felon. OAA will establish seven OAA Support Forums by the end of Year 2, one in each PSN target area: Clayton County, DeKalb County, Floyd County, Fulton County, Hall County, Henry County and Troup County, in order to offer reentry support, solve mutual dilemmas, and share known resources for successful transition back into the community.

2) **Are there additional partners we will need to implement these strategies (add to partners identified in Appendix A)?**

As we implement the prevention and reentry strategy into the TEAs and other parts of the district, we will identify key stakeholders in individual communities with capacity to provide necessary services to returning citizens and at-risk youth.

D. *Accountability*

1) **What outcome data will we use to track our progress?**

2) **How will we monitor violent crime trends in our target areas as well as other parts of the district?**

3) **Who will be responsible for semi-annual performance reporting?**

   The USAO, with the research partner, will handle semi-annual performance reporting.

4) **How will we ensure our strategies remain targeted and prioritized?**

5) **How frequently will we meet to discuss progress, challenges, successes, and mid- course corrections? Who will be involved?**

   The individual task forces in the TEAs are meeting bi-weekly or monthly to discuss progress and to constantly re-evaluate the enforcement actions being undertaken. The VRO meetings are held monthly in each Division, and USAO internal meetings are held monthly.

E. *Next Steps*

We will encourage each of the TEA teams to participate in the VRAT.

Appendices

Appendix A-Identifying Key PSN Partners

Criminal Justice Partners:	Involved in Planning	Involved in Implementation
Police (local)	LaGrange Police Dept.; Henry County Police Dept.; Henry County Sheriff's Office; Clayton County Police Dept. Atlanta Police Dept.	Yes
Federal law enforcement (specify)	FBI, ATF, HIDTA	Yes
Prosecutor's Office	Coweta Circuit District Attorney; Clayton County District Attorney; Henry County District Attorney for TEAs and all District DAs for VRO	Yes
U.S. Attorney's Office	Yes	Yes
Community Corrections	No	N/A
Department of Corrections	Yes	Yes
State Probation and/or Parole	No	N/A
US Probation	Yes	Yes
Research partner	Yes	Yes
Fiscal Agent	Yes	Yes
Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice	Yes	Yes
Department of Community Supervision	Yes	Yes
Local Government:		
Schools	Yes	Yes
Executive (Mayor's Office, Manager)	No	Possibly
Public Housing	N/A	N/A
Community Stakeholders:		
Faith Community	Yes	Yes
Neighborhood Associations	Yes	Yes
Foundations	Yes	Yes
Social Services	Yes	Yes
Outreach Workers	Yes	Yes
Trauma Center	No	Possibly

Appendix B – Sources of Data for Analyzing Problem

What types of data and sources of information have you gathered and analyzed?	
Calls for police service	Yes
Police incident reports	No
Street level intelligence	Yes
Systematic crime incident reviews	No
Shots fired/shotspotter	No
NIBIN (National Integrated Ballistics Intelligence Network); Gun tracing	Yes
Gun crime case processing (e.g., GUNSTAT)	No
Citizen perceptions	Yes
Community characteristics	Yes
Other	Three year review of crime statistical data
What types of analysis have you conducted?	
Trend analysis	Yes
Crime mapping	Yes
Risk Terrain Modeling	No
Social Network Analysis	No

Gang audits	Yes
Repeat violent offender patterns	Yes
Other	

Appendix C - Problem Analysis Summary

Based on your analysis of violent crime patterns, to what extent are the following drivers of violent crime in your target area? (repeat if multiple target areas)		
LaGrange, Clayton County, and Henry County TEAs	Rate (1=highest priority; 2=priority; 3=concern but not as significant relative to others; 4=does not appear to drive a significant amount of our violent crime)	Note if this will be a focus of your violence reduction strategy
Gangs or violent street groups	1	Yes
Geographic hot spot areas	1	Yes
Felons in possession	2	Yes
Prolific (chronic) violent offenders	2	Yes
Street disputes	1	Yes
Household/family/neighbor disputes	2	No
Intimate partner violence	2	Yes
Illegal drug markets	2	Yes
Other (specify)		

Based on your analysis of violent crime patterns, to what extent are the following drivers of violent crime in your target area? (repeat if multiple target areas)		
Atlanta – English Avenue	Rate (1=highest priority; 2=priority; 3=concern but not as significant relative to others; 4=does not appear to drive a significant amount of our violent crime)	Note if this will be a focus of your violence reduction strategy
Gangs or violent street groups	3	Yes
Geographic hot spot areas	1	Yes
Felons in possession	2	Yes
Prolific (chronic) violent offenders	2	Yes
Street disputes	1	Yes
Household/family/neighbor disputes	3	No
Intimate partner violence	3	No
Illegal drug markets	1	Yes
Other (specify)		

Appendix D - Linking Targeted and Prioritized Enforcement Strategies to Problem Analysis

For each identified driver of violent crime, what strategies have you identified to address the problem?	
Insert Drivers of Violent Crime that your team has prioritized (from Appendix C)	**Strategies**
Gangs or violent street groups	We are conducting investigations of gang members using resources from the Georgia Gang Investigators Association and Formulytics software, and we are conducting training on gang investigations and prosecutions for TEA law enforcement. In addition, we are implementing surge operations with ATF and the Department of Community Supervision. DCS will conduct 4th Amendment waiver searches of gang members currently under supervision, in conjunction with ATF. We will federally prosecute violators who are found to be in possession of firearms.
Geographic hot spot areas	We are conducting undercover investigations to determine the main factors leading to crime and to determine the offenders committing crime in the hot spot areas. We are also stressing the importance of NIBIN to local law enforcement in an effort to link crimes.
Felons in possession	We have sent information to all LE agencies in the District regarding federal gun laws and also on how they can refer cases to our office. We also are coordinating with the local District Attorneys to insure that felons in possession are prosecuted in the most appropriate venue.
Prolific (chronic) violent offenders	Violent Repeat Offender (VRO) initiative which is a data-driven initiative targeting specific offenders who are currently active in criminal activity by using objective measures such as: criminal history, temporary restraining orders, and number and recency of arrests, as well as subjective criteria such as: confidential informants, citizen reports, tips, officer knowledge, and other anecdotal information.
Street disputes	For disputes involving firearms, we are educating officers on the importance of collecting shell casings to be run through NIBIN. Our use of NIBIN has already resulted in identification of the triggerman in a homicide.
Intimate partner violence	We are conducting training on the use of federal gun laws to target persons under TROs and/or who have previous DV convictions.
Illegal drug markets	We are continuing our enforcement efforts in the English Avenue community, where we conducted a three year DMI initiative. The focus of our

	efforts here is now focused on violent offenders and drug dealers with firearms.

Appendix E - Prevention Strategies

Identify prevention strategies that focus on high-risk people and places?	
People (e.g., high risk youth; gun involved former prisoners returning to community; shooting victims; community engagement & awareness)	**Strategies**
High-Risk Juveniles who are returning to the TEAs and other high crime areas of the District	The Credible Messenger Initiative focuses on partnerships with unique individuals who can relate to and build trusting relationships with committed youth as well as incarcerated young adults and their families. Credible Messengers will facilitate in-custody group sessions using a cognitive behavioral intervention with our target participants, and become available at all times for one-on-one support upon release.
High Risk Juveniles not currently incarcerated	A partnership with Communities in Schools (CIS) will identify juveniles at a high risk for violence and intervene with services prior to them becoming involved in crime. CIS connects children and their families to basic and critical educational and community-based resources, tailored to each student's specific needs. An evidence-based approach, adapted to meet each community's unique needs, is the basis for all services provided to meet basic needs, behavioral interventions, family engagement and academic assistance. With children facing challenges both inside and outside the classroom, the school-based site coordinators strategically align and deliver needed resources so students can focus on learning.
High Risk Adults currently incarcerated	The Credible Messenger Initiative also is being implemented in adult corrections facilities to focus on identifying risk factors and needs of committed adults who are returning to the TEAs. The Offender Alumni Association, a grass-roots movement modeled after the concept of AA and NA, offers peer-to-peer support in strengthening family relations, community revitalization, engaging inmates behind the wall, and removing the stigma associated with being a convicted felon.
Places (e.g., repeat violent crime locations; repeat violent crime street segments; high violence neighborhoods, precincts, beats)	
Target Enforcement Areas	Implement "offender notification" meetings to deter continued violence by presenting chronic offenders with the choice between support for

	changing their behavior or coordinated law enforcement action if they choose not to change.