

City of Madison
Community Development Division
Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grant
Isthmus Safety Initiative
2022 Policy Paper

I. Introduction

The Madison Police Department applied for the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) Grant, a community-based crime reduction program, focused on downtown Madison, Wisconsin. Awarded to the City of Madison, the grant program, the Isthmus Safety Initiative (ISI), is managed by the City of Madison's Community Development Division (CDD) with Public Health Madison and Dane County's (PHMDC) Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) providing coordination and community engagement activities, as well as support to understand and analyze the data in order to address the root causes of crime in the downtown area.

Using a data-driven approach, the ISI's Advisory Council -- composed of stakeholders, residents, business-owners, and community representatives -- selected Gun Crime and Sexual Violence as the program's priority. The role of the Advisory Council is to make decisions on crime priorities, root causes, and implementation actions. Representatives from PHMDC, CDD Madison Police Department (MPD), the University of Wisconsin Public Health Institute (UWPHI), Madison Downtown, Inc. (MDI) and the Capital Neighborhood Association form a Steering Committee that provides financial oversight and programmatic advice.

The source of funds for the Isthmus Safety Initiative project are Federal Funds awarded through the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to support data-driven, comprehensive, and community-oriented strategies to reduce crime in neighborhoods with hot spots of crime. Through a broad cross-sector partnership team, including neighborhood residents, BCJI grantees employ a wide range of crime prevention and intervention strategies to address the conditions, including physical conditions, which contribute to crime in these areas. It is expected that funded projects will work closely with city staff, the project manager and the project researcher to develop systems and processes to fulfill federal data collection and reporting requirements.

Through a data-driven process that included the views and ideas of the Advisory Council, an Action Plan was developed that aims to collaboratively implement activities that address and prevent chronic hotspots of violent crime in Downtown Madison to make it a safe, healthy, thriving place to live, work, play and visit. After several key discussions regarding the potential inequitable impacts of any crime-reduction efforts targeting Gun Crime and Sexual Violence, the Council voted for the following interventions, listed in order of priority:

1. *Safety Ambassadors: Safety Ambassadors will be stationed in the downtown entertainment area in pairs, helping people find their way, checking in on folks that appear to have over consumed and encouraging people to continue on to other venues rather than congregating in one area.*
2. *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): CPTED strategy will focus on decreasing accessibility and improving lighting and surveillance in the city-owned parking lot that has been a known area for folks to drink out of cars and store weapons just in case.*
3. *Bystander Intervention Training for Bartenders and Bar Staff: Training of bar staff to support de-escalation of aggression and intervention in the case of sexual predation.*

This policy paper will focus on providing a descriptive framework that will be used to communicate to policy makers, the larger community, and potential vendors the essential components of the Isthmus Safety Initiative that will be funded by the City of Madison under the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grant.

II. Project Overview

MPD applied for this grant as an internal data analysis revealed that Downtown is a hotspot for crime in the city. From 2017 to 2019, MPD staff noted a 30% increase in violent crime (e.g., homicide, shootings, substantial and aggravated batteries, sexual assaults, and other weapon offenses) Downtown, while Madison's overall violent crime decreased about 9% (UCR data) over the same period.

During the Isthmus Safety Initiative planning phase, PHDMC analyzed data provided by MPD from 2018-2021 and found that the priority areas of gun crime and sexual violence were concentrated in the State Street area. The data showing that the State Street entertainment area is a hotspot, supported many of the potential drivers of crime Downtown identified by UWPHI research and the Advisory Council. The relevant identified drivers of crime included, but are not limited to, heavy alcohol use and a heavy drinking culture at UW-Madison and in Wisconsin in general; people from around the city being drawn to Downtown as a hub for socializing; the mixing of inebriated UW-Madison college students and community members and tensions over territory control; crowds gathering at food carts, outside bars, etc.; rape cultural norms maintained inside and outside the bars on State Street; and areas of Downtown (parking lots, alleyways, etc.) that are poorly lit, poorly kept, highly accessible for storage and illegal activities, uncontrolled and not visible/monitored by law enforcement or other agencies.

Utilizing crime data and best practices research evidence ISI developed a multi-tiered approach that seeks to alter the conditions identified as driving crime in this area: drunk people escalating conflict, drunk people congregating near an under-surveilled parking lot where guns are often stored for later use, and social norms that ignore signs of sexual predation.

III. Scope of Services

The focus of the ISI is on increasing safety in the downtown Madison entertainment district by introducing interventions to reduce gun crime and sexual violence related to a permissive drinking culture and social norms that ignore signs of sexual predation. Gun crime and sexual violence were identified as crime priorities by the Advisory Council based on crime data provided by MPD, a community safety survey data from 2013-2020 by MPD, and the Council's lived experience. From the crime data provided by MPD, between 2017 and 2021 there were 18 Unique Incidents with 69 Total Offenses of gun crime downtown and 74 Unique Incidents with 149 Total Offenses of sexual violence downtown. While the location of the incidents was randomized within a 1000 foot radius, the data showed hotspots of both crime types occurring in within the State Street area. The State Street area hotspot was further supported as a focus by the Central Police District Captain's qualitative assessment, provided on a tour of State Street, of where the most resources are deployed to prevent and address violent crime.

Project Area

The general project area is the downtown entertainment district in and around State Street running from the State Capital (Mifflin and Carrol Streets) to the edge of University of Wisconsin at North Lake Street and two to three blocks on either side of State Street.

Time Frame

The Isthmus Safety Initiative is primarily focused on weekend nights when people are frequenting the bars. Hours of focus are on the nights of Friday and Saturday between 10:00 pm and 3:00 am (as that is when the largest rate of crime occurs in the State Street area), and as needed during special events held in the State Street area. The interpersonal intervention of Safety Ambassadors is needed most during the peak months from April to October, while the bar staff training and CPTED can be done year around. All programs should begin in some capacity by Fall of 2022. The program runs until September 2023, with the possibility of an additional no-cost grant extension of a year. As a note, the ISI Action Plan has been submitted to BJA for approval, but awards cannot be made until the Action Plan has been approved and grant funds have been released by BJA.

Core Program Elements

The BCJI model is based on the principle that sustainable reductions in crime require collaboration among partners in the criminal justice system, service providers, and the communities they serve. These partnerships extend to community development corporations and private businesses that are linked to BCJI in local revitalization efforts. The BCJI Program approach centers on four core elements:

1. **Place-based strategy:** Target where crime is concentrated and enhance the impact of crime control efforts with locally driven neighborhood revitalization strategies.

BCJI grantee sites target a specific geographic area within their community with high levels of crime or types of crime in order to most effectively direct resources and to positively influence multiple social disorganization factors such as concentration of high risk residents, limited infrastructure, and neighborhood physical conditions. Crime reduction efforts often include addressing physical conditions that increase the risk for crime by seeking to harden these targets through assessments and review of land use, code enforcement, and nuisance laws.

2. **Community Engagement:** Increase community and resident engagement in shaping and sustaining crime prevention and revitalization efforts.

In BCJI, residents and neighbors, alongside law enforcement and criminal justice system partners, are key to keeping communities safe. To catalyze and sustain change, there must be active involvement and leadership by neighborhood residents throughout the process. Understanding residents' views of neighborhood change is critical. Engaging in community-oriented strategies should be driven by local data and needs, and should comprehensively address critical issues.

3. **Data and evidence driven:** Improve the use of data and research to problem solve and guide program strategy.

BCJI grantee sites work with local law enforcement and community stakeholders (including local nonprofit organizations) to conduct a broad examination of crime drivers in hot spots and then consider appropriate evidence-based and or innovative strategies to address them. Collaborative local partnerships, which often include research partners, can help a community to assess the program's implementation and intended impacts, as well as assess gaps in services, strategies, and partners. Law enforcement agencies are required to serve as the lead or a partner on developing strategies and support for crime hot spot and other data analysis to inform the BCJI approach.

4. **Build Partnerships and Enhance Trust:** Build capacity to promote sustainable collaborations that tackle problems from multiple angles.

A strong set of partners and trust between them and community residents is critical for implementing comprehensive strategies in high crime neighborhoods. BCJI sites work to strengthen cross-sector partnerships and to build and enhance trust among them so they can effectively work with residents.

Types of Program Strategies

1. **Safety Ambassadors:** Safety Ambassadors will be stationed in the downtown entertainment district in pairs. The focus of the Safety Ambassadors is to increase safety and to be good "hosts", not to enforce laws. In practice, this means that the Safety Ambassadors will identify and safely intervene in situations that put the community at

risk (i.e., intoxicated individuals acting aggressively, a woman being followed, etc.) before the situation can escalate. Safety Ambassadors will not enforce laws/ordinances or break up potentially hazardous conflicts. Serving as additional “eyes and ears” they will be trained to identify the situational risk and when/how to coordinate with Public Health Madison and Dane County’s (PHMDC) Violence Intervention and Outreach program and MPD. PHMDC’s Violence Intervention and Outreach program is expected to build relationships with those at risk of engaging in violence, connect them to resources and services in the community as a way to intervene in the cycle of violence and prevent violence from occurring, and provide case management types of services. As such, coordination with the Violence Intervention and Outreach and being able to rely on the relationships they build to help prevent potentially violent situations is important. Safety Ambassadors are “upstream” workers to create conditions to reduce violence, whereas Violence Interrupters and Violence Intervention and Outreach workers are there to work with people engaging in violence to make better choices, MPD is there to respond to violence when it is occurring. Training for Safety Ambassadors will include situational awareness training, Stop the Bleed training, implicit bias training, trauma-informed care, active shooter training, issues of mental health and substance use, and issues of homelessness to ensure that vulnerable populations are not being targeted.

Further safety-related functions of Safety Ambassadors include, but are not limited to, identification of and safely intervening in situations that put the community at risk; “Safe Walk” services; keeping foot traffic moving; serving as an extra set of “eyes and ears” by identifying escalating situations and coordinating with MPD; and maintaining open communication and coordination with City and County violence prevention services including, but not limited to, Public Health Madison and Dane County’s PHMDC’s Violence Intervention Services and the Madison Police Department. Hospitality-related functions of Safety Ambassadors include, but are not limited to, greeting the State Street area community; providing information and directions about State Street and downtown businesses, government and educational facilities, services, and special events; and providing information to persons experiencing houselessness or violence about available services and partner organizations.

2. **Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED):** CPTED implementation focuses on changing the physical environment to reduce the likelihood of committing crimes. This can include improving lighting, wayfinding, territoriality, improving general upkeep of an area, increasing opportunities to be observed by passerby, limiting access to a particular area, etc. A separate funding process will be conducted for CPTED.
3. **Bystander Intervention Training for Bartenders and Bar Staff:** Bystander intervention training empowers individuals to be able to notice, identify, and intervene safely in situations. Recently there have been a number of programs that aim to empower bar staff and owners to recognize the signs of sexual predation or aggression escalation and to intervene. The Bystander Intervention training would include sexual violence and gun

violence awareness training and extended to the entire staff, including bouncers. Certification for staff and informational materials on how to discreetly notify staff for help by the public will be made available at the completion of the training for the establishment to display.

Measurements of Success

Funded programs must identify clear and measurable outcomes appropriate to violence prevention and crime reduction, and should include at least two of the following measureable changes:

- Decrease in percentage of Sexual Violence incidents in the State Street area (compared to both past years and versus Madison as a whole)
- Decrease in percentage of Gun Crime incidents in the State Street area (compared to both past years and versus Madison as a whole)
- Increase in community knowledge of Safety Ambassadors and increase of perception of safety and welcoming nature of the State Street area associated with Safety Ambassadors implementation
- More than 50% of bar and restaurants in the hotspot region will have bystander intervention training(s) and more than 50% of bar staff in the hotspot region will attend bystander intervention training(s).
- Increase in awareness of bar owners/restaurants and /or students aware of the ISI program and interventions

IV. Eligibility

1. Eligibility is open to non-profit organizations and agencies that have obtained tax-exempt status under 26 USC 501(c)(3) OR groups that can secure, as fiscal agents, organizations that have obtained such status. Please see the Fiscal Agent packet available on the Funding Process website for more information. Organizations that are identified to serve as Fiscal Agents on behalf of applicants will be asked to indicate their understanding of the City's expectations and agree to act on the applicant's behalf.
2. Applicants may apply for funding to perform work within one or more of the following activities:
 - Safety Ambassadors
 - Bystander Awareness Training for Bartenders and Bar Staff

Each service type has separate criteria for implementation and reporting. Applicants may apply for funding to perform work within one or more activity type. Applicants should be aware of and incorporate best-practice standards outlined in this document in the planning, description, and implementation of their proposals.

3. Eligible expenses include personnel, program/project supplies, space, and special costs. No more than 20% may be applied to overhead or administrative costs. In awarding grants, the City may identify specific uses for allocations. Capital expenses related to the purchase of vehicles or property are not eligible. All awarded funds must be utilized in the timeline outlined in the contract. Funds not expended by the contract end date will not be reimbursed.
4. Eligible expenditures include personnel costs, program/project supplies and costs, space and special costs. With very few exceptions, Federal funds may not be used for food. Please consider using other funds for food costs. In awarding grants, the City may identify specific uses for allocations. Capital purchases related to purchase of vehicles or property will not be considered. All awarded funds must be utilized in the timeline outlined in resultant contracts. Any remaining funds not expended by the contract end date will not be available for project use.

Collaborative Proposals

Joint proposals that request funding for multiple agencies or organizations participating in a collaborative effort are encouraged. Joint proposals are appropriate when:

- Joint funding would increase program capacity or enable the existence of a program that would not otherwise be possible due to cost burden, staffing capacity, access to participants, or another similar reason.
- Joint funding will reduce administrative burdens for involved agencies or organizations.
- Joint funding strengthens the collaboration of agencies involved, the neighborhood, community, or connections between partners.

Note: Potential applicants will be required to attend an RFP Workshop, or schedule a conversation with City. Applications will not be accepted from entities that have not attended a workshop or consulted with staff on their proposals.

Funds Available

The CDD anticipates allocating up to \$380,000 through this request for proposal process, however, given the variability in the cost of the interventions, awards for the interventions will be made on a prioritized basis until no further funds are available. As a note, \$50,000 in funds has been set-aside for a separate CPTED funding process.

Contracts awarded through this RFP process will be for 12 months with the potential for an additional 12 months through a no cost grant extension.

V. Timeline

The following dates are tentative, non-binding, and are subject to change.

Date	RFP Activity
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July 12, 2022	Introduce Resolution and Policy Paper to Common Council
July 13, 2022	Public Safety Review Committee
July 14, 2022	Board of Health
July 25 , 2022	Finance Committee
August 2, 2022	Common Council Approval
August 3, 2022	Release of RFP
August 2022	Application Workshops – specific dates TBD
August 29, 2022	DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS AT 12:00 PM (NOON) CDT
September 6, 2022	Introduction to Common Council
September 12, 2022	Finance Committee Action
September 20, 2022	Common Council Final Action
September 21, 2022	Notification of Awards
October 1, 2022	Anticipated Contract Start Date