

Gang Reduction Impact Partnership (GRIP)

Upon acknowledging that our community cannot arrest its way out of the gang problem, the City's Original Aurora Renewal Division (OAR) launched an eight-month assessment and planning process from which a gang-reduction strategic plan was established. More than 65 individuals representing 50 entities participated in the planning process that was launched in mid-2010. This Gang Reduction Impact Partnership (GRIP) utilized the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's evidence-based Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM) to guide its efforts. By adhering to this model and utilizing its five strategies in developing the plan, the city is better positioned to deal holistically with its gang issues and secure funding to implement the plan's programs.

Upon completing the planning process in February 2011, OAR applied for funding from the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ) and secured a four-year grant totaling \$478,000 to implement several components within the plan.

GRIP focuses on a target area that extends slightly beyond Original Aurora with boundaries of Yosemite Street on the west; Laredo Street on the east; the Stapleton boundary and East 30th Avenue on the north; and 1st Avenue on the south. The population of this area is estimated to be 79,100 people or 24% of the city's overall population.

The demographics and crime trends of the target area compelled GRIP to formulate a plan that focuses on the following four goals and underlying strategies:

Goal 1: Prevent youth from becoming involved with gangs.

- Generate gang awareness in youth and parents with age-appropriate presentations
- Disseminate gang-related information via a variety of venues
- Educate youth about laws related to gang membership/activity
- Expand youth participation in gang-prevention efforts
- Increase knowledge of teachers and administrators about gang issues
- Assist school staff to work with parents of youth on probation
- Offer family-focused interventions for at-risk youth and their families
- Integrate existing mentoring programs into prevention efforts
- Expand after-school programs and increase pro-social activities
- Offer character-building and positive decision-making courses, job readiness training and youth employment opportunities

Goal 2: Intervene with gang-involved youth and their families.

- Conduct street outreach with at-risk and gang-involved youth
- Develop a corps of trained street outreach volunteers
- Provide case management and make referrals to appropriate services
- Host pro-social activities for high-risk and gang-involved youth
- Intervene in gang incidents and provide mediation to de-escalate gang conflicts
- Offer family-focused intervention services to gang-involved youth and their families
- Develop referral and placement pathways with employment agencies that provide job readiness, vocational training and entrepreneurial opportunities

Goal 3: Reduce gang-related crime and violence

- Conduct targeted gang investigations
- Utilize enforcement technology to prevent or prosecute crime

- Conduct joint home visits with probation on gang members under supervision
- Target house parties that may lead to gang violence
- Establish policies and procedures that support appropriate data sharing with criminal justice partners and community agencies
- Develop protocols with Aurora Public Schools to identify youth who are subject to a negotiated withdrawal from one school to another

Goal 4: Create an environment that inhibits gang activity.

- Train and organize property managers in combating gang activity
- Engage faith community in efforts to mobilize around gang issues
- Work with faith community to provide support to help youth get out of gangs
- Hold or co-sponsor community events that focus on gang issues
- Develop and implement community-wide information campaigns
- Monitor area for graffiti and implement rapid clean-up
- Install street and alleyway lighting to deter crime
- Conduct “community circles” with residents to assess and address neighborhood concerns
- Launch the “Better-a-Block” initiative to empower residents to take action that will build cohesion and improve the appearance of the community

Agencies Involved in Planning Process:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| • City of Aurora – Original Aurora Renewal | Aurora Police Department |
| • United States Attorney’s Office | Division of Youth Corrections |
| • 17 th & 18 th Judicial District Attorney’s Offices | Aurora Public Schools |
| • Living Waters Christian Center | St. Therese Church |
| • 18 th Judicial-Senate Bill 94 | Juvenile Assessment Center |
| • OMNI Institute | Adams County Youth Initiative |
| • Boys & Girls Club | Red Cross/Blue Shield Gang Prevention |
| • Aurora Mental Health Center | Aurora Youth Options |
| • Colorado Youth at Risk | The 4 Aspects |
| • Gang Rescue & Support Program (GRASP) | Renovation Outreach |
| • Coalition of Faith | Colfax Community Network |
| • Metro Organizations for People | A Promising Future |
| • Council on Substance & Mental Health | Aurora Housing Authority |
| • Community College of Aurora | |

For more information about the GRIP initiative, please call 303-739-7926.