AURORA, COLORADO

GROUP VIOLENCE INTERVENTION

PROBLEM ANALYSIS REPORT

July, 2023

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National Network For Safe Communities at JOHN JAY COLLEGE

CONTENTS

I. GROUP VIOLENCE INTERVENTION (GVI) PROBLEM ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

The National Network for Safe Communities' (NNSC) Group Violence Intervention (GVI) has repeatedly shown[1] that cities can dramatically reduce violence when community members and law enforcement join together to directly engage with active, violent street groups and clearly communicate: 1) a credible community message against violence; (2) a credible law enforcement message about the consequences of further violence; and (3) a credible and genuine offer of help for those who want it. A more detailed description of the GVI strategy is found in *Appendix A*. NNSC defines a group as two or more people who engage in violence and/or criminal activity together. Groups can be any social network whose members commit violent crimes together: they can be long-standing organizations, or cliques that are more fluid and may or may not meet the statutory definition of a gang. Regardless of their label or composition, groups co-offend and commit retaliatory violence in similar ways; group members also face extraordinary risk of victimization. This intense concentration of violence requires that public safety practitioners adopt a tailored approach.

To develop a customized, data-driven approach and to understand local violence dynamics, NNSC conducts a "problem analysis" with law enforcement in every city preparing to implement the Group Violence Intervention. The purpose of this analysis is to assess the connection between serious violence and local street groups. The problem analysis includes two exercises: a group audit and a violent incident review. The group

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[1] Systematic reviews by the National Academies of Sciences, the United States Agency for International Development, Weisburd et al., and others support that the strategy is the most effective known to reduce community violence, with the National Academies finding that they "show consistent crime control impacts on gang violence, street crime driven by disorderly drug markets, and repeat individual offending. Oakland, California, for example, has seen reductions in both homicide and nonfatal shootings of 50% each while simultaneously minimizing the criminal justice footprint. See: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. *Proactive policing: Effects on crime and communities*. National Academies Press, 2018; Abt, Thomas, and Christopher Winship. "What works in reducing community violence: a meta-review and field study for the northern triangle." (2016); Weisburd, David, David P. Farrington, and Charlotte Gill. "What works in crime prevention and rehabilitation: An assessment of systematic reviews." *Criminology & Public Policy* 16, no. 2 (2017): 415-449; McLively, Mike, and Brittany Nieto. "A Case Study in Hope: Lessons from Oakland's Remarkable Reduction in Gun Violence." *Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Faith in Action*, *and BBGVPC* (2019).

audit systematically unpacks all known and active groups in each jurisdiction. The violent incident review builds on frontline law enforcement intelligence to understand group connections to homicides and nonfatal shootings.

NNSC's problem analysis exercises are grounded in the emerging data-driven science of violence prevention, which establishes that America's violent crime is distributed unevenly across communities. This concentration—geographic, demographic, and social—has important implications for intervention. NNSC's deep experience exploring these dynamics in cities across the country—more than two dozen in the last six years—has confirmed that these forms of concentration are remarkably consistent across cities. On close examination, the social connections between perpetrators and victims of violence are often recognizable as street groups. This tells us that identifying these active groups and their members allows law enforcement to focus on the population in their city most likely to be involved in serious violence. This document further details the methodology and results derived from the Aurora problem analysis.

On May 15, 17, and June 27, 2023, NNSC staff conducted a problem analysis with Aurora law enforcement partners. The findings are consistent with cities NNSC has worked with to implement GVI successfully. During the group audit, Aurora Police Department (APD) personnel identified at least 36 groups comprised of approximately 1,355 individual group members. Law enforcement personnel also provided detailed information regarding the relationships between these groups, the areas they operate in, and particularly violent and/or active group members (more information can be found in *Appendix B*).

Following the group audit, NNSC conducted the violent incident review, in which law enforcement personnel reviewed 93 homicide and nonfatal shooting incidents from 2022 through 2023. Law enforcement confirmed that **at least 36% of homicides and 28% of nonfatal shootings involved group members** as suspected perpetrators, known victims, or both.

Overall, these findings are consistent with cities across the country, where groups typically drive up to half of all serious violence. The problem analysis highlights the need to operationalize street level intelligence and to use it to track the involvement of street groups in serious violence. The National Network recommends that law enforcement partners institutionalize regular incident reviews (often referred to as "shooting reviews") to assess homicides and nonfatal shootings after April 2023. For more information about shooting reviews and other next steps, refer to Section VII below.

Groups and group members in Aurora are involved in a very significant proportion of violence; as such, there is a significant opportunity to reduce serious violence through NNSC's Group Violence Intervention. As detailed in the subsequent pages, the data collected and analyzed will inform the design and implementation of the GVI framework in the city. This report concludes with a discussion of the immediate next steps required to implement this violence prevention work.

II. AURORA PROBLEM ANALYSIS

The problem analysis has two parts—the group audit and violent incident review. **The goal of the problem analysis is to capture frontline law enforcement insight into local violence dynamics and to expand opportunities for prevention and intervention.**

NNSC worked with APD personnel to assemble a cohort of knowledgeable frontline officers from within the department and outside agencies to conduct the problem analysis. At the outset of the problem analysis, the NNSC team told the participants that their contributions would be anonymous and that the information shared during the research exercises was confidential and protected under a data sharing agreement between NNSC and APD.

III. GROUP AUDIT

The problem analysis begins with NNSC guiding the assembled law enforcement and public safety professionals through a *group audit*, which gathers information on active violent street groups (gangs, crews, sets, cliques, etc.). **NNSC uses the term "group" instead of "gang,"** which defines street groups as two or more people who engage in violence and/or criminal activity together who may or may not meet the statutory definition of a "gang." The purpose of the group audit is:

> (1) To identify all groups contributing to the most serious violence in Aurora; and

> (2) To identify the group conflicts that are most closely associated with violence and/or group-involved individuals central to those conflicts

To capture as comprehensive and nuanced an understanding of a city's violent groups as possible, the group audit draws primarily from the street experience of knowledgeable frontline law enforcement personnel rather than simply from formal or written intelligence.

NNSC and APD frontline law enforcement identified at least 36 violent groups operating in the city (depicted below in *Figure 1*), consisting of approximately 1,355 active group members. This group population represents 0.34% of the population in Aurora.[2] The group audit table, appearing at the end of this report (*Appendix B*), relays the key information captured on each group, including size, age range, conflicts, and alliances.

Groups in Aurora are comprised of a mix of well-established gangs from the west coast, Denver, and hybrid sets that have emerged within the city. Some groups act as umbrella groups that are comprised of several smaller groups. Several hybrid groups, such as Group 33, Group 32, and Group 31 are groups of younger individuals who are not established as

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[2] The 2022-estimated population of Aurora is 393,537.

formal gangs, but have been involved in violence that is known to district detectives. While law enforcement described many rivalries between groups, very few of these rivalries lead to serious violence. Among the most active rivalries described in Aurora, that between Group 5 and Group 8 have led to an important number of shootings.

Figure 1. Aurora group Sociogram

Significant reductions in violence can occur by focusing on the groups in Aurora that represent approximately 0.34% of the population. Therefore, NNSC advises that the law

enforcement partners regularly return to the group audit to ensure that the information about groups and links between the groups (or lack thereof) reflects current information as accurately as possible. The partnership must establish tracking measures to monitor the fluid dynamics of local violence and group membership; at minimum, this includes refreshing the group audit 2-4 times per year to ensure that all information is current. This is further elaborated on in Section VII.

IV. INCIDENT REVIEW

The purpose of the incident review is to assess a city's serious violence problem by retrospectively reviewing each homicide incident from January 2022 through April 2023 and each nonfatal shooting incident from December 2022 through April 2023. Before the violent incident review, NNSC staff explained to the law enforcement cohort that the goal was to gather information about these incidents that official records do not routinely capture, such as officers' impressions and "word on the street."

The NNSC team also explained the **differences between "group-motivated" or "gang-motivated" and "group member involved" (GMI),** reiterating the importance of using the group member-involved definition to gauge the level of group violence in Aurora. **Identifying GMI incidents captures all violence in which group or gang members participated, as victims or perpetrators, irrespective of motivation.** To learn more about how NNSC classifies incidents as GMI refer to *Appendix C.*

NNSC uses the measure of GMI because all violence connected to groups shares a specific and powerful influence: the group itself. Any type of social group establishes expected norms and conduct for its members. This is no different for street groups involved in violence, which have established norms and conduct such as illegal gun carrying and the promotion of violence to settle disputes. These norms and the social pressure applied by

the group facilitate violence and encourage behaviors that pose particular challenges to public safety.

Group culture that places a premium on status and respect, in addition to group acquisition and sharing of weapons, means group norms and activities have significant effects on violence committed by individual group members, even beyond violence specific to promoting the group's interests. By assessing "group member involved" incidents, rather than limiting the analysis to "group-motivated" incidents, NNSC captures a full measure of the violence connected to street group dynamics.

NNSC and APD personnel reviewed 93 incidents, including **50 homicide and 43 nonfatal shooting incidents**. The goals of the incident review were:

(1) To understand the context and driving causes of the most serious violence;

(2) To determine the extent to which the street groups identified in the group audit contributed to the most serious violence in the city for the given time period; and

(3) To establish a baseline for comparison against future violent incident data

Information and current intelligence on the complex group dynamics within a city are usually scattered among frontline personnel and not systematically collected and analyzed. The problem analysis synthesizes frontline intelligence across different agencies and units to create a current snapshot of local group and violence patterns and concentration. Unpacking serious violence in this way helps answer questions such as:

- What proportion of the city's serious violence involves a group member as either a suspect or victim?
- To what extent are victims and suspects of serious violence connected to groups, and which groups are driving the violence?
- How do "non-GMI" incidents compare to incidents that involve group members?
- Do victims and suspects know each other before an incident?
- What can we learn about various characteristics, such as out-of-jurisdiction connections, which might apply to the incidents reviewed?

These diagnostic questions help lay a foundational understanding of serious violence and its intersection with high-risk group networks. The answers to these questions about Aurora are laid out in the next section and then contextualized in the *Discussion, Limitations,* and *Implications* section that follows.

V.   RESULTS FROM INCIDENT REVIEW

GROUP MEMBER INVOLVEMENT (GMI)

NNSC and APD law enforcement found that 36% of homicide 28% of nonfatal shootings reviewed involved group members.[3] An additional 2% of homicide and 12% of nonfatal shootings had a likely involvement of group members (likely GMI). NNSC classified 10% of homicide incidents and 44% of nonfatal shooting incidents as unknown GMI, given the lack of information necessary to say with confidence whether or not the incident involved group members. Finally, law enforcement confirmed that 52% of homicide incidents and

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[3] See *Appendix C* for more on how NNSC classifies incidents as confirmed, likely, unknown, or non-GMI.

16% of nonfatal shootings were unrelated to groups or group members (non-GMI). NNSC has found that sites typically begin implementation with a GMI percentage between 30% and 60% of all shootings and homicides. The findings here suggest that street-level violence dynamics in Aurora are in line with other jurisdictions implementing GVI.

Table 1. Percentage of homicides and nonfatal shootings that are group-member involved (GMI)

| GMI	Homicide	Nonfatal Shooting	Total
Yes	36.0% (18)	27.9% (12)	32.3% (30)
Likely	2.0% (1)	11.6% (5)	6.5% (6)
Unknown	10.0% (5)	44.2% (19)	25.8% (24)
No	52.0% (26)	16.3% (7)	35.5% (33)
Total	100% (50)	100% (43)	100% (93)

Note: Number of incidents is shown in parentheses. For homicide incidents in which additional victims were non-fatally shot, those who survived were counted under the one homicide incident (and therefore were not included in the nonfatal shooting incident count).

Figure 2 below combines information obtained in the group audit and incident review. The graphic compares Aurora's group population to that population's involvement in the homicides and nonfatal shootings reviewed in this report. According to estimates made during the group audit, there are approximately 1,355 active group members in Aurora and neighboring jurisdictions. **This means that groups that represent 0.34% of the city's population are associated with at least 36% of recent homicides and 28% of recent nonfatal shootings.**

For incidents that involved group members:
- 41% included only a group-involved suspect
- 37% included both a group-involved victim and a group-involved suspect
- 22% included only a group-involved victim

Figure 2. Population compared to homicides and nonfatal shootings
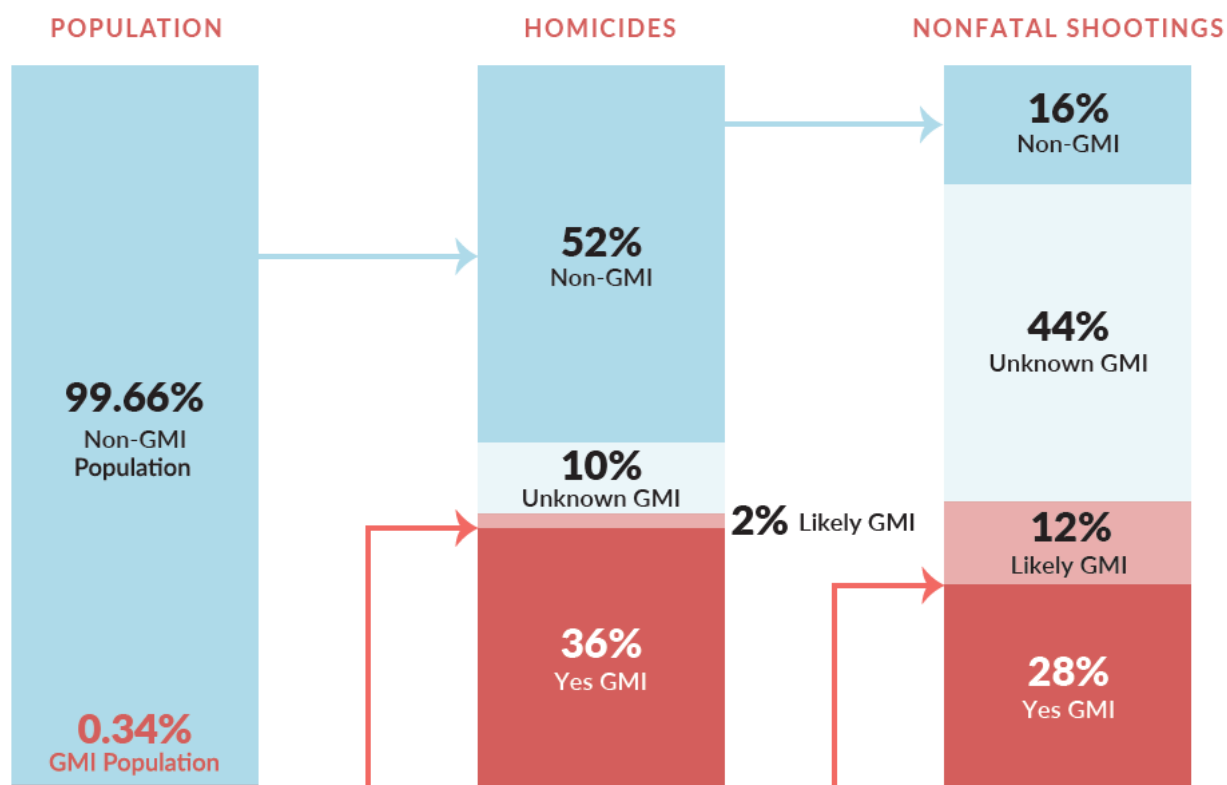
GROUP INTELLIGENCE

Based on national research, NNSC knows that group involved violence tends to involve individuals who know each other and that groups often have long-standing vendettas or beefs with other groups. Group members also tend to be disproportionately victimized by violence. To begin understanding the extent to which these or other elements are present in Aurora, the NNSC team coded for the following variables (which are not mutually exclusive, as an incident may have more than one characteristic):

- *Suspect identified*: was at least one suspect identified by full name and date of birth?
- *Knew each other prior*: did at least one victim-suspect pair know each other before the incident?
- *Known to LE*: was at least one individual involved in the incident known to law enforcement before the incident occurring?
- *Drugs*: did the incident involve a dispute over the sale of drugs?
- *Retaliation*: was this incident a direct retaliation for prior violence?
- *Group dispute*: did the incident involve an ongoing dispute between rival groups?
- *Personal dispute*: did the incident involve an altercation between individuals unrelated to groups?
- *Accidental or self-inflicted*: was the incident an accidental or a self-inflicted injury?
- *Intimate partner violence (IPV)*: did the incident involve former or current intimate partners? Or did the incident involve a third-party victim connected to an IPV incident (*IPV SO*)?
- *Family violence*: did the incident involve family members excluding intimate partners?
- *Robbery*: did the incident involve a robbery or theft?
- *Money*: did the incident involve a dispute over money?
- *Unintended*: did the incident involve a victim that was not an intended target?
- *Internal*: did the incident involve a dispute between group members from the same group?

Figure 3 displays the intersection of these variables with group involvement across incidents under review. The figure combines confirmed and likely GMI incidents (n=36) and compares them to incidents that were non-GMI (n=33). Approximately 89% of GMI incidents involved at least one individual previously known to law enforcement compared to 52% of non-GMI incidents. Nearly all non-GMI incidents had at least one identified suspect (97%) compared to 72% of GMI incidents. At least one victim-suspect pair knew

each other prior to the incident in 67% of both non-GMI and confirmed and likely GMI incidents.

Some of the primary characteristics of confirmed and likely GMI incidents include personal disputes (31%), ongoing group disputes (22%) and retaliatory incidents (17%). Disputes over drugs, money and internal group strife were each a characteristic of less than 11% of confirmed and likely GMI incidents. Over 48% of non-GMI incidents involved personal disputes. Incidents involving IPV and IPV spillover were a characteristic of 36% of non-GMI incidents, compared to only 6% of confirmed and likely GMI incidents[4]. A common thread through many of these incidents was terminating relationships with abusive partners.

Figure 3. Incident characteristics - Confirmed GMI and likely GMI versus non-GMI homicides and nonfatal shootings

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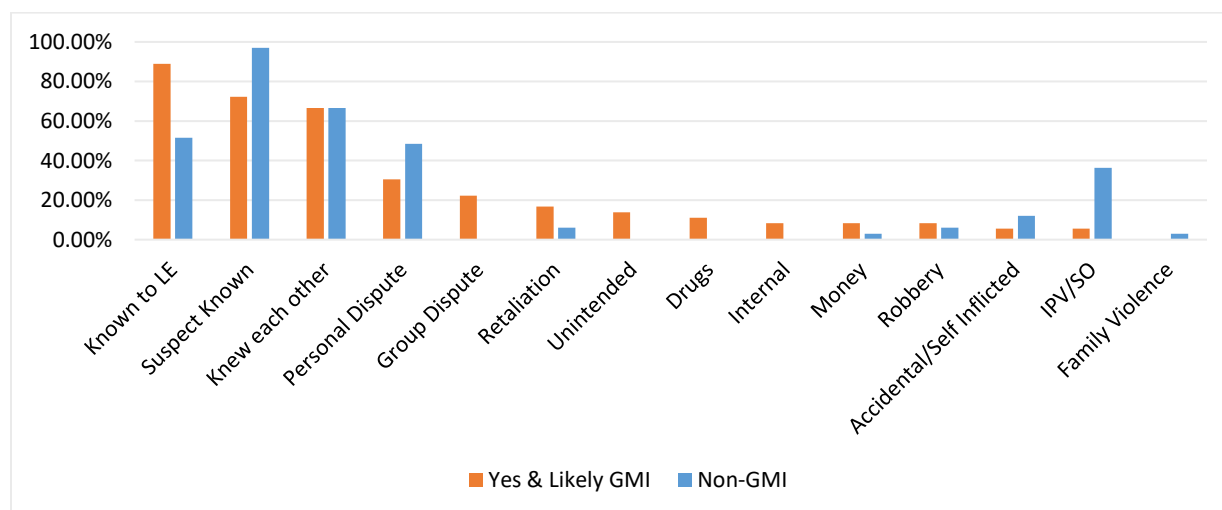
[4] NNSC has a focused deterrence strategy for intimate partner violence (called IPVI). To learn more visit: https://nnscommunities.org/strategies/intimate-partner-violence-intervention/

Another important aspect of GVI is to know which groups drive the violence. In *Figure 4*, group involvement, either as victims or suspects, were counted for each homicide and nonfatal shooting. This includes instances where several groups were involved and where multiple associations were present. **By incident count, Group 8 (5) was the most active group, followed by Group 2 (4), Group 5 (4) and Group 1 (4).** All other groups mentioned during the incident review were involved in less violence compared to these more active and prominent groups. These counts only include confirmed GMI incidents and therefore represent a lower bound of group involvement.

Figure 4. Confirmed GMI homicide and nonfatal shooting incidents: Counts of incidents involving a group by victim and suspect
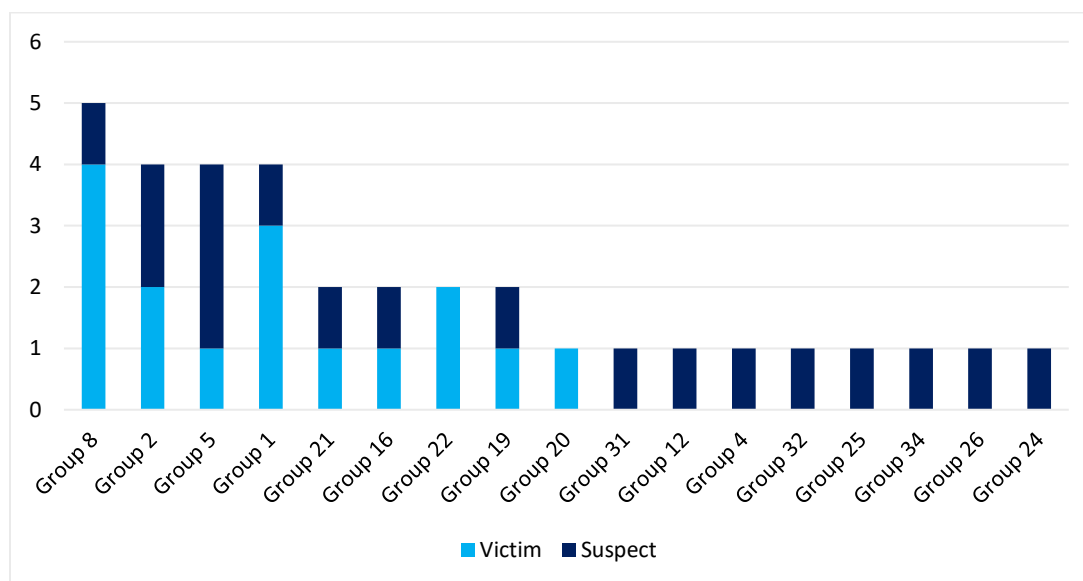
VICTIM AND SUSPECT DEMOGRAPHICS

This section presents the findings on victim and suspect ages, (*Table 2)* race, and sex (*Table 3)* across homicide and nonfatal shooting incidents. **Victims and suspects involved in confirmed and likely GMI incidents had an average age of 26, with evenly distributed ages falling between 17 and under, 18 to 24, and 25 to 34.** On average, victims were older than suspects were (31 vs. 27). Those involved in non-GMI incidents were also older than individuals involved in confirmed and likely GMI incidents (33 vs. 26). No individuals 17 and under were involved in non-GMI incidents compared to 24% in confirmed and likely GMI incidents. While young and older adults represent higher percentages of individuals involved in confirmed and likely GMI incidents, those 17 and under represent a significant percentage of individuals involved in these incidents.

Table 2. Known victim and suspect ages by incident type

	Victims	Suspects	Victims & Suspects (Non-GMI Incidents)	Victims & Suspects (Yes & Likely GMI Incidents)
Age	n=118	n=83	n=77	**n=95**
17 & Under	11.9%	15.7%	0.0%	**24.2%**
18-24	22.9%	32.5%	29.9%	**28.4%**
25-34	28.0%	27.7%	27.3%	**25.3%**
35-44	24.6%	18.1%	28.6%	**14.7%**
45-54	10.2%	4.8%	13.0%	**5.3%**
55 & Up	2.5%	1.2%	1.3%	**2.1%**
Average Age	30.8	27.1	32.7	**26.2**

Note: Individuals with missing ages were excluded from this analysis

Group violence in Aurora significantly affects Black residents (59%) and Hispanic residents (22%). Over 84% of individuals involved in group violence are male. Both White and Hispanic individuals were more likely to be involved in non-GMI incidents than confirmed and likely GMI incidents. Black individuals were more likely to be involved in confirmed and likely GMI incidents than non-GMI incidents. Female individuals were more likely to appear as victims (22%) than suspects were (15%). They were also more likely to appear in non-GMI incidents (26%) compared to confirmed and likely GMI incidents (15%).

Table 3. Known victim and suspect sex by incident type

	Victims	Suspects	Victims & Suspects (Non-GMI Incidents)	Victims & Suspects (Yes & Likely GMI Incidents)
Sex	n=116	n=81	n=77	**n=92**
Male	78.4%	85.2%	74.0%	**84.8%**
Female	21.6%	14.8%	26.0%	**15.2%**
Race	n=115	n=81	n=77	**n=91**
Black	44.3%	49.4%	31.2%	**59.3%**
White	17.4%	21.0%	26.0%	**13.2%**
Hispanic	35.7%	25.9%	41.6%	**22.0%**
Other	2.6%	3.7%	1.3%	**5.5%**

Note: Individuals with missing sex and race or ethnicity were excluded from this analysis.

VI. DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, & IMPLICATIONS

The results of the Aurora problem analysis are in line with NNSC's national experience. The most important findings are that: 1) Aurora has a small number of individuals who are

disproportionately involved in a significant amount of serious violence, and 2) these individuals are operating in a small number of groups. GVI is designed to address those very dynamics.

Other key findings in Aurora shed important light on the nature of the problem. Violence in the city involves a mix of juveniles, young adults, and adults. While the narratives around youth violence are often overstated, the findings in Aurora suggest that outreach to juveniles should be an important component of the intervention.

NNSC's findings also indicate that violence in Aurora is overwhelmingly concentrated demographically, as most victims and suspects were male. Group violence also affects an important number of Black and Hispanic residents in the city. The demographics of group-involved individuals must be kept in mind when engaging in support and outreach in Aurora. To be seen as credible, the offer of help should always be tailored to meet the needs of this population of group-involved individuals.

The group landscape in Aurora is similar to other large cities around the country. With at least 36 groups that total to an estimated 1,355 members, violence in Aurora is concentrated in an important way. This reality, that an extremely small number of identifiable group members are responsible for a significant proportion of homicides and shootings, highlights the need for an equally narrow and focused public safety effort. By focusing on this high-risk population, GVI has repeatedly demonstrated that violence can be dramatically reduced.

The findings in this report are also limited to the information provided and shared by partners in attendance at the virtual group audit and violent incident review. Because of this, all findings in this report are can change, as the intelligence is confirmed and refined. Despite these limitations, law enforcement in Aurora demonstrated a very high degree of knowledge about violence and groups in the city. The information outlined in this report is meant to provide the GVI partnership with clear insights into violence dynamics in Aurora and set a baseline for levels of group violence. Local practitioners, within both law

enforcement and the community, are ultimately the experts who hold the most nuanced and real-time insights into violence dynamics.

VII. NEXT STEPS & IMPLEMENTATION

The National Network for Safe Communities looks forward to working with partners in Aurora to reduce violence and increase public safety through the implementation of GVI. NNSC recommends the following steps to build on the intelligence gathering practices established during the problem analysis and support the ongoing implementation of GVI.

Compare NNSC findings with current Aurora Police Department intelligence.
During the problem analysis, APD demonstrated excellent frontline knowledge about groups and violence in the city. The APD should consider NNSC's findings and continue to build-out intelligence on the groups that are actively involved in violence.

Routinize group audits.
In NNSC's experience, groups are extremely fluid and naturally transition over time, with changes in membership, activities, conflicts, and alliances. Therefore, it is essential to regularly review the active groups in Aurora. Law enforcement partners should meet for routine intelligence updates at least twice a year to monitor group characteristics and status. This includes building out intelligence and familiarity with the smaller groups of juveniles actively involved violence who are not currently in established gangs. More focus should also be placed on continuing to focus on the smaller networks of individuals involved in violence within larger groups.

Enhance and expand institutionalized shooting reviews.
NNSC recommends that the law enforcement partners in Aurora work to enhance and expand their standing weekly violent incident reviews, often referred to operationally as *shooting reviews*, focused on nonfatal shootings and homicides in the city. Shooting

reviews are the operational, frontline meetings where recent shootings and homicides are discussed with relevant law enforcement partners, including but not limited to:

- o Aurora Police Department
- o Department of Corrections – Probation & Parole
- o US Attorney's Office
- o State's Attorney's Office
- o County Attorney's Office
- o Federal LE Agencies – FBI, ATF, etc.
- o Relevant Public Works Offices/Agencies - Codes Enforcement, Sanitation, Parks, etc.
- o Analysts
- o Any other relevant law enforcement agency

Shooting reviews also:

- o Gather the best intelligence on group involvement in serious violence
- o Identify the most violent groups
- o Track the changing dynamics of groups
- o Share information among all operational partners
- o Devise operational responses to violence
- o Hold partners accountable to commitments that are made

NNSC has found that shooting reviews is the timeliest and most practical method for continually assessing group and gang dynamics and their impact on violence, as well as devising coordinated operational responses to violence. Expanding shooting reviews to include relevant agency partners that can assist in facilitating non-law enforcement mechanisms to interrupt violence allows the partnership to utilize methods of deterrence that are swift and certain while actively trying to reduce the need for prosecution and incarceration unless absolutely necessary.

Continue to engage other partners.
NNSC has found that a comprehensive and committed partnership ensures access to accurate intelligence and effective enforcement. NNSC recommends expanding frontline law enforcement engagement to include a wide representation of patrol officers, particularly those working the night shift in higher violence areas, and across the department. Additionally, the GVI strategy benefits from committed engagement and collaboration from other law enforcement partners and agencies such as those from probation, parole, prosecution, task forces, law enforcement partners from neighboring jurisdictions, etc. Given the close proximity and the overlap in groups from this jurisdiction, engaging and cooperating with partners in Denver can be crucial to the intervention.

Plan for first direct communication with groups.
GVI is rooted in direct communication with active groups delivered by a partnership of law enforcement, social service providers, and community members. Traditionally, NNSC recommends that cities convene a call-in (traditional or modified) approximately every four months during the first years of implementation to reach those at the highest risk and send the message about group enforcement, community concern, and available resources. Custom notifications and other forms of direct messaging are a constant throughout the year and should be used to interrupt "beefs," prevent retaliation after a violent incident, calm outbreaks of group violence, and reinforce the core GVI message.

APPENDIX A: OVERVIEW OF GVI AND RELEVANT RESEARCH

A substantial body of empirical research[5] has shown that violence and community disorder in troubled neighborhoods is caused predominantly by a remarkably small number of highly active people locked in the dynamics of gangs, street groups, and drug crews. NNSC's Group Violence Intervention (GVI) has repeatedly shown that cities can dramatically reduce violence by assembling a partnership of law enforcement, social service providers, and committed community actors (e.g., parents, leadership from faith-based organizations, street-outreach workers, neighborhood associations, individuals who were formerly involved in violence dynamics, etc.) to engage in ongoing direct communication with these groups. Direct communication is central to GVI and is conducted via a "call-in," a face-to-face meeting between an assembly of group members and the partnership, or "custom notifications," a face-to-face meeting between an individual group member and representatives from the partnership, repeated at intervals as necessary. In both scenarios, partners deliver: 1) a credible moral message against violence, 2) a credible law enforcement message about the consequences of further violence, and 3) a genuine offer of help for those who want it.

Legal and professional framings around such issues as "gangs", "gang validation", "gang statutes" and "gang-related violence" can have a profound impact on frontline law enforcement's perceptions of these dynamics. American policing's long-standing focus on formal definitions of gang membership; descriptions of gangs as hierarchical, organized, and business-oriented; and focus on gang-involved violence as violence conducted in furtherance of the gang's interest often obscures what is otherwise apparent to officers

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[5] Braga, A., & Kennedy, D. (2021). A Framework for Addressing Violence and Serious Crime: Focused Deterrence, Legitimacy, and Prevention (Elements in Criminology). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781108938143

at the street level: the groups most relevant to local violence dynamics are not necessarily "gangs" by any legal definition, nor do most of their activities have anything to do with the gang's interest. Rather, these groups are small, loosely connected, and fluid; the violence they are involved in is typically related to issues of disrespect, standing personal disputes and intimate relationships, and small amounts of money or drugs. The formal processes governing intelligence management, arrests, and convictions are not responsive to this frontline reality; they are designed to support the aforementioned long-standing legal definitions of gangs and gang-related violence. NNSC's Group Violence Intervention was created in partnership with frontline law enforcement officers, as a strategy that could align policing's intelligence gathering and law enforcement responsibilities with the officers' lived experience of group dynamics around violence.

A central operational shift is that law enforcement puts groups ***on prior notice*** that law enforcement will meet group-involved violence with a specific and swift response directed ***at the group as a whole*** rather than at individuals. Individual violent offenders receive the same enforcement attention as they had previously. However, their fellow group members get new attention for any crimes committed, outstanding warrants, probation and parole violations, open cases and other possible formal and informal levers that can be pulled to apply unwanted pressure. The intervention combines this prior notice of potential law enforcement exposure with a powerful message against violence from community members whom the group members respect and a reorganized, streamlined social service structure tailored for group members who need and want support. The aim is to create collective consequences for violence and so reduce informal peer dynamics in the groups that promote violence, reassert community standards against violence, and offer genuine help for those who will take it. When considering whether GVI is appropriate for a particular city, law enforcement personnel begin by identifying individuals most closely associated with violence and the groups—if any—to which they belong and the violent incidents they are responsible for or involved in. This process is known as the problem analysis.

NNSC's problem analysis exercises are grounded in the emerging science of violence prevention. This nascent strand of research, highlighted below, has important implications for intervention—both in Aurora and beyond. Half of America's homicides occur in just 127 American cities; more than a quarter of homicides occur in neighborhoods that contain just 1.5% of the country's population, and as little as 5% of blocks in cities generate over half of all complaints of crime and violence.[6,7] Those neighborhoods where violence concentrates are often next door to communities that experience little to no serious violence, as in Chicago, where neighborhood homicide rates vary between under four per 100,000 to over 80 per 100,000.[8] While the geographic concentration of violence is stark, the most serious violence—homicides and shooting violence—are also concentrated socially and correspond to particular demographic profiles and social connections. Victimization rates vary widely across gender, age, and race: for example, black males ages 15 to 34 are 17 times more likely to be victims of homicide than non-Hispanic white males of the same age.[9]

Interpersonal connections also influence serious violence. According to Tracy and collaborators: "exposure to a victim or perpetrator of violence in one's interpersonal relationships and social networks increases the risk of individual victimization and perpetration."[10] Papachristos et al. have analyzed social networks using arrest records and

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[6] Aufrichtig, A., Beckett, L., Diehm, J., & Lartey, J. (2017). Want to fix gun violence in America? Go local. The Guardian.

[7] Weisburd, D. (2015). The law of crime concentration and the criminology of place. Criminology, 53(2), 133-157.

[8] Mason, M. (2017, December). Homicide in Chicago community areas 2007–2015: Concentrated risk and stable rates. Illinois Violent Death Reporting System.

[9] Cook, P. J., & Pollack, H. A. (2017). Reducing access to guns by violent offenders. RSF.

[10] Tracy, M., Braga, A. A., & Papachristos, A. V. (2016). The transmission of gun and other weapon-involved violence within social networks. Epidemiologic reviews, 38(1), 70–86.

determined the consistent concentration of a city's gun violence within small social networks and the "transmission" of victimization along those social connections.[11] This research identifies subsets of society that experience tremendously disproportionate amounts of the most serious community violence.

The social connections described by Papachristos and partners above are often identifiable as street groups. Street groups take various forms, from more established hierarchical gangs to small, loosely aligned sets of individuals that do not have a group name. In a review of 23 sites where NNSC has conducted a problem analysis, NNSC found that, on average, 0.6% of a city's total population was recognizable to frontline law enforcement as involved in this violent group dynamic, and that this tiny fragment of the overall population was, in turn, connected to 50% of homicides, on average. By identifying these active groups and their members, law enforcement can more effectively focus on the population in their city most likely to perpetrate and be victimized by serious violence.

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[11] Green, B., Horel, T., & Papachristos, A. V. (2017). Modeling contagion through social networks to explain and predict gunshot violence in Chicago, 2006 to 2014. JAMA internal medicine, 177(3), 326–333.

APPENDIX B: GROUP AUDIT TABLE

#	Group Name	Size	Age Range	Conflicts	Allies
1	Group 1	~30	12-23	Group 2, Group 4, Group 17, Group 25, Group 21	Group 14, Group 23
2	Group 2	120	12-40s	Group 1, Group 23, Group 18, Group 24, Group 19	N/A
3	Group 3	~60	11-23	Group 15, Group 7, Group 5	Group 16, Group 28
4	Group 4	~10	14-20s	Group 1, Group 23	Group 17
5	Group 5	20-30	15-30	Group 8, Group 3	Group 7, Group 12s, Group 27
6	Group 6	15-20	18-30	Group 35, Group 26, Group 21	Group 27, Group 25

#	Group Name	Size	Age Range	Conflicts	Allies
7	Group 7	15-20	15-20	Group 8, Group 9, Group 36, Group 15, Group 3	Group 5, Group 10, Group 12
8	Group 8	50	12-20s	Group 5, Group 10, Group 13, Group 11, Group 7	Group 9
9	Group 9	10	15-25	Group 7	Group 8
10	Group 10	10	16-20	Group 8	Group 7
11	Group 11	30	15-20	Group 8, Group 15	N/A

#	Group Name	Size	Age Range	Conflicts	Allies
12	Group 12	5-25	20-30	N/A	Group 27, Group 5, Group 7
13	Group 13	10-20	15-25	Group 8	N/A
14	Group 14	20	18-30	N/A	Group 1
15	Group 15	5-10	16-20	Group 11, Group 3, Group 7, Group 28	N/A
16	Group 16	20	20-30	N/A	Group 3, Group 28, Group 22

#	Group Name	Size	Age Range	Conflicts	Allies
17	Group 17	Non-active	14-25	Group 1	Group 4
18	Group 18	50-100	13-45	Group 2	Group 23, Group 24
19	Group 19	50-100	13-45	Group 2	N/A
	Umbrella Group	100-200	13-45	Group 2	N/A
20	Group 20	15	16-22	N/A	N/A

#	Group Name	Size	Age Range	Conflicts	Allies
21	Group 21	20-40	15-30	Group 27, Group 6, Group 1, Group 22	Group 26
22	Group 22	10-20	20-30	Group 21	Group 16, Group 28
23	Group 23	50-100	15-30	Group 2, Group 4	Group 1, Group 24, Group 18
24	Group 24	50-100	13-45	Group 2	Group 23, Group 18
25	Group 25	5	15-18	Group 1	Group 6

#	Group Name	Size	Age Range	Conflicts	Allies
26	Group 26	50-100	25-40	Group 27, Group 6	Group 35, Group 21
27	Group 27	30	16-38	Group 26, Group 21	Group 12, Group 5, Group 6
28	Group 28	10-20	15-25	Group 15	Group 3, Group 22, Group 16
29	Group 29	20-40	18-40	Group 30	N/A
30	Group 30	N/A	N/A	Group 29	N/A

#	Group Name	Size	Age Range	Conflicts	Allies
31	Group 31	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
32	Group 32	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
33	Group 33	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
34	Group 34	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
35	Group 35	N/A	N/A	Group 6	Group 26

#	Group Name	Size	Age Range	Conflicts	Allies
36	Group 36	N/A	N/A	Group 7	N/A

APPENDIX C: GROUP MEMBER INVOLVED (GMI)

The purpose of the incident review is to assess a city's violent crime problem by retrospectively reviewing each homicide and nonfatal shooting reported within the city for a predetermined period. A top priority is understanding which incidents are **group member involved**. This appendix details what that entails.

NNSC explicitly sees a difference between **"group-motivated" or "gang-motivated" and "group member involved" (GMI). Identifying GMI incidents captures *all* violence in which group or gang members participated, as victims or perpetrators, irrespective of motivation.** NNSC uses this measure because all violence connected to groups shares a specific and powerful influence: the group itself. Any type of social group establishes expected norms and conduct for its members. This is no different for street groups involved in violence, which have established norms and conduct such as illegal gun carrying and the promotion of violence to settle disputes. These norms and the social pressure applied by the group facilitate violence and encourage behaviors that pose particular challenges to public safety. Group culture that places a premium on status and respect, in addition to group acquisition and sharing of weapons, means group norms and activities have significant effects on violence committed by individual group members, even beyond violence specific to promoting the group's interests. By assessing "group member involved" incidents, rather than limiting the analysis to "group-motivated" incidents, the NNSC team captures a full measure of the violence connected to street group dynamics.

The most essential aspect of the incident review is to determine which homicides and nonfatal shootings are group member involved. The process for how NNSC defines incidents as GMI is as follows.

NNSC classifies an incident as **"confirmed GMI"** if any of the following is true:

- Victim is a known group member.
- Suspect is a known group member.
- The circumstances and context of an incident are clearly connected to group violence, but information about the victim and/or suspect is unknown.

NNSC classifies an incident as **"likely GMI"** if any of the following is true:

- The victim and/or suspect are loosely or tangentially associated with a group of individuals, but the associations are not entirely clear.
- Multiple victims and/or suspects are involved in the incident, and the circumstances of the incident suggest a group dynamic.

An incident is classified as **"unknown GMI"** if there is not enough information to determine group member involvement.

An incident is classified as **"not GMI"** if law enforcement knows that neither the victim(s) nor the suspect(s) involved in the incident are associated with a group and nothing about the incident suggests a group dynamic.

To visualize how NNSC classifies incidents as GMI, *Figure C1* depicts this process in a simplified flowchart that lays out the steps to coding an incident as group member involved, focusing on the four categories: confirmed GMI ("Yes"), not GMI ("No"), unknown GMI ("Unk"), and likely GMI ("Likely").

Figure C1. GMI Incident Review Coding Process Diagram