



## Legislation Text

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Resolution to Amend the Fiscal Year 2023 Council Approved Budget to Accept and Appropriate \$300,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) - Gun Violence Intervention Grant Program to Support the City's Efforts to Reduce Gun Violence

### **PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:**

Disproportionate rates of gun violence occur in concentrated areas of the City amongst a limited group of actors and their associates, which threatens the community's fundamental right to life. Additionally, it negatively impacts perceptions of safety, obstructs the health and well-being of individuals, businesses, neighborhoods, and community stakeholders. Gun violence has additional ancillary effects including individual trauma, resident flight, and detracts revenue-generating companies from the City. From late November through early December 2021, the Office of Youth and Young Adult Opportunities fielded a survey created by researchers at Christopher Newport University's Center for Crime, Equity, and Justice Research and Policy (CCEJRP). The survey aimed to understand the community's perceptions of the causes and effects of crime and safety within the City with the goal of aligning the City's work with community needs.

The results of the survey identified unsupervised youth, drugs, and mental health/well-being as the top three contributors to crime. The survey further identified a considerable gap between residents knowing of available community resources and utilizing these resources as an additional barrier to safety. Last, survey participants shared widespread concerns about gun accessibility for high-risk individuals and crimes occurring at night. The Hampton Police Division (HPD) continues to track and maintain surveillance on vulnerable individuals most likely to shoot or be shot as well as monitor five traffic zones where firearm-related violence is prevalent: Langley Square Area, Shell Road Corridor, Old Wythe, Nickerson, and Magruder Heights. HPD will utilize this data-informed decision-making to deploy resources to minimize the loss of life, reduce community trauma, increase trust in government and make Hampton an even better, safer place to live, work, play, and invest.

### **Discussion:**

After gaining community and stakeholder input, government officials and city leaders met to determine the causes and sub-causes of gun violence. Participants believe disproportionate areas of gun violence or "hot spots" and vulnerable individuals inundated with several complex challenges resulted in increased gun violence. Additional causes of increased gun violence include economic disinvestment, blight, concentrated poverty, family dysfunction, poor conflict resolution, unaddressed trauma, substance abuse, criminal justice system practices, and community desensitization.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Gun Violence Intervention Grant will allow Hampton to fund intervention strategies with the expectation to significantly reduce gun violence among the limited group of actors and associates committing gun violence in the disproportionately affected traffic zones of our community. In addition to reducing violence, we aim to enhance police legitimacy and improve police-community relations. With assistance from Human Services, Court Services Unit,

Youth and Young Adult Opportunities, Hampton City Schools, Hampton-Newport News Community Services Board, and the Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Hampton Police will activate the Focus Deterrence Model to foster stronger relationships between law enforcement and those we serve by offering divergent programs for those willing to change. This framework outreach will include deliberate, persistent, and consistent attempts to connect with individuals involved in violence to foster new relationships, build community, and end involvement in life-threatening behaviors. Individuals will be given a choice to either partner and participate in supportive services or be the subject of increased and aggressive law enforcement attention. HPD will outline a plan for each traffic zone to determine enforcement tactics, areas for enhanced lighting, resource needs, and infiltrating social networks that perpetuate violence.

To activate, HPD projects a total need of \$300,000 to fund the critical tasks and activities of this program: enhanced patrols - \$94,000; lighting - \$55,000; mental health - \$7,500; unsupervised youth and young adults (community fellowship for 10 participants) - \$135,200; and quality events and experiential learning - \$8,300.

**Impact:**

In line with the City of Hampton's Safe and Clean initiative, the \$300,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Gun Violence Intervention Program Grant seeks to ensure all Hampton citizens and businesses are safe, healthy, and secure in their persons and property. Further, when the problem is solved, the rate of gun violence in the City could be greatly reduced - 50% within five years, there will be an integrated system of care with multiple entry points, more parental involvement, greater quality of life, decrease in court dockets, increased sense of safety in public spaces, and a reduction of illegal guns carried in public spaces.

**Recommendation:**

We request Council accept and appropriate the \$300,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Gun Violence Intervention Grant Program award in order to begin efforts to significantly reduce gun violence and the associated harms it causes in our community by addressing the underlying root causes, providing the necessary wrap-around support case management and family-based intervention, increase out-of-school time activities, and provide viable alternatives to gun violence.

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth of Virginia - Office of the Attorney General has awarded the City of Hampton the FY 2023 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Gun Violence Intervention Grant in the amount of \$300,000;

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2023 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Gun Violence Intervention Grant does not require a local cash or in-kind match;

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2023 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Gun Violence Intervention Grant award will be used by the Hampton Police Division to fund intervention strategies with the expectation of significantly reducing gun violence; and

**WHEREAS**, the grant award is for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Hampton, Virginia hereby amends its Fiscal Year 2023 Council Approved Budget to accept and appropriate the FY 2023

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Gun Violence Intervention Grant award in the amount of \$300,000, from the Commonwealth of Virginia - Office of the Attorney General to the Grants Fund to be spent in accordance with the grant agreement.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Council authorizes the City Manager, or her designee, to take any and all actions necessary to accept and implement this grant award.