

**DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT**

Committee on Public Safety  
Joshua Kingsley, *Senior Legislative Counsel*  
Nevin Singh, *Senior Financial Analyst*  
Jack Storey, *Senior Financial Analyst*



**THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

**COMMITTEE REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS DIVISION**

Andrea Vazquez, Legislative Director  
Rachel Cordero, Deputy Director, Governmental Affairs Division

**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY**

*Hon. Kamillah Hanks, Chair*

**March 30, 2022**

**Oversight- The Mayor’s Blueprint to End Gun Violence**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

On March 30, 2022, the Committee on Public Safety, chaired by Council Member Kamillah Hanks, will hold an oversight hearing on Mayor Eric Adams’ “Blueprint to End Gun Violence.” Those invited to testify include members of the New York City Police Department (“NYPD” or “the Department”), the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice (“MOCJ”), directors of several Cure Violence organizations, advocates and members of the public.

**II. BACKGROUND**

Following nearly a decade of relatively low rates of gun violence, New York City has experienced a rise in shooting incidents in recent years. Generally, this increase mirrors nationwide trends, which may indicate causes not unique to New York City—such as, the massive societal

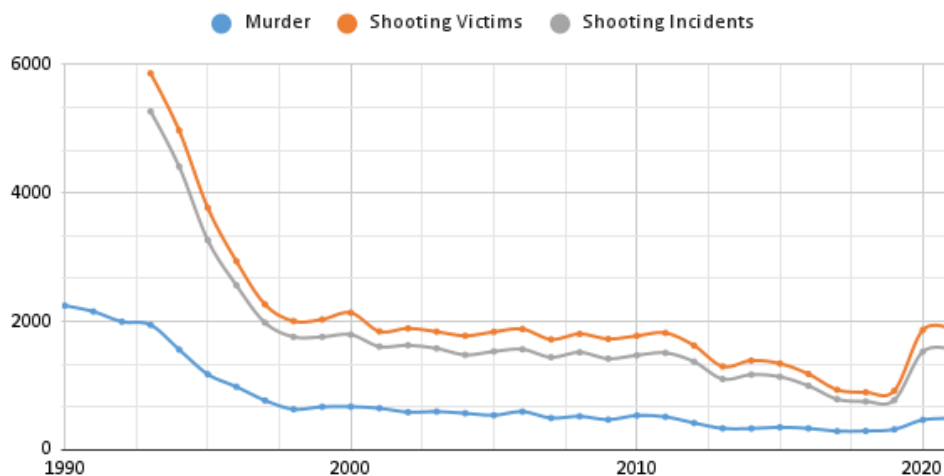
## DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT

and economic disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, high rates of gun violence persist in certain areas of the city and significant public discourse has focused on how to reverse these trends and improve public safety for all New Yorkers.

### Historical Trends in Crime Rates

For historical context, the rates of gun violence and murder decreased steadily and dramatically in NYC beginning in the early-1990s, before stabilizing at relatively low rates throughout the 2000s and 2010s. Shooting incidents dropped from 5,269 in 1993, to 1,794 in 2000, to 776 in 2019.<sup>1</sup> In 1993 there were 1,946 murders in NYC, which decreased to 613 in 2000, and 319 in 2019.<sup>2</sup> However, New York City experienced a notable increase in shooting incidents, and similar increases in murders beginning in 2020. For example, in 2021 there were 1,559 shooting incidents, which is nearly double the number of shootings recorded in 2019; and 485 murders, which represents a 52% increase from 2019.

Murders, Shooting Victims, & Shooting Incidents in NYC  
1990 - 2021



<sup>1</sup> Data provided by the New York City Police Department. See also <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/stats/crime-statistics/historical.page>.

<sup>2</sup> Id.

**DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT**

**Murder & Shooting Data<sup>3</sup>**

*1990 through 2021*

| <b>YEAR</b> | <b>Murder</b> | <b>Shooting Victims</b> | <b>Shooting Incidents</b> |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>1993</b> | 1946          | 5862                    | 5269                      |
| <b>1994</b> | 1561          | 4973                    | 4411                      |
| <b>1995</b> | 1177          | 3769                    | 3265                      |
| <b>1996</b> | 983           | 2938                    | 2563                      |
| <b>1997</b> | 770           | 2264                    | 1980                      |
| <b>1998</b> | 633           | 2004                    | 1759                      |
| <b>1999</b> | 671           | 2030                    | 1759                      |
| <b>2000</b> | 673           | 2135                    | 1794                      |
| <b>2001</b> | 649           | 1844                    | 1608                      |
| <b>2002</b> | 587           | 1892                    | 1629                      |
| <b>2003</b> | 597           | 1840                    | 1580                      |
| <b>2004</b> | 570           | 1776                    | 1479                      |
| <b>2005</b> | 539           | 1837                    | 1532                      |
| <b>2006</b> | 596           | 1881                    | 1566                      |
| <b>2007</b> | 496           | 1720                    | 1442                      |
| <b>2008</b> | 523           | 1806                    | 1519                      |
| <b>2009</b> | 471           | 1727                    | 1420                      |
| <b>2010</b> | 536           | 1775                    | 1473                      |
| <b>2011</b> | 515           | 1821                    | 1510                      |
| <b>2012</b> | 419           | 1624                    | 1373                      |
| <b>2013</b> | 335           | 1299                    | 1103                      |
| <b>2014</b> | 333           | 1391                    | 1172                      |
| <b>2015</b> | 352           | 1344                    | 1138                      |
| <b>2016</b> | 335           | 1182                    | 998                       |
| <b>2017</b> | 292           | 936                     | 789                       |
| <b>2018</b> | 295           | 897                     | 754                       |
| <b>2019</b> | 319           | 922                     | 776                       |
| <b>2020</b> | 468           | 1868                    | 1531                      |
| <b>2021</b> | 488           | 1876                    | 1561                      |

---

<sup>3</sup> Id.

## DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT

### *Nationwide Spike in Gun Violence*

For national context, despite recent increases in shootings and murders, New York City is still relatively safe compared to other large U.S. cities;<sup>4</sup> and increases in rates of shootings during the pandemic have been reported throughout the country.<sup>5</sup> Record increases in gun sales, masses of homebound schoolchildren, social isolation, and economic struggles due to COVID-19 placed many people at increased risk for gun violence. Researchers have cited such factors as potential causes for the gun crime spike during the last two years.<sup>6</sup> In fact, 2020 was one of the deadliest years on record for the United States; gun homicides and non-suicide-related shootings took approximately 19,300 lives, a 25% increase from 2019.<sup>7</sup> There were 3,906 additional firearm deaths and 9,278 additional firearm injuries in 2020 compared to 2019,<sup>8</sup> and three in four big cities saw increases in firearm homicides.

Moreover, gun sales have surged nationally during the COVID-19 pandemic. Industry data and firearms background checks show that nearly 23 million guns were purchased in 2020, according to Small Arms Analytics, representing a 65 percent increase from the 13.9 million guns purchased in 2019.<sup>9</sup> Unintentional shooting deaths by children also increased by nearly one-third when comparing March to December of 2020 with the same period in 2019.<sup>10</sup> The pandemic saw

---

<sup>4</sup> Everytown Gun Safety, *Murder and Gun Homicide Data Tracker*; available at: <https://everytownresearch.org/report/city-data/#murder-and-gun-homicide-trends-by-city>.

<sup>5</sup> Ssentongo, P., Fronterre, C., Ssentongo, A.E. *et al.* Gun violence incidence during the COVID-19 pandemic is higher than before the pandemic in the United States. *Sci Rep* 11, 20654 (2021); available at: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-98813-z>. (Although, nationwide data on shooting incidents is inconsistently reported, available data indicates significantly higher rates of gun violence once the pandemic began, in Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin).

<sup>6</sup> Everytown for Gun Safety. (2021, May). Gun Violence and COVID-19 in 2020: A Year of Colliding Crises. <https://everytownresearch.org/report/gun-violence-and-covid-19-in-2020-a-year-of-colliding-crises/>

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> Cartaya, M. C. S. A. M. (2021, March 14). *US record guns sales: Americans bought guns in record numbers in 2020 during a year of unrest.* CNN. <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/03/14/us/us-gun-sales-record/index.html>

<sup>10</sup> *Supra* note 10.

## **DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT**

millions of children out of school while gun sales hit record highs, bringing more guns into homes. This resulted in a surge in the number of children accessing firearms and unintentionally shooting themselves or someone else. Lastly, stay-at-home orders and reduced capacity in shelters left domestic violence victims trapped with abusive partners. Data from over 40 states showed about half of domestic violence service providers surveyed saw an increase in gun threats toward survivors of intimate partner violence in their communities during the pandemic.<sup>11</sup>

### **III. MAYOR'S BLUEPRINT TO END GUN VIOLENCE**

“The Blueprint to End Gun Violence” (“the Blueprint”) outlines Mayor Eric Adams’ approach to addressing gun violence in NYC.<sup>12</sup> These proposals largely center the City’s response on increased law enforcement activity in an effort to enforce gun possession laws, seize illegal firearms and incarcerate gun offenders. In addition, the Blueprint proposes expanding community-based solutions to crime, and increasing access to social services and resources for the city’s most vulnerable communities. Below is an outline of the specific proposals included in the Blueprint.

#### *NYPD Policies:*

- (1) Neighborhood Safety Teams. NYPD will deploy reconstituted anti-crime units to the 30 police precincts within the City where 80% of violence occurs. The City will conduct listening tours in “key neighborhoods, truly understanding the challenges of past Anti-Crime Units.” Finally, NYPD will provide additional training, supervision, analytics and risk monitoring to ensure such teams effectively work with communities.
- (2) More Officers on Patrol. The NYPD will place more officers on patrol in key neighborhoods Citywide. To do so, the City will seek increased federal funding, and attempt to better utilize existing resources by identifying inefficiencies in deployment to enable the shift of uniformed officers off administrative and/or other duties that can be served by civilian roles.
- (3) Expanding Partnership between NYPD and State Police. Increased interagency sharing of investigative information, and increased strategic presence in public transportation facilities.

---

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> New York City Mayor Eric Adams, “Blueprint to End Gun Violence,” January 24, 2022; available at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2022/the-blueprint-to-end-gun-violence.pdf>.

## DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT

- (4) Spot Checks for Gun Trafficking at City Entry Points. In collaboration with State Police, NYPD will implement “spot checks” at entry points such as Port Authority and/or other bus/train stations.
- (5) Increase Resources for Gun Violence Suppression Division. Expanding a “highly-specialized” unit within NYPD’s Detective Bureau that is tasked with seizing illegal guns, and targeting gun carriers, traffickers and sellers.
- (6) Using Technology to Identify Suspects and those Carrying Guns.
- (7) Expanding NYPD’s Gun Violence Strategic Partnerships. Daily meetings with local, state and federal partners to share intelligence and information on specific cases. Additionally, will increase funding and expand intelligence network to include additional surrounding jurisdictions.
- (8) Expanded NYPD Collaboration with FBI, ATF and all federal partners.

### *Non-NYPD Community Initiatives:*

- (1) Empowering Violence Interrupters Citywide. The Administration will build on already-successful work of violence interrupters within the City’s Crisis Management System (“CMS”) and ensure that such programs have sufficient resources.<sup>13</sup>
- (2) Expanding Summer Youth Employment. The Administration will “launch an unprecedented Summer Youth Employment and Youth Engagement Program for Summer 2022.” This effort will include partnerships with large businesses and corporations for identifying internships for young people.
- (3) Expand Fair Futures Initiative. The Administration will support expanded funding for programs such as the Fair Futures Initiative, which is targeted youth support and mentorship for middle-and-high school aged youth in the City’s foster care system.<sup>14</sup>
- (4) Expand Community Hiring Efforts. The Administration will support legislation to require entities doing business with the City hire individuals from targeted communities with New York City.
- (5) Expanding Hospital Violence Intervention Programs (HVIP). The Department of Health will expand HVIP to 10 additional hospitals in communities with high rates of gun violence.
- (6) Expanded Mental Health Care. The Administration will refocus existing funding for the City’s Office of Community Mental Health (formerly ThriveNYC) into areas of direct need such as homelessness.

---

<sup>13</sup> The Crisis Management System, managed through the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice and its Office to Prevent Gun Violence is designed to prevent gun violence by using a public health approach. CMS arose out of a recommendation by the Council’s Task Force to Combat Gun Violence, and includes several programs whose models acknowledge that violence is a learned behavior and seeks to support communities with programming intended to prevent gun violence, restore damage done to community by gun violence, and fund initiatives that respond to gun violence. These neighborhood networks offer legal services, hospital-based responses, youth employment opportunity, school-based conflict mediation, mental health services, and other social supports.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on the Fair Future’s Initiative, visit: <https://www.fairfuturesny.org/>.

## **DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT**

(7) Expand Mandated Mental Health Treatment for Individuals with Severe Mental Illness who are Deemed Dangerous. The Administration advocates to “revisit existing law” that facilitate court mandated treatment for individuals with severe mental illness who are unwilling to seek treatment and are determined to be a danger to themselves or others by a doctor and judge.

### *Other City Efforts:*

(1) Identifying a Dedicated Anti-Gun Violence Liaison in Every City Agency. Such individual will be agency point-of-contact for NYPD, CMS providers, and City Hall’s “Crisis Management Team,” and be responsible for solving gun violence related challenges confronted by the agency.

(2) Creating a Quality of Life Task Force. Senior leadership from NYPD, DSNY, and DHS, along with mental health experts, will be tasked with providing comprehensive and coordinated delivery of services to areas that have seen rise in crime and deterioration of neighborhoods.

(3) City Judicial Appointments. Future mayoral judicial appointment must show a “demonstrated commitment to keeping violent criminal who use guns off New York City streets.”

(4) Partnering with Business Leaders to Fund Crime Stoppers. The Administration aims to increase financial rewards for individuals who provide law enforcement with information that leads to arrests for gun-related crimes.

(5) Expanding Operation Safe Shoppers. The Administration will increase funding to stores and businesses to expand security camera technology if such establishment places at least one camera directed at the public sidewalk and agrees share footage with police.

(6) Launching “Sermons for Safety.” The Administration will coordinate a month-long effort to include public safety messaging in religious services; including efforts to connect young people to community-based violence interrupters.

### *NYS Legislative Reforms:*

(1) Bail—Allowing Judges to Take into Account a Defendant’s Dangerousness. New York State’s bail statute does not permit judges to consider an individual’s potential “dangerousness” when making pre-trial detention determinations; rather, such decisions are guided by consideration of factors indicating whether a defendant can be expected to return to court for future appearances. The Blueprint proposes reforms to state law to permit judges to incarcerate a defendant pre-trial following a determination of such individual’s dangerousness.

(2) Bail—Demanding Accountability and Transparency. The Administration proposes reforms to New York State law to require that judges make bail determinations and underlying reasoning part of the public record. Additionally, the Blueprint proposes expanded public reporting of data related to judicial bail determinations.

(3) Raise the Age. The Administration proposes changes to State’s recently enacted “Raise the Age Law,” to grant prosecutors the ability to charge 16 & 17-year-olds as adults in Criminal Court if such individual faces gun related allegations and refuses to cooperate with law enforcement investigations regarding the source of the firearm. Currently, such cases originate in Criminal

## **DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT**

Court, where judges maintain discretion on whether to transfer such cases to Family Court or continue the case in the adult criminal system.

(4) Discovery—Changing Disclosure Obligations of Prosecutors in Gun Cases. The Administration proposes changes to NYS law to prosecutorial obligations to disclose evidence to a defendant facing criminal charges. Specifically, the Blueprint calls for: (a) reforms to NYS “speedy trial” laws in order to allow prosecutors to move gun cases forward to trial before complying with discovery obligations; and (b) changes to the state’s discovery law such that prosecutors would no longer be required to disclose all collected evidence, but rather only materials deemed to be “truly necessary.”

(5) Raising Criminal Penalty for Gun Trafficking. Under NYS penal law, it is a Class B felony to illegally sell ten or more guns; a Class C felony to illegally sell five or more guns; and Class D felony to sell one or more guns.<sup>15</sup> The Administration proposes changes to state law such that anyone who sells three or more guns in a 1-year period would be subject to the highest level felony charge.

### *Other Proposals:*

(1) U.S. Attorney’s Offices: The Administration commits to increasing the number of federal gun cases brought in conjunction with NYPD investigations; and encourages federal prosecutors to “expand their barriers for prosecution of a gun charge, and enforce out-of-state charges for guns that have been carried over state lines.”

(2) Local District Attorneys: The Administration proposes the City’s five District Attorneys consider: (a) triaging gun cases to expedite the prosecution of such defendants; and (b) meeting weekly with the Deputy Mayor of Public Safety and the Police Commissioner to improve collaboration.

(3) The Courts: The Administration proposes that the court system prioritize expedited processing of gun cases by: (a) encouraging all stakeholders to return to courthouses for in-person proceedings; (b) reducing social distancing requirement in courtrooms to facilitate in-person jury trials; (c) committing resources to expedite DNA testing in gun cases; and (d) examining whether more judges are needed to preside over gun cases.

## **IV. EXISTING FUNDING OF RELEVANT PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES**

The Mayor’s Blueprint includes a number of proposals calling for expanded funding for existing NYPD initiatives or government funded community-based programs. Below is a brief description of existing funding for relevant programs and initiatives.

---

<sup>15</sup> See NYS Penal Law §§265.13, 265.12, 265.11



## DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT

- NYPD Civilianization (\$4.2 million). The Mayor’s Blueprint calls for expanded officer patrols by reassigning uniformed officers currently serving administrative or civilian roles. This process, known as civilianization, involves the NYPD hiring additional civilian personnel to assume roles currently served by uniformed officers, thereby enabling uniform officers to return to uniform duties. This has been an ongoing effort by the Department; most recently, with 100 civilian positions added to the FY-2022 budget in November to support the Department’s ongoing efforts at civilianization. The titles for the new positions will be Police Administrative Aides and they will be assigned to the Patrol, Transit, and Housing Bureaus.<sup>16</sup>
- NYPD Gun Violence Suppression Division (\$13 million). The Blueprint calls for expansion of the specialized Gun Violence Suppression Division within the Department’s Detective Bureau. Currently, the Gun Violence Suppression Division consists of 60 uniformed personnel. Existing funding for the division is \$5.2 million; however, the Division incurred an additional \$7.3 million in overtime expenditures in FY-2021.<sup>17</sup>
- Crisis Management System (\$100 million). The Blueprint proposes expanded support for the City’s Crisis Management System to ensure such programs are sufficiently funded. Former Mayor de Blasio announced a tripling of the investment in CMS from the \$35 million that was allocated FY21 – bringing the estimated total funding to approximately \$100 million for FY22.<sup>18</sup> In addition, the Council provides \$3.9 million in discretionary funding to CMS.<sup>19</sup>
- Summer Youth Employment (\$236 million). The Blueprint proposed launching an unprecedented Summer Youth Employment program. In February of 2022, the Administration

---

<sup>16</sup> Information provided to Council’s Finance Division by the Mayor’s Office of Management and Budget.

<sup>17</sup> Id.

<sup>18</sup> Id.

<sup>19</sup> Fiscal Year 2022 Council Discretionary Funding; available at: <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2021/07/Fiscal-2022-Schedule-C-Merge-6.30.21.pdf>.

## **DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT**

and Council jointly announced expanded funding for Summer Youth Employment – guaranteeing 100,000 jobs at an expected cost of \$236 million annually.<sup>20</sup>

- *Fair Futures* (\$20 million). The Blueprint proposes expansion of the City’s Fair Futures initiative that provides coaches, tutors, and other health, housing, education and employment supports for foster youth aged 11 to 21. The Fair Futures initiative has been a Council priority since the program’s inception in FY 2020; and will be funded at \$13.5 million in FY 2023.<sup>21</sup>
- *Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (HVIPs)* (\$6 million). The Blueprint proposes expansion of Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs. Such programs currently receive approximately \$6 million as a component of the Crisis Management System.<sup>22</sup>

### **V. PUBLIC RESPONSES TO THE BLUEPRINT**

There have been mixed public responses to Mayor Adams’ Blueprint. To some, the proposals strike the proper balance between law enforcement and community-based solutions to violence; whereas, others have expressed concerns that the plan is over-reliant on law enforcement tactics.

Following the release of the Blueprint, the Administration published an open letter from a collection of business, real estate, and labor entities applauding the Mayor’s plan as a necessary step in improving public safety.<sup>23</sup> The letter focused on the importance of reducing crime to “restor[e] the sense of personal security that every resident, worker, visitor, and community in our city has the right to expect;” while also, crediting the plan’s inclusion of proposals to “invest in

---

<sup>20</sup> <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/081-22/new-york-city-mayor-eric-adams-record-100-000-summer-youth-employment-opportunities#/0>.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/082-22/mayor-eric-adams-releases-preliminary-budget-fiscal-year-2023#/0>

<sup>22</sup> Supra note 16

<sup>23</sup> <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/052-22/adams-administration-releases-open-letter-showing-broad-support-mayor-adams-efforts-make>

## DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT

mental health care and alleviate conditions that contribute to violent behavior, including substance abuse, homelessness, and joblessness.”<sup>24</sup>

However, both police reform and civil liberties advocates have been critical of certain components of the Blueprint. Primarily, such concerns relate to the Blueprint’s proposed expansion of controversial policing and surveillance tactics that have previously harmed marginalized communities and contributed to mass incarceration; and its advocacy for the rollback of recent NYS legislative reforms.<sup>25</sup> Specifically, critics have questioned NYPD’s ability to implement “Neighborhood Safety Teams,” without compromising New Yorkers’ civil liberties, in part, due to abuses of past iterations of similar units in communities of color—including the police killings of Eric Garner, Amadou Diallo, Kimani Gray, Saheed Vassell, Antonio Williams, and others—and such units’ historic involvement in the Department’s unconstitutional use of stop-and-frisk. Additionally, advocates oppose the Blueprint’s suggested changes to NYS law relating to bail, discovery and age of criminal responsibility—legislative reforms that were intended to achieve a fairer criminal justice system and reversing mass incarceration. These criticisms challenge the nexus between such reforms and recent increases in gun violence, and questions remain as to whether or not the Mayor’s plan will increase the City’s jail population without improving public safety.

Finally, critics have highlighted the Blueprint’s noticeable departure from policy proposals crafted by the Mayor’s transition committee, an entity of diverse stakeholders that the Mayor tasked with making policy recommendations prior to taking office. To some, the Blueprint’s heavy emphasis on solving gun violence primarily through law enforcement measures and increased

---

<sup>24</sup> Id.

<sup>25</sup> Katz, M. (2022, January 25). *Adams’ Anti-Violence Plan Worries Progressives and Police Reform Activists*. Gothamist. <https://gothamist.com/news/adams-anti-violence-plan-worries-progressives-and-police-reform-activists>

## **DRAFT- DO NOT DISTRIBUTE -- DRAFT**

incarceration, and its arguably lesser commitment to holistic measures to address the root causes of violence, runs contrary to the advisory recommendations from that committee, which embraced “decarceration by true investment” in mental health, employment programs, housing, and other social services to prevent crime and reduce the city’s jail population.<sup>26</sup>

### **VI. ISSUES & CONCERNS**

The Committee seeks an opportunity to examine the Mayor’s Blueprint to obtain details on aspects of the plan and inquire how the Administration plans to successfully implement some of the more controversial law enforcement measures. Specifically, the Committee aims to: (1) provide public transparency regarding details of each proposal; (2) receive explanations from the Administration as to how they believe the Blueprint will comprehensively prevent gun violence; (3) inquire how the Administration will implement and engage directly with impacted communities, in particular regarding proposed Neighborhood Safety Team policing tactics; and (4) lay the groundwork for ongoing oversight regarding the implementation of the Mayor’s Blueprint. Ultimately, the Committee hopes to ensure that the implementation of the Blueprint successfully strikes an appropriate balance to improve public safety through law enforcement, while protecting civil liberties, improving community-police relations and addressing the root causes of violence.

---

<sup>26</sup> Katz, M. (2022, January 25). *Adams’ Anti-Violence Plan Worries Progressives and Police Reform Activists*. Gothamist. <https://gothamist.com/news/adams-anti-violence-plan-worries-progressives-and-police-reform-activists>