



A Four Point Plan for Making Baltimore Safer

A Safer City for Every Baltimorean

Introduction

I believe the number one job of the Mayor is to make City of Baltimore safer for everyone.

This has been a year of profound hardship for our city. With the painful loss of Freddie Gray, the entrenched conflicts that his death brought to the surface, and the horrifying spike in violence that followed, we all strive to find words of healing and actions to match. But that takes leadership, and that is what I'm offering the citizens of this city.

It has also been a year of deep reflection. We know that what happened in April was an expression that things needed to change. That to stop the violence that has plagued our city, we must first fix the problems in the way we approach that violence.

Baltimoreans know that in order to heal what's been broken, we must come together as a community to reclaim, revive and rebuild Baltimore. That kind of leadership starts in the mayor's office.

I know what it means for a mayor to work with the police department to make a safer city where every citizen is respected and valued. A wealth of reports and studies provide ideas about how we can move the city forward, all from brilliant minds and organizations right here in Baltimore. And they all share a common sense approach to problem solving: extensive community engagement, strategic partnerships, measuring outcomes, faithful execution and a rebuke of the culture of low expectations.

In order to create a safer city for all of us, as Mayor I will harness that positive energy to define and fuel a shared agenda, ensuring that all citizens are heard and represented. I will engage all communities, business owners, universities, and faith leaders in prioritizing actions that can move our city in one direction. And together, we will begin the hard work of healing the frustration and hopelessness that are part

of daily life in too many of our neighborhoods. The healing process must go beyond words and move to action. As mayor I pledge to be a change agent to restore Baltimore so that it once again is viewed as a safe and inviting city for all.

As we move forward together, I ask for your help. Our city needs you. From Park Heights to Highlandtown, Cherry Hill to Sandtown, each and every one of our residents has something to contribute. We need to look out for each other because we are all members of one community.

We will heal what's broken, together.

- *Sheila Dixon*

Four Point Plan for a Safer City

Building a brighter future for Baltimore is a partnership between City and Citizens -- and nowhere is that partnership more critical than in improving the public safety and security of our communities.

People throughout our City are willing to give their leaders a chance based on action, not rhetoric. Stopping and preventing violent crime cannot be a matter for academic or political debate; it can and must be done now.

ONE: RECLAIM our communities by first and foremost, stopping the gun violence and killing through targeted enforcement.

Prioritizing our efforts on apprehending gun offenders and stopping the most violent offenders from committing crimes before they happen. Gun crimes are deadly crimes. Targeting the most violent offenders, who are responsible for the city's deadliest crimes, is the highest priority. We as a city must do more to end gun violence, using all the tools at our disposal and targeting the most violent offenders as the highest priority.

The power of data can direct our efforts. We know who the drivers of violence are in our city, their motivating factors, and when, where and how they will commit crimes. We must bring together local Law Enforcement, Prosecutors, Parole, Probation, Corrections, as well as our partners at the state and federal level to harness this data and use it to prevent crimes before they happen. This data, which is currently available and underused, must be used to:

- Prioritize our valuable and limited resources to ensure we are targeting the most violent offenders;
- Strategically deploy foot patrols in neighborhoods to prevent crime and restore confidence;
- Identify our disconnected youth and intervene before they fall prey to gang culture;
- Recognize the value of collaboration to strengthen and inform the warrant apprehension task forces that can quickly arrest offenders;
- Understand how targeted and deliberate prosecutions can impact and avert future actions of criminals, gangs, and the people affected by their actions; and
- Value what successful re-entry means and how to partner with people - not just services - to fully integrate the men and women returning to our communities from incarceration.

Officers – every single one – must understand the core elements of their work that contribute to making the city safer. Many of our city’s hard-working law enforcement officers already have established relationships in the communities where violence occurs, conducting door-to-door safety campaigns and home visits of suspects and potential victims. Police officers on the ground will understand the core elements of their work that help them prevent crimes before they happen, utilizing smart phone and mobile technology to provide them with real-time updates on violent offenders.

We must truly understand the complete picture each offender represents. Prosecutors can work with community and law enforcement to identify priority prosecutions that will have the biggest impact on helping communities.

We must de-emphasize arrest as a primary means to resolving non-violent crime. We can make fewer arrests and enable prosecutors and the system as a whole to work better, addressing problems with nuance and with the support of the community, by de-emphasizing arrest as a primary means to resolving non-violent crime.

We must leverage the resources of state and federal agencies to help city agencies fight crime in Baltimore. When the Baltimore Police, State Police and Federal law enforcement agencies share information and coordinate tactics and priorities, we can make the most our resources and ensure that the worst criminals get the most attention. By utilizing every resource possible, we can learn from crime fighting efforts of the FBI and local police departments around the country, bringing the most innovative tactics to Baltimore. And by working with the federal prosecutors and the State's Attorney, we must pursue the toughest sentences against our most violent offenders, seeking harsher penalties and longer sentences.

All of this can be done consistently and persistently so that we can stop responding only to the latest fatality and begin to proactively refine our system.

SECOND: REVIVE our public safety department and invest in officers - committing ourselves to the highest standards of professional development and public service.

Overhaul the Police Academy, understanding that what we expect from our police officers is accountability, engagement, partnership, assistance, and respect. For the safety of our citizens and of our officers, we need to fundamentally review the way we train and retrain our police force. We must foster a culture of openness and transparency in the performance of their duties, retraining the police to think of their role in the community not as a force that is designed to control a population but one that is designed to provide a service to the community. We must create a sense of safety and reassurance that allows a community to flourish. And we must perform a full job task analysis to determine the tools and resources our law enforcement personnel need to properly police in the 21st century.

Every officer must know how to de-escalate situations, recognize and eliminate racial bias, and engage in respectful community interaction. All officers will be retrained to manage routine complaints in a customer-friendly manner, minimizing stress and reducing the chance of escalating conflicts.

Strengthen the city's independent civilian oversight board by providing funding for professional staff and empowering it to take complaints not just in the form of a formally filed complaint, but by phone calls, personal testimony, emails or cell phone footage. The independent civilian oversight board is an important tool to hold law enforcement accountable and encourage community engagement. The oversight board will be directed to use information from body camera footage, civilian cell phone and other recorded videos, and citizen testimony as grounds to investigate cases of police misconduct.

Offer continuous training and support for our existing officers. We rely on our officers to keep us safe, and we must do all we can to keep them healthy and supported. We must engage in mental health and supportive counseling as part of continuous training, ensuring that officers at all times are healthy and able to protect the community. Training programs should be offered on a regular and ongoing basis so that officers have the best information on how to do their jobs effectively. We must also create a robust incentive program along with establishing partnerships with area colleges and universities for police officers to obtain college degrees.

Most of our officers are decent men and women doing a tough job. We cannot afford to have them demoralized, undercutting their effectiveness and engagement. Our administration will work with the police union to find solutions to the problems we face and restore the pride and honor of the Baltimore Police Department. It is critical in order for us to stop the police force depletion within the department and keep talented, experienced officers within the police force.

Reward and recruit officers who engage in the local community. Identifying officers and potential officers with integrity, commitment, and the passion for service will be vital to restoring community trust. We must enable officers who have demonstrated commitment within the community to take on leadership roles, keep good officers in the City through homeownership incentives, and encourage local Baltimoreans to join the police force and be part of the solution.

THIRD: REBUILD the vigor and efficacy of City Government by coordinating all our agencies to focus on the safety, health and security of Baltimore residents.

We cannot combat crime effectively without acknowledging the corresponding public health crisis, one that demands the scientific rigor of a public health response to identify and eliminate risk factors. We must link to strategies, some outside of this plan, that invest in the potential of our people, so that all of our citizens can enjoy the blessings of a peaceful and prosperous life.

Under coordinated leadership within City Hall, dedicated staff will work with the leaders of Police, Fire, Health and Emergency Management to strategically focus resources and build partnerships that:

- Expand the use of hospital emergency departments to counsel and connect trauma victims to services and assistance, using models proven to reduce repeat injuries. There is only one hospital currently providing this critical service, and we must take the program's successes to replicate and expand them across the city.
- Equip every school with in-house health centers and mental health services, as well as mentoring and tutoring services to reduce youth and gang violence.
- Recognize that violence is ultimately a public health issue and requires investment as far upstream as possible. We must emphasize lead poisoning reduction, mental health for children, home visiting for pregnant women and other methods to ensure the health and safety of our city's residents.
- Structure services for substance use disorders and mental illness to provide individuals with volunteer and job opportunities that will help them live independently, work, and contribute to our city.
- Partner with local businesses to provide job opportunities to identified at-risk individuals in real time.
- Engage and support our faith community in directing efforts outside their churches and onto street corners to deliver their messages not only to the willing and able, but to those who would shut them out.
- Coordinate the extensive array of volunteer efforts in our community so that we are constantly engaging those that we know are at risk of committing crimes and/or becoming victims of crime – from music lessons to drug treatment to health care for longstanding conditions.

Success will be measured not by the number of people in the system, but by the quality of results for each individual. We must measure our effectiveness by reduced recidivism, lower overdose rates, increased employment, and stable housing.

FOURTH and most critical: REBUILD the public trust by redefining community policing and how we partner together for safer, healthier neighborhoods.

Getting out of squad cars and into the community is a great first step for our patrol officers – but it is only the first step. Many of our police officers already do this, and both officers

and community members alike are better for it. By incorporating the ideas outlined below, patrol officers gain will channels they can use to prevent crime, protect communities, and keep kids on the right track.

Law enforcement will work with community, business and faith leaders to set the standards for policing in their neighborhood. We will establish metrics for community engagement and include them in performance measurements for the City's public safety leaders. This kind of engagement will help prevent break-ins, property destruction and other crimes that undermine the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

A welcoming police department. Commit the capital resources needed to rebuild our police facilities to provide safer, healthier workplaces for our officers, and a community welcoming presence – a “front of house” where community meetings can be held and our youth can turn to as a safe space. In addition, we must aggressively seek funding to build and operate community centers that are strategically located in the most troubled and economically deprived parts of the city.

Strengthen and expand the Safe Streets program to ensure sustainability and effectiveness throughout the city. The Safe Streets program has been effective at preventing crime and engaging the community. We must take steps to strengthen and protect the integrity of the program, empowering local neighborhoods to connect with high-risk youth and create positive outlets and relationships they can rely on.

Keeping our neighborhoods clean. Trash collection, street repair, tree trimming and other public works efforts contribute to a community engagement strategy empowering all of us to build and sustain a healthier, safer and more secure Baltimore.

Reaching out to neighborhood organizations and beyond. Local neighborhood organizations are an effective way to reach members of the community, but we must also make every effort to engage community members, business owners and faith leaders who do not attend their local meetings and keep them informed of local safety initiatives. Each district should meet with members of the community at least every month, and we need to do more home visits to residents like our senior citizens who often cannot attend meetings.

Advertise existing services to local communities. Our police officers can be one of the greatest advocates for the many programs that do exist to serve our community. We should equip them with the information they need to help others.

Increase summer and other job opportunities for youth. The youth summer jobs program is key to setting the foundation for future job opportunities for our city's youth. We must expand the program to give even more of our children these opportunities.

Restorative justice programs for all minor offenses. Partner with community and advocates to develop diversion and restorative justice programs for minor offenders, including in our schools, rather than using jail time or school expulsion as a solution.

All the elements of our government must be configured to assist in the most fundamental element of our human existence, the need to be healthy, safe and secure. We can use the

vast network of government services in an integrated fashion to reinforce this commitment to our neighbors. We can ensure that every department head, every division chief, every section supervisor, and every employee of our city government understands that they have a role in making Baltimore safer and our citizens more secure. It's something we can control, and as a result, we can be assured of the outcome: a healthier, safer, more equitable city for all Baltimoreans.

Sheila Dixon has been widely acknowledged as a strong leader on public safety. When Dixon was mayor, alongside her appointed Police Commissioner Frederick H. Bealefeld III, Baltimore saw the lowest number of killings in 20 years, with many of the city's most troubled neighborhoods seeing major drops in crime. Fatal and non-fatal shootings dropped 14 percent, and gun crimes and robberies also declined. Dixon is widely credited with ending the zero-tolerance crime fighting strategy, shifting to a successful community policing strategy that targeted known offenders.