

“There is nothing more serious and more urgent right now than public safety. Without safety, we will achieve nothing that is lasting. It all starts with safety and that will be my number one priority as Mayor. My administration will cover every priority in this city with a safety plan, to ensure that we are able to live long, undisturbed lives and enjoy the beauties that our great city has to offer.” James M. DeLeon

The Path to reduce gun violence and crime will be explained as follows:

THE PHILADELPHIA PLAN: A PATH TO REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE

Gun violence in Philadelphia has to be viewed as a dramatic incident that is greatly affecting the lives of all Philadelphians. When viewed from that frame of reference, it is obvious that a Local Incident Management System (“LIMS”) must be put in place to address the current crisis plaguing our city.

Similar to the National Incident Management System (“NIMS”), the LIMS would establish a uniform set of processes and procedures that the City Government would use to combat gun violence by enabling the necessary responders to work together more effectively and efficiently to manage the root causes of gun violence. A LIMS system, as applied to gun violence, would coordinate input from the Mayor’s Office, the President of City Council’s Office, the 1st Judicial District, the District Attorney’s Office, the Police Commissioner, the Prison Commissioner and both funded and non-funded community groups. These sectors would develop a uniform policy aimed at addressing the root causes that result in gun violence in the neighborhoods. Other sources of input could be the School District of Philadelphia, the Media and the City’s academic institutions, among other possible necessary components.

The LIMS would be managed and operated by a Director of Public Safety who would serve as the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander’s responsibilities would include:

1. Command – provide on-scene management and control authority;
2. Operations-direct incident tactical operations;
3. Plan – prepare Incident Action Plan and maintain situation and resources status;
4. Logistics-provide services and support to the incident; and
5. Finance and Administration.

The Incident Commander must have multiple Deputies who must be equally capable of assuming the primary role, as in Philadelphia gun violence, as a whole, is an incident; the Kensington Neighborhood related to crime and open-air drug markets and/or use is an incident; and failing schools as a whole is an incident.

The Director of Public Safety, the Deputies and all City Department heads and their Deputies will receive the following Incident system training:

IS-100 – Intro to the Incident Command System

- IS-200 – Basic Incident command system for initial response
- IS-300 – Intermediate Incident command system for expanding incidents
- IS-400 – Advanced Incident command for command and general staff – complex Incidents
- IS-700 - National Incident Management system, an introduction
- IS-800 - National Response Framework, an introduction
- E/G/L 0191 – Emergency Operations Center/Incident command system interface

The National Incident Management system provides recommendations to assist authorities in developing their own training plans tailored to their specific needs, such as the Philadelphia Local Incident Management System to combat gun violence.

One possible result that could come from a LIMS would manifest in the manner that the Court system handles individuals who are arrested and charged with gun violations, including illegal purchases and transfers of firearms. In addition to the imposition of monetary bail, the court would require the offender to refrain from any social media communication as a condition of bail. Studies have shown that many individuals who illegally possess and/or carry a gun and go on to use that gun against another individual has done so after either posting on social media or has seen a post on social media that the individual found to be “disrespectful”. Moreover, many of the younger offenders garner “likes” and followers by putting up posts of themselves brandishing guns – as if the possession of the gun gives the individual “street cred” and, thereby, creating a feeling of increased “self-respect”. Similarly, individuals who are arrested and charged with Domestic Violence offenses would be ordered to stay away from any Complainant and to stay off of all social media platforms as it relates to the complainant.

All offenders in the above-listed categories, who have no financial means of support or other history, will be given direct daily supervision while on bail by either the court’s Probation office or an authorized community based support center. This daily supervision will engage the offender with job, crisis management and mentoring counseling and also expose the participant to other positive life altering skills, such as courses in vocational programs. Once the offender has secured a job, school or other probation-acceptable endeavor, the individual will be moved to either non-reporting pre-trial probation, involving one or two telephone calls per week to his/her assigned probation officer and/or community-based support person. A mandatory curfew will also be imposed for all pre-trial offenders as a condition of bail, with the time constraints determined by the individual’s work status and schedule. By maintaining direct supervision for unemployed offenders and indirect supervision for employed offenders, coupled with a curfew requirement and a ban from social media platforms, the program would create a clearer, non-cluttered landscape for the Police wherein it could engage the community in its own gun

deterrence initiatives. These mechanisms, working in tandem, would increase the probability of reducing gun violence.

Consequently, a LIMS based program, as described in this article, will establish the Court system, and its components, as a filtration system in putting the appropriate people in contact with the corresponding grassroots organization that is necessary for implementation of the program, while supporting ongoing Police engagement with the community to remove guns from the hands of those individuals who are prone to use them.

A LIMS program can be adapted to meet the needs of helping to maintain a system that could combat not only gun violence but also any series of events considered “dramatic incidents”. Such a program would address many of the violence-based events, and socio-economic issues, that currently plague the lives of the citizens of Philadelphia.

Another component of LIMS is mobilizing grassroots community organizations supported by City funding to implement mentoring and intervention actions directed at our young people who are seeking answers to their perceived “dead-end” cycle of poverty through violence and anti-social behaviors. These programs will be directed to altering these young people’s negative and limited vision of society and “re-engage” them into a more positive, future thinking reality of what life can be without resorting to uncontrolled rage. It is that rage that ultimately leads to gun violence and mindless criminal behavior. An important component of my plan is to provide mental health resources to the communities impacted by violence, especially resources that will address PTSD in the community. Job training and employment opportunities will also be a part of my plan that will be geared toward allowing those who are involved in criminal behaviors and violence a means to earn money and build a career that will allow them to become productive members of our communities. By making these individuals productive through wage earning jobs that support an individual’s needs, the cycle of generational poverty, that plagues the majority of those communities in our city that suffer under the weight of crime and gun violence, will be broken.

Furthermore, to achieve the reduction of gun violence and criminal behavior that is ravaging our City, LIMS would also implement economic opportunities for our citizens who are victims of cyclic, generational poverty. These programs would be grounded in job training, job and career opportunities, employment access, access to financial management and education and entrepreneurial education. An important component of bringing those communities out of this generational cycle of poverty is to create a better public health system. This health care equity is vital to ensure that our City’s disadvantaged citizens receive the resources necessary to lead health and productive lives so that they can also become and stay financially stable. This approach will ensure that all residents of this City receive the medical and mental health resources necessary to stabilize the communities and its members and make our citizens part of the societal solution to the City’s economic and societal problems.

1) Community Policing

Community policing is an integral component of LIMS. The term is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systemic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues, such as gun violence, social disorder and fear of crime.

In Philadelphia, under LIMS, Community policing would develop community partnerships, engage in problem solving and implement community organizational features by working in conjunction with the neighborhood grassroots community organization, both supported and non-supported by the LIMS, that have implemented mentoring and intervention actions aimed at the neighborhood youth and at risk adults living within the neighborhoods covered by their respective patrols. This approach allows the community police agents to become a part of the neighborhood allowing them to get a better sense of the residents' needs, while helping residents develop a greater trust in the police.

a: Community Support Officers

To lessen tensions between the Police and the community, and to allow the Police to concentrate on traditional policing, the Community Support Officer concept will be created through the LIMS. The Community Support Officer would be trained by certified mental, behavioral and emotional health professionals in the areas of anger management, post-traumatic stress disorder and mental health awareness so that these officers will be able to interact effectively with individuals in the community that may be suffering from these illnesses/conditions. These trained officers will also be equipped to recognize other disorders that may be present in the encountered individual that may need to be addressed, will be CPR certified and able to administer Narcan to those experiencing drug overdose symptoms. The officers will also be trained in conflict resolution skills, applied psychology and relationship management that can be employed in domestic assault situations.

The Community Support Officer would be deployed through the 311 City service line for non-criminal matters, such as minor interpersonal disputes, misbehaving pets, disputes between spouses, family members, roommates, or neighbors, with a goal to contain things before Police are needed. If Police are needed, the Community Support Officer would have a special silent alert system that would be used to call in armed Police officers for backup.

2) Schools

The LIMS system can fix schools that do not have adequate support for a well-rounded safe and secure academic environment which will encourage learning for all students. This system will be employed on a school by school basis.

LIMS would provide for the access and functional needs of the whole school community, which includes children, and their family members, adults with disabilities, access and functional needs, those from religious, racial and ethnically diverse backgrounds and people with limited English proficiency. Teachers and school staff will also be included in this model.

Schools must provide critical academic services and nurture the health, safety and well being of the school community, while also serving as critical partners supporting the health, safety and well-being of the broader community. LIMS will provide a school safety task force to keep children and schools safe. The LIMS will also provide to each individual school, designated as a failing school, critical services through its Health and Social Service component, such as health care, behavioral and mental health services, PTSD and anger management counseling and job counseling to the whole school community. Each school will be shown how to create a cohesive set of social, emotional and mental health services, as well as job counseling, promoting the well being of its school community; from helping train school staff on signs of students struggling, to learning strategies aimed at helping students handle personal traumatic events, to creating a long term program to foster the development of coping skills, along with developing tools to help identify students who need additional support. These support programs will also be available to the parents of the students on an as needed basis. Finally, LIMS will re-institute afterschool programs to give our youth access to homework assistance and tutoring, meals and extracurricular activities that will boost their confidence, create improved socialization with their peers and encourage healthy relationships and interactions with others. To further this resolution, the City's recreation centers must be open and fully staffed with adults who are committed to our children's success, both in life and as a productive member of our communities and society as a whole. These recreation centers must become an oasis for our children and teens in their communities where they can come to participate in athletic, artistic and social activities in a safe and holistic environment – free from the real-world stressors that our children are exposed to on a daily basis. Emotional and mental health counselors will be part of each recreation center's staff to allow our children and teen access to people who can "just listen" to them – without criticism or judgment. Improved educational opportunities and engagement of the City's youth in positive activities is an important component that will ultimately lead to a reduction in gun violence and the feeling of "lawlessness" that is pervasive in our City.

3) Kensington

Kensington is entangled in a situation where we must use the LIMS program to immediately reduce crime, treat those people caught up in the grip of drug addiction and recover the neighborhood and its business corridor.

a) Reduction of crime

LIMS will provide support to the police by giving greater coordination, unity of

command, collaborative planning and training with the State and City police forces, as well as detailed implementation guidance. This will lead to regular and special police patrols and investigative units arresting drug dealers by:

1. reducing the gang violence associated with drug trafficking;
2. controlling the street crimes committed by drug users;
3. improving the health, economic and social well-being of drug users;
4. restoring the quality of life in Kensington by ending street level drug dealing;
5. helping to prevent children from experimenting with drugs; and
6. protecting the integrity of criminal justice institutions.

It is important to note that the Kensington community's own efforts at self-defense will help the police succeed. The police must be enthusiastic about direct citizen action against drug dealing. Such efforts extend the reach of social control over more terrain for longer periods of time than the police could sustain alone.

b) Treat and recover the people and the neighborhoods

Philadelphia maintains a wide array of human service programs that provide assistance to special-needs populations, including victims of drug use – such as what is located in Kensington. With the input from, and help of, local community groups, the LIMS will set up both brick and mortar, as well as mobile locations in Kensington, to identify, triage and treat acutely sick and injured street dwellers, and residents; the management of chronic medical conditions in large numbers of street dwellers and residents; the assessment, communication and mitigation of public health risk; and, clean up of hazardous waste.

The Human Services component of LIMS will provide counseling, special needs population supports, immediate and short-term assistance for individuals, households, and groups dealing with the aftermath of extended drug use, and expedited processing of applications for local, state and/or federal benefits, including job counseling. Housing solutions for the displaced street dweller population will consist of pre-identified workable sites and housing units available through local, state, federal and private agencies.

The LIMS will be ongoing in Kensington until the neighborhood and business corridor have been recovered from the current ravages of open air drug use and crime.

c) Recovery of the Kensington Business Corridor

As the LIMS is reducing crime and treating the people of Kensington, it is incumbent that the city task the Chamber of Commerce, the Black Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Asian Chamber of Commerce to jointly form an action plan to reach out to the owners of shuttered storefronts and initiate discussions on reopening to tenants

under favorable lease terms. By engaging in this approach, these Chambers of Commerce can improve Kensington's economy and quality of life through:

- a. Helping businesses grow and prosper;
- b. Increasing job opportunities;
- c. Encouraging an orderly expansion and development of all segments of Kensington;
- d. Contributing to the overall economic stability of Kensington;
- e. Helping further the interests of small businesses in Kensington.

4) Communication

The Philadelphia City Government will disseminate essential public information prior to and as the LIMS moves through neighborhoods most affected by gun violence and crime, as well as Kensington. The public will receive timely and accurate information on the progress of the LIMS or lack thereof, and what steps are being taken to maintain a successful LIMS outcome.

Education, small businesses, businesses, artistic programming—all aspects of our community, will have a plan covered and protected by LIMS.

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