

# Oakland Homicide Problem Analysis 2016-2017

Oakland Police Department  
California Partnership for Safe Communities

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# **Problem Analysis: Introduction and Overview**

# Introduction and Overview

- A “problem analysis” is a set of data collection and analysis exercises designed to support the implementation of violence reduction strategies, including Ceasefire. This methodology has been developed and refined over the last 20 years, and used in dozens of cities nationally.
- This analysis establishes a common understanding of the local violence problem that guides and informs the work of civic, community, and criminal justice leaders to reduce violence.
- The problem analysis identifies the groups and individuals within a community who are at greatest risk of violence and helps tailor an intervention to reduce that risk.
- A problem analysis is primarily a practice document with implications for local policy.

# Introduction and Overview

- This analysis examined all homicides in the City of Oakland from January 2016 – June 2017 ( $n = 119$ ).
- These 119 homicides involved 198 unique victims or suspects. This analysis examines the characteristics of these incidents and the involved individuals, including demographics and criminal justice system involvement.
- The analysis also includes information on groups, gangs and networks at high risk of involvement in violence, including their size, relationships, turfs, and activities as well as the spatial concentration of violence throughout the city.
- This is intended to update the findings from the previous problem analysis from January 2012-June 2013.

# Framing: Context and Trends

## 1. Violence in Oakland is a longstanding serious problem.

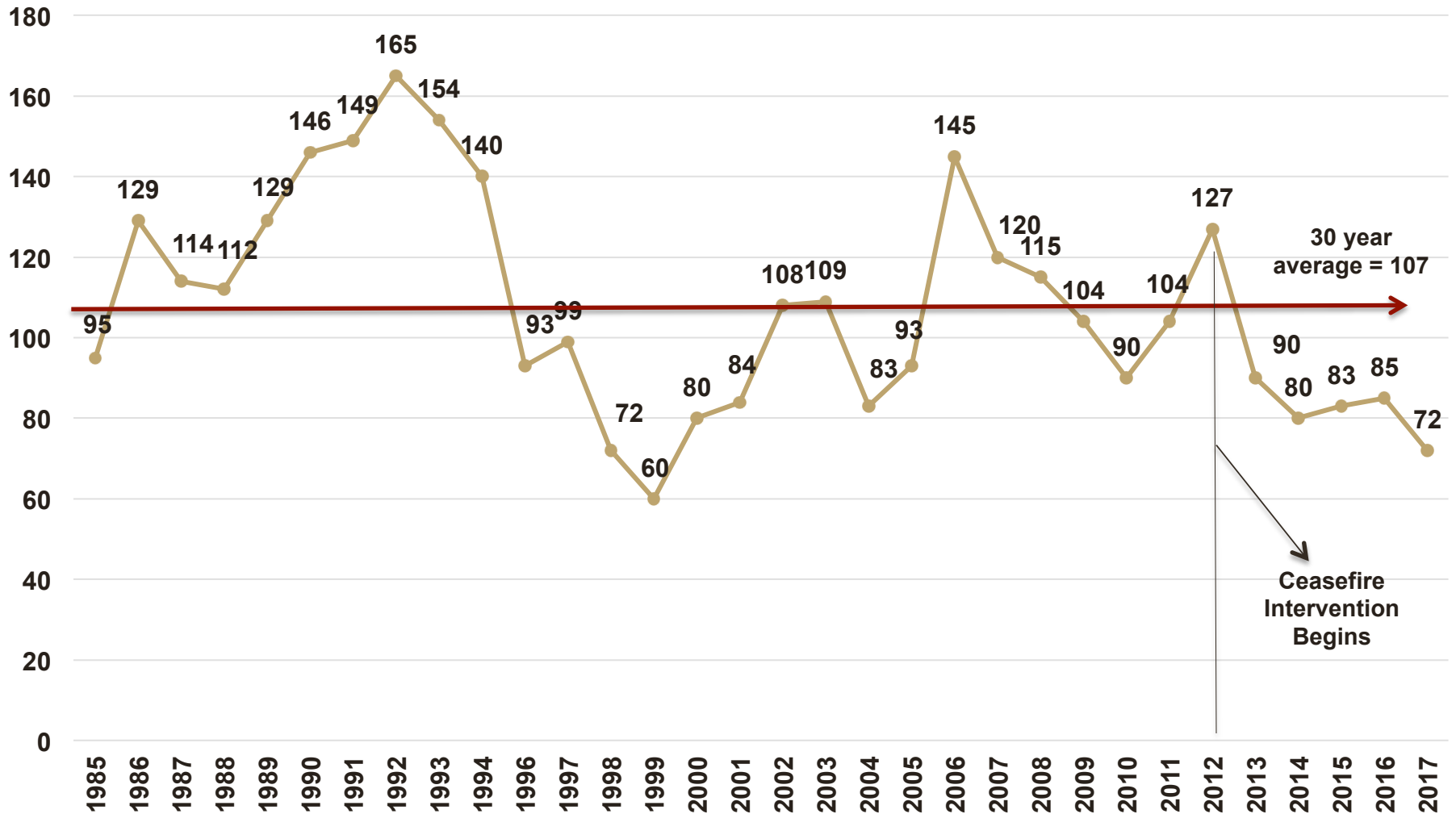
- Oakland has averaged 107 homicides a year since 1985.
- During this period, the homicide rate has ranged from three to as much as six times state and national rates.

## 2. Oakland has made significant recent progress on homicide

- Oakland experienced -30% fewer homicides from January 2016-June 2017 compared to January 2012 to June of 2013 (the previous problem analysis).
- 2013-2017 marks only the second time in the last 30 years that Oakland has experienced 5 consecutive years well-below the long-term average of 107. Non-fatal shootings also declined significant during this period.
- The five year average from 2013-2017 is 82 homicides, a -23% decline from the 30 year average (107).

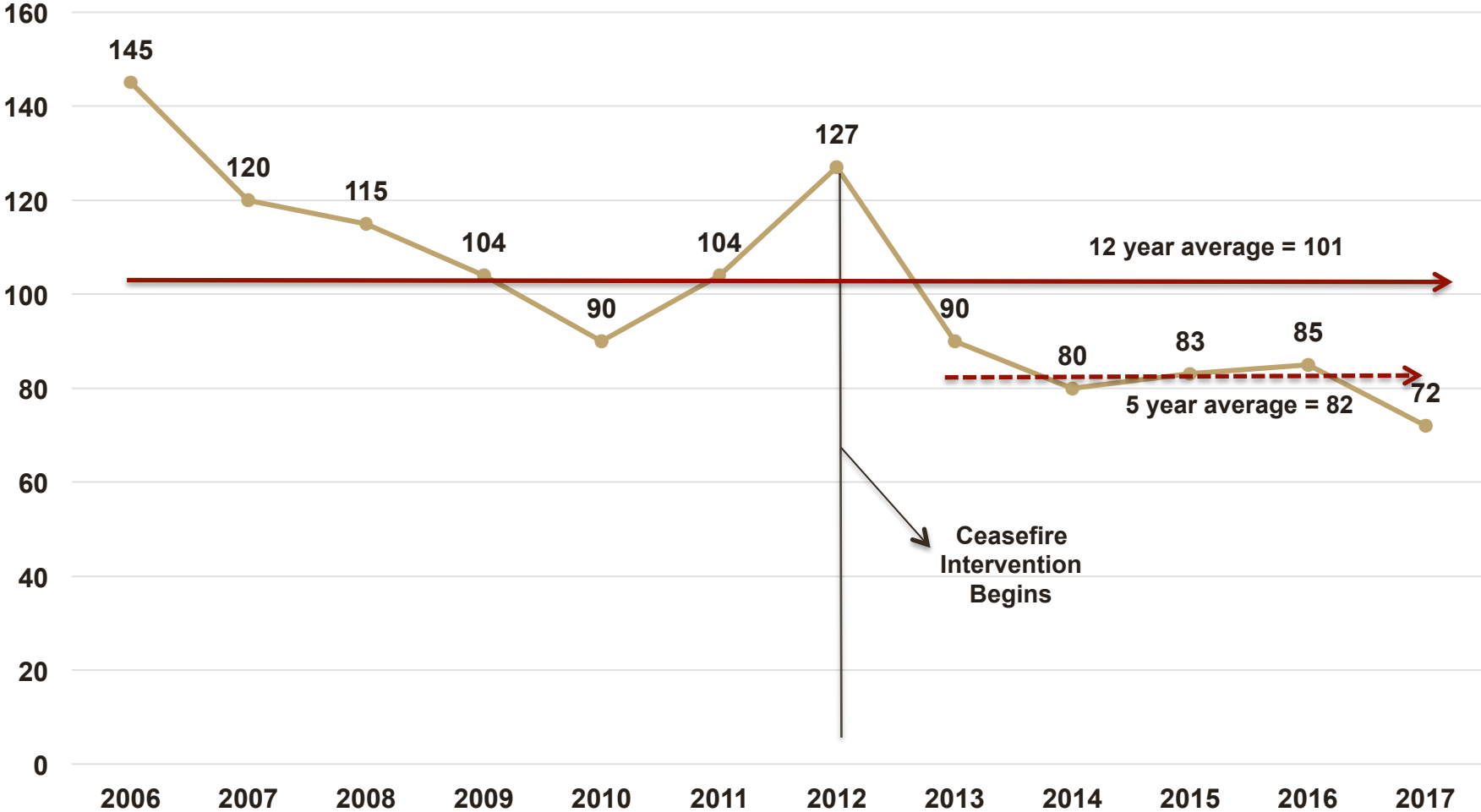
# Context and Trend Data

# Oakland Homicides: 1985 - 2017

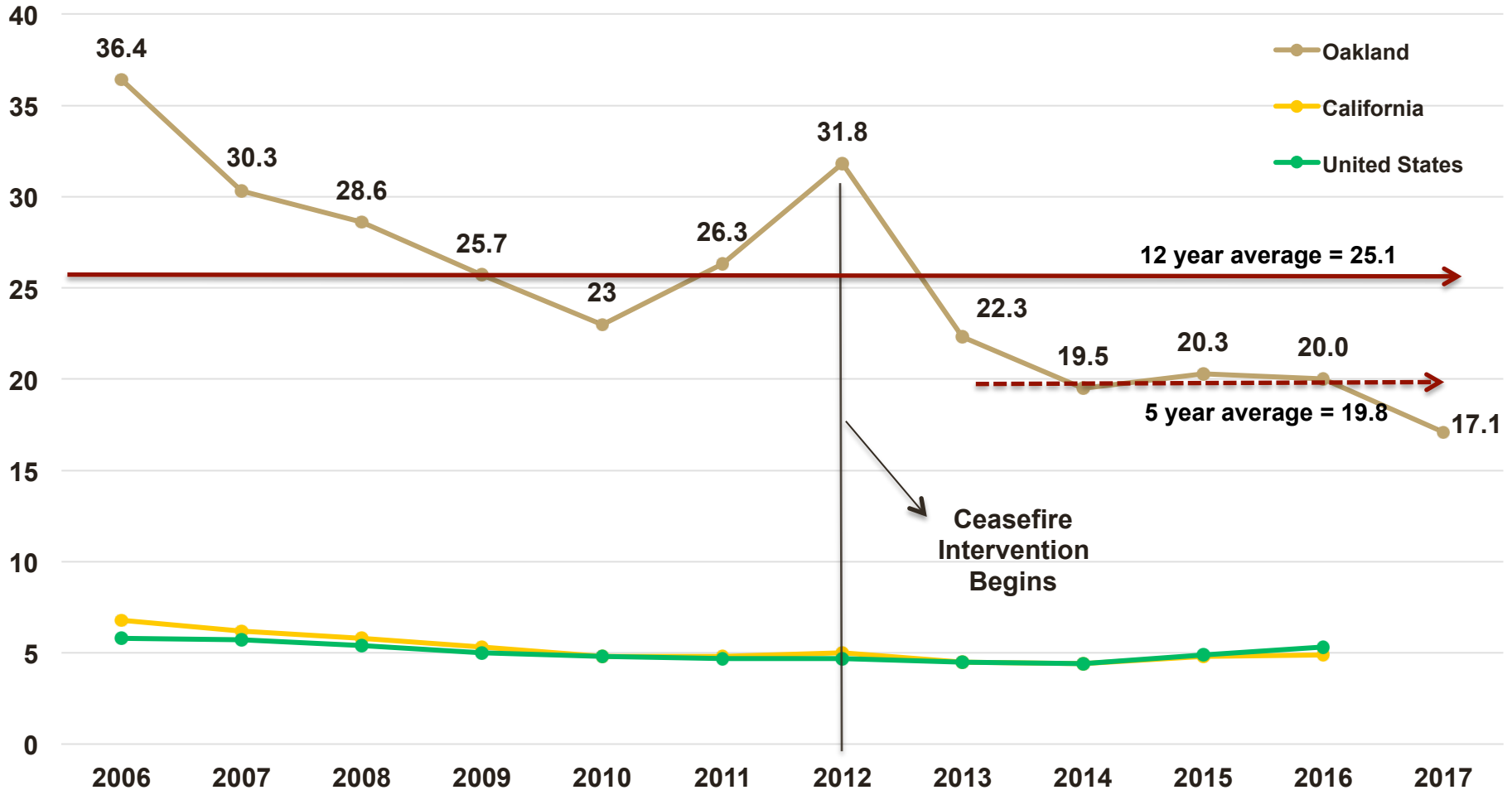




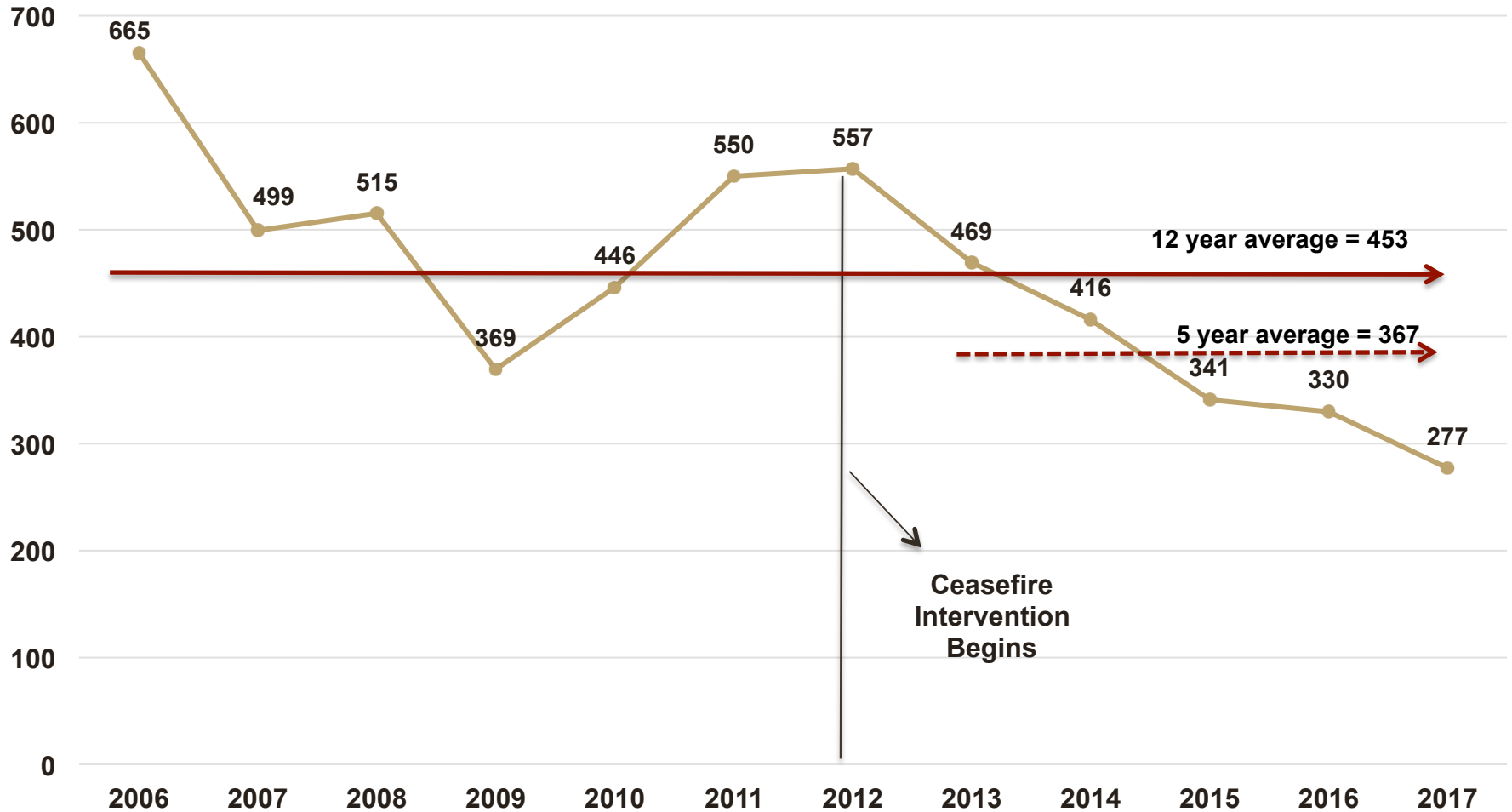
# Oakland Homicides: 2006 - 2017



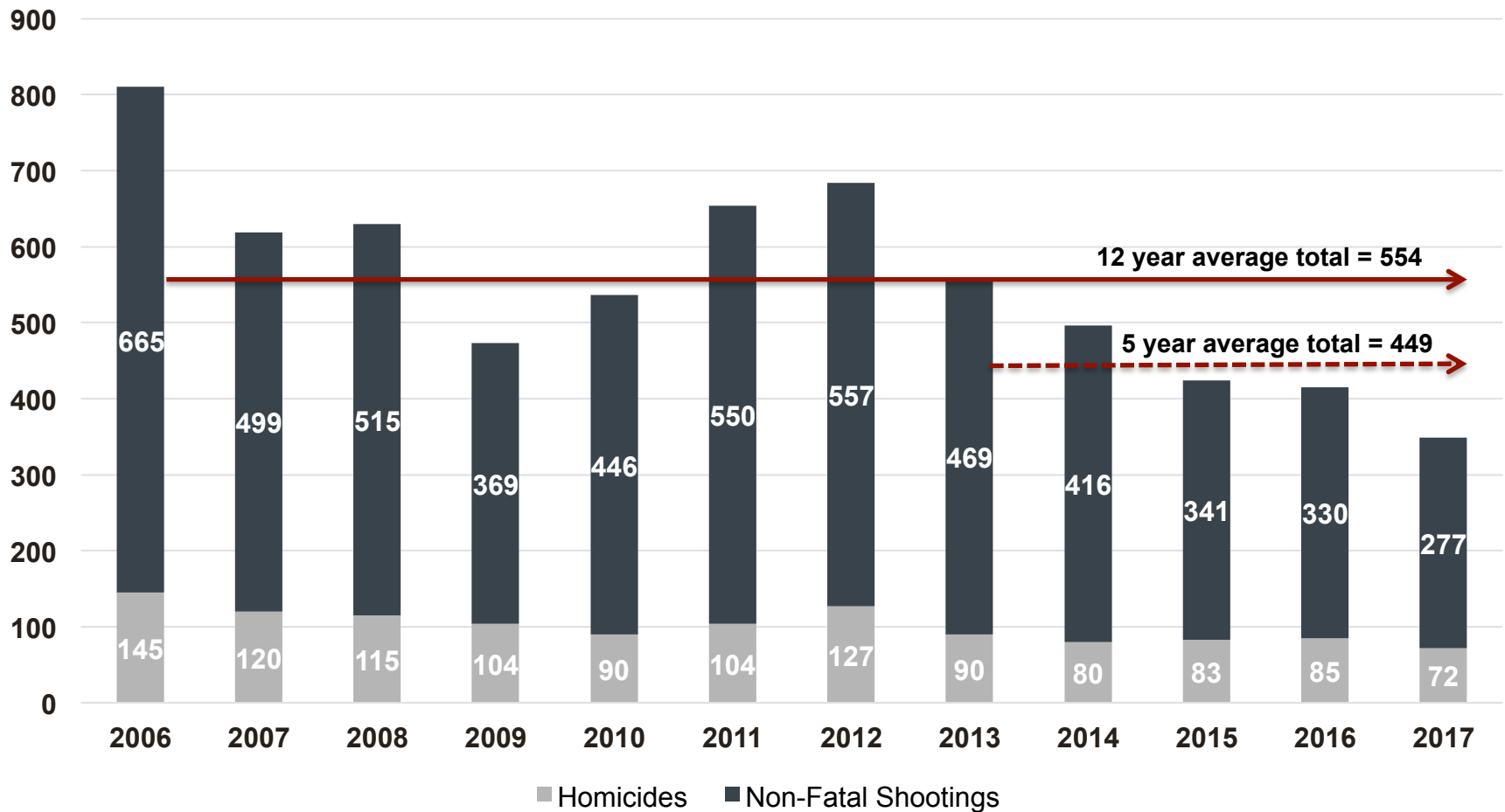
# Oakland Homicide Rate (per 100,000 population): 2006 - 2017



# Oakland Non-Fatal Shootings: 2006 - 2017



# Oakland Homicides & Non-Fatal Shootings: 2006 - 2017



**Homicide Victims and Suspects:  
Demographics & Criminal Justice  
System Involvement**

# Summary Observations: Characteristics of Those Involved in Homicide

- Suspects and victims of homicide in Oakland are primarily African-American and Hispanic men between the ages of 18-34.
- Both suspects and victims have very extensive involvement in the justice system, averaging 9.13 prior arrests at the time of the homicide. Among individuals known to the criminal justice system, the average number of prior arrests was 11.9.
- These individuals are involved in a wide variety of crimes including violence, weapons, drug, property and disorder offenses.
- The average age of someone involved in homicide is 30. Victims tend to be slightly older, but victims and suspects are otherwise nearly identical in sex and race.

# Homicide Victims and Suspects: Sex and Race

	Victims (n=115)	Suspects (n=79)	Victims & Suspects (n=194)	Oakland Population
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	88.7%	88.6%	88.7%	49.5%
Female	11.3%	11.4%	11.3%	51.5%
<b>Race</b>				
White	7.0%	5.1%	6.2%	25.9%
African- American	67.0%	70.5%	68.4%	28.0%
Hispanic	23.5%	20.5%	22.3%	25.4%
Asian	0.0%	2.6%	1.0%	16.8%

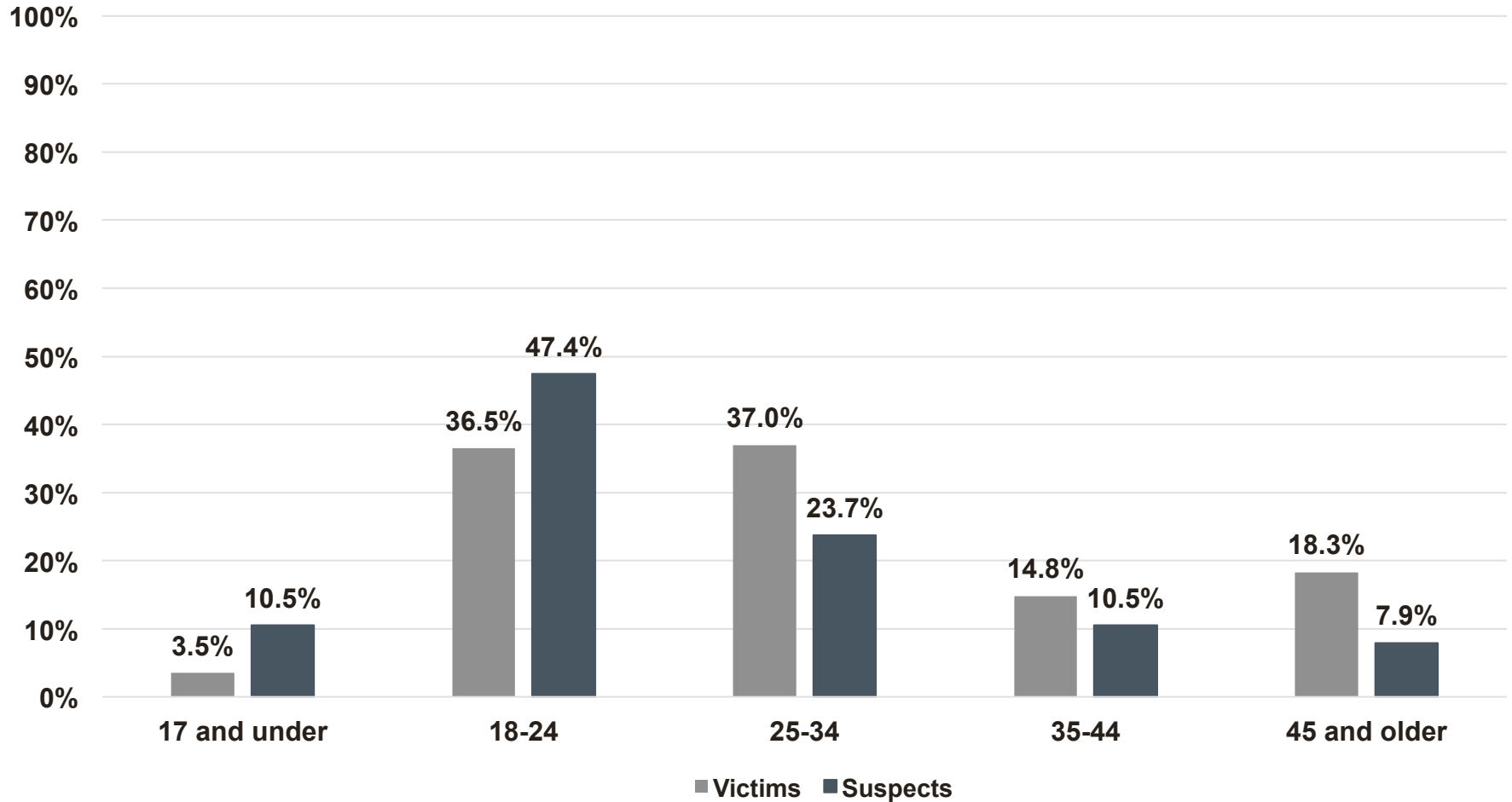
# Homicide Victims and Suspects: Age

	Victims (n=115)	Suspects (n=76)	Victims & Suspects (n=191)
<b>Age</b>			
17 and under	3.5%	10.5%	6.3%
18-24	36.5%	47.4%	40.8%
25-34	27.0%	23.7%	25.7%
35-44	14.8%	10.5%	13.1%
45 and older	18.3%	7.9%	14.1%
<b>Mean Age</b>	31.9	27.3	30.0



# Age:

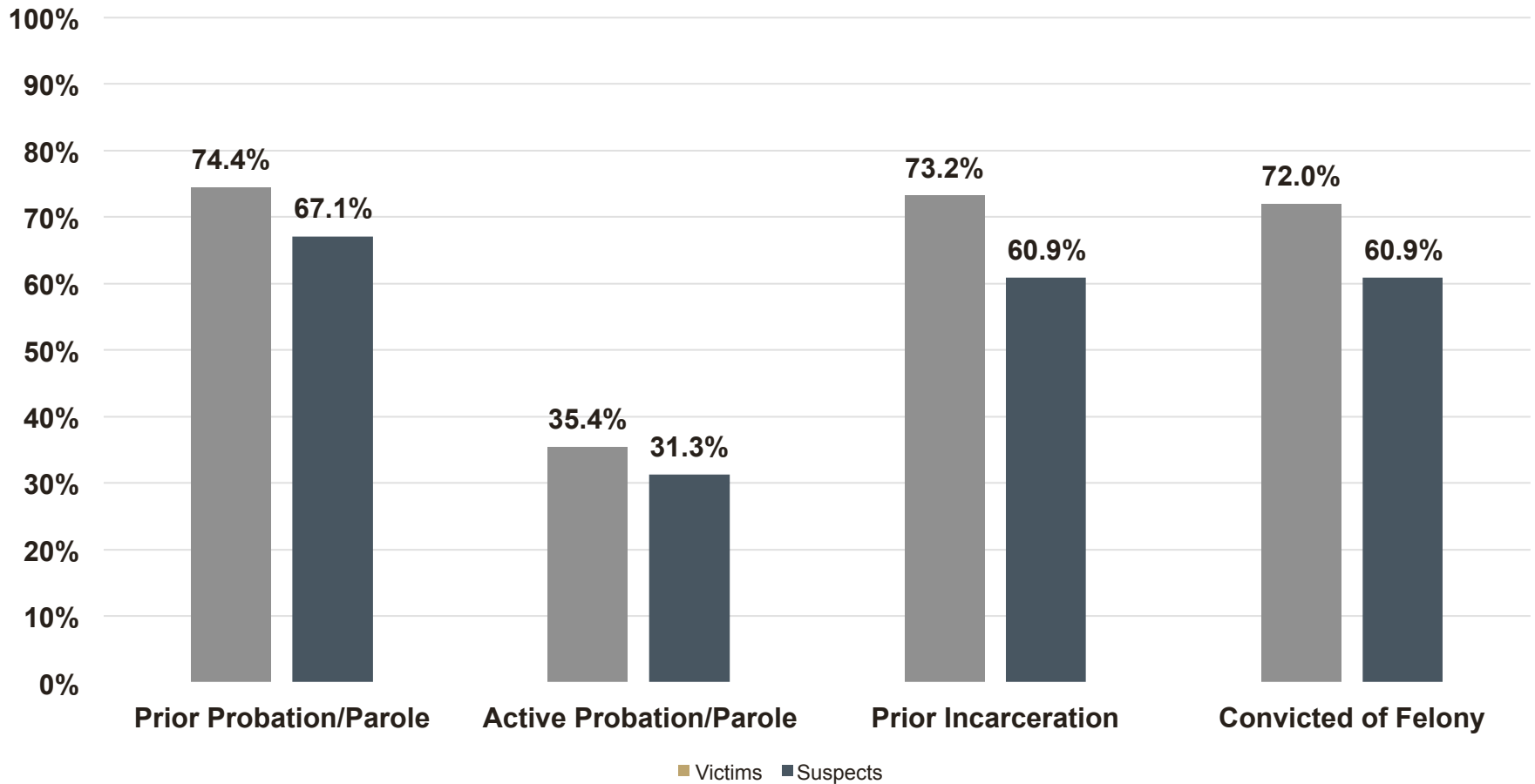
All Known Individuals Involved in Homicides ( $n = 191$ )  
January 2016 – June 2017



# Homicide Victims and Suspects: Criminal Histories

	Victims (n=118)	Suspects (n=80)	Victims & Suspects (n=198)
Known to the CJ system prior to the incident	82 (69.5%)	64 (80%)	146 (75.7%)
Of those known to the CJ System:			
Average age	32.6	27.8	30.5
Average number of prior arrests	13.2	10.2	11.9
Prior probation/parole	74.4%	67.1%	71.2%
Active probation/parole	35.4%	31.3%	33.6%
Prior incarceration	73.2%	60.9%	67.8%
Convicted of felony	72.0%	60.9%	67.1%

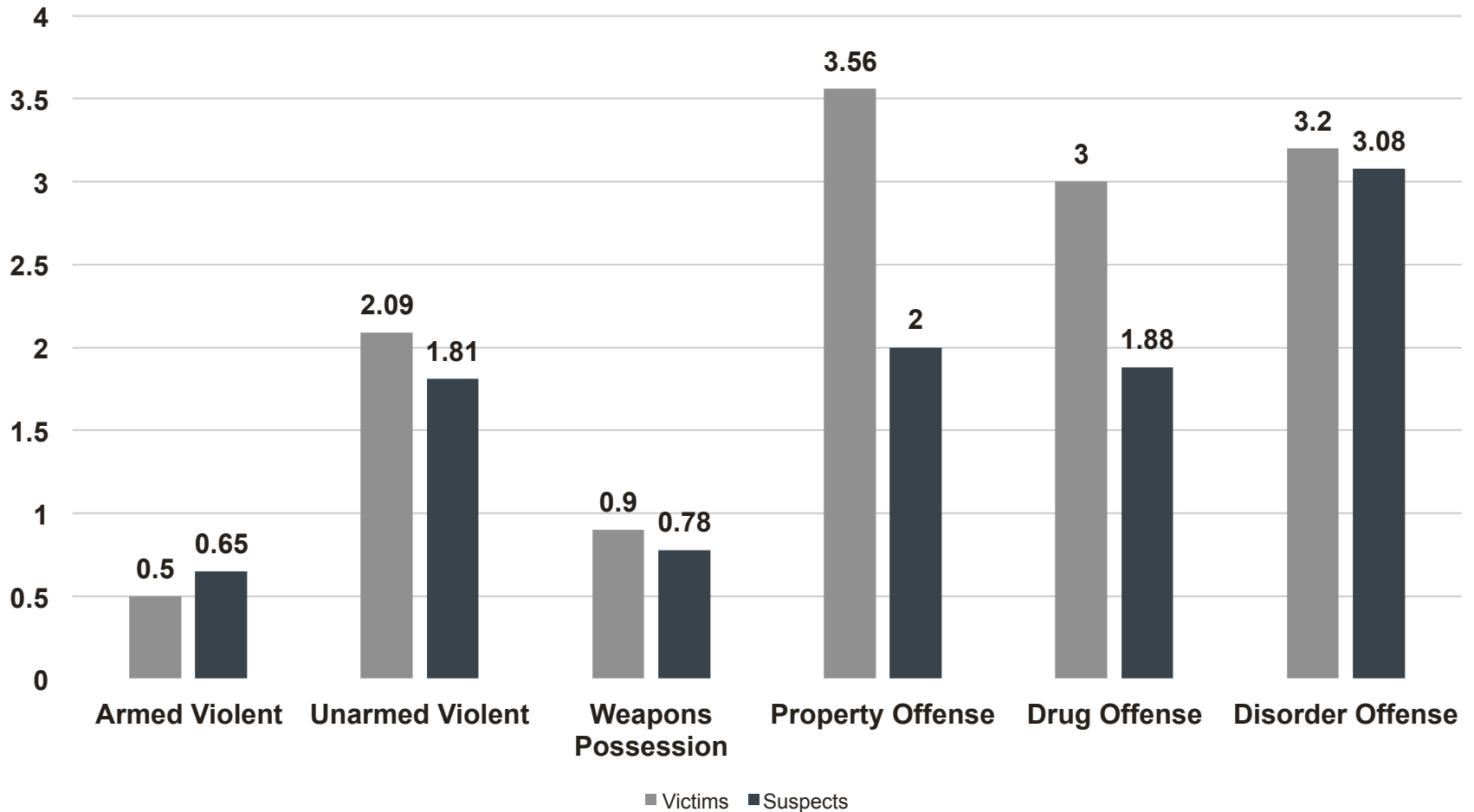
# Homicide Victims and Suspects: Criminal Histories



# Homicide Victims and Suspects: Criminal Histories – Average Prior Offenses

	Victims (n=82)	Suspects (n=64)	Victims & Suspects (n=146)
Of those known to the CJ System:			
Armed violent offenses	0.50	0.65	0.57
Unarmed violent offenses	2.09	1.81	1.97
Weapons possession	0.90	0.78	0.85
Property offenses	3.56	2.00	2.88
Drug offenses	3.00	1.88	2.51
Disorder offenses	3.20	3.08	3.14
Total	13.24	10.20	11.91

# Homicide Victims and Suspects: Criminal Histories – Average Prior Offenses

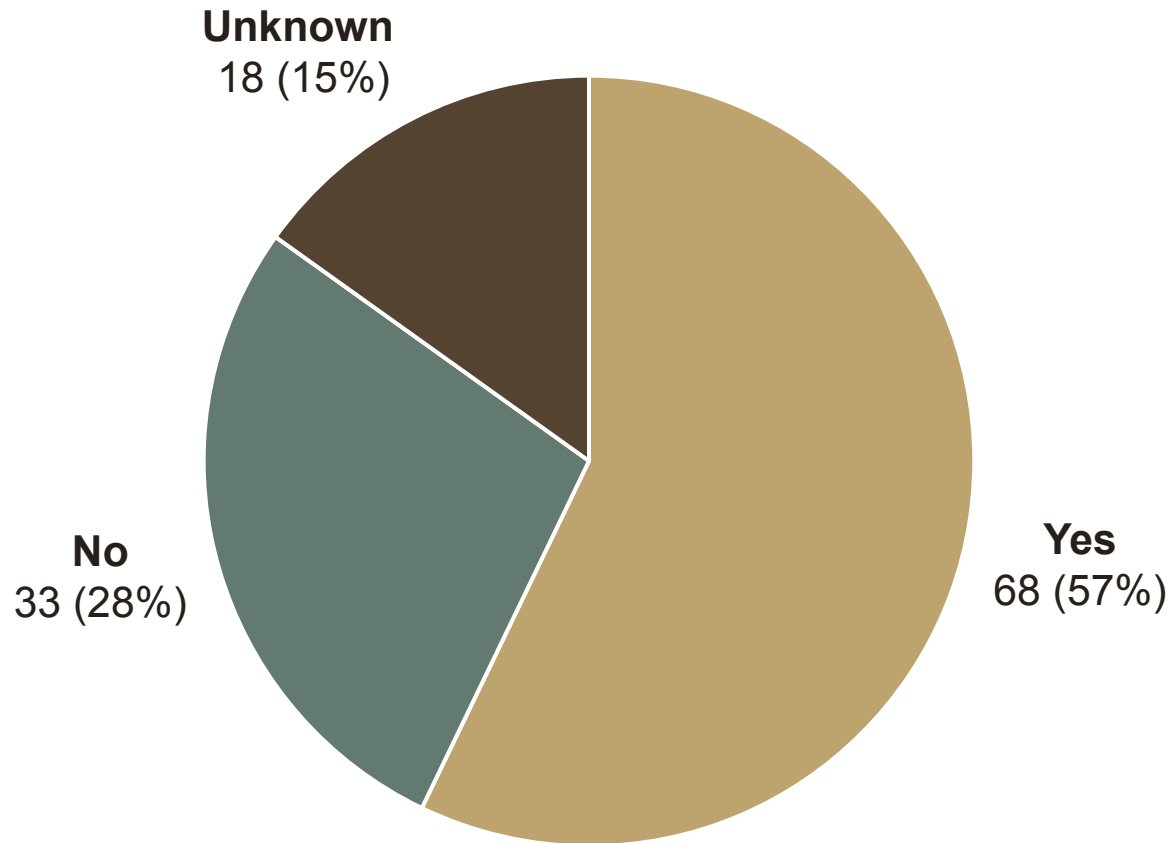


# **Homicide Analysis & Group Involvement**

# **Group Involvement in Homicides: Summary Observations**

- 1. The majority of homicides in Oakland involve group members as either victims or suspects or both (57-72%).**
- 2. We use the term “group-involved” because it:**
  - (a) captures the full variety of gangs, sets and crews characteristic of California cities; and**
  - (b) includes not just group-on-group conflicts but also incidents in which someone’s association with a group increases their risk of violence.**
- 3. Homicides in Oakland fall into many categories of circumstances, but the largest are personal and group disputes within and between groups and gangs.**
- 4. Group and gang members are also involved in a significant share of other crimes that result in homicides, such as drug-related disputes, domestic violence, and robberies**

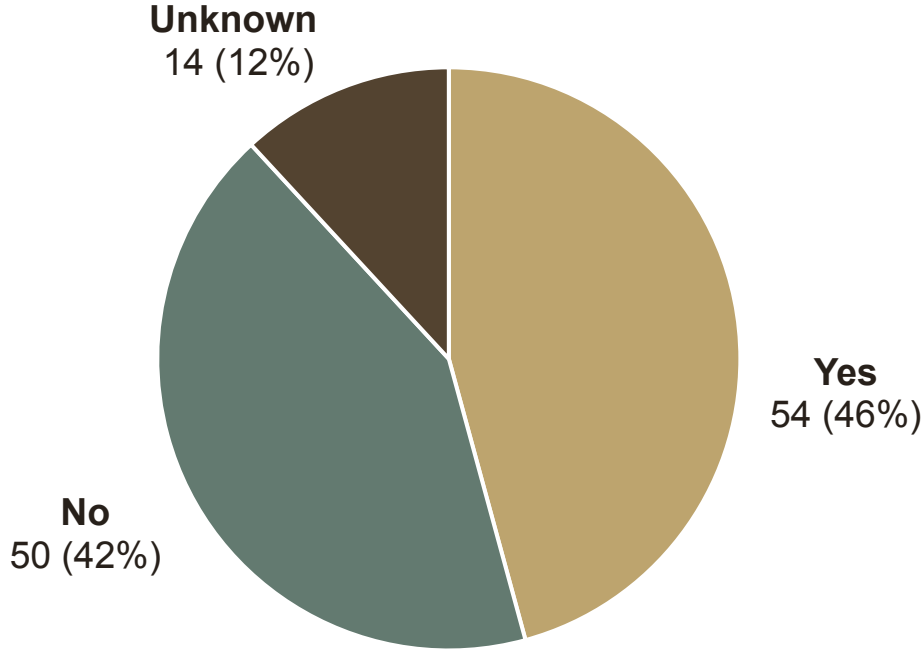
# Group Member Involved Homicides



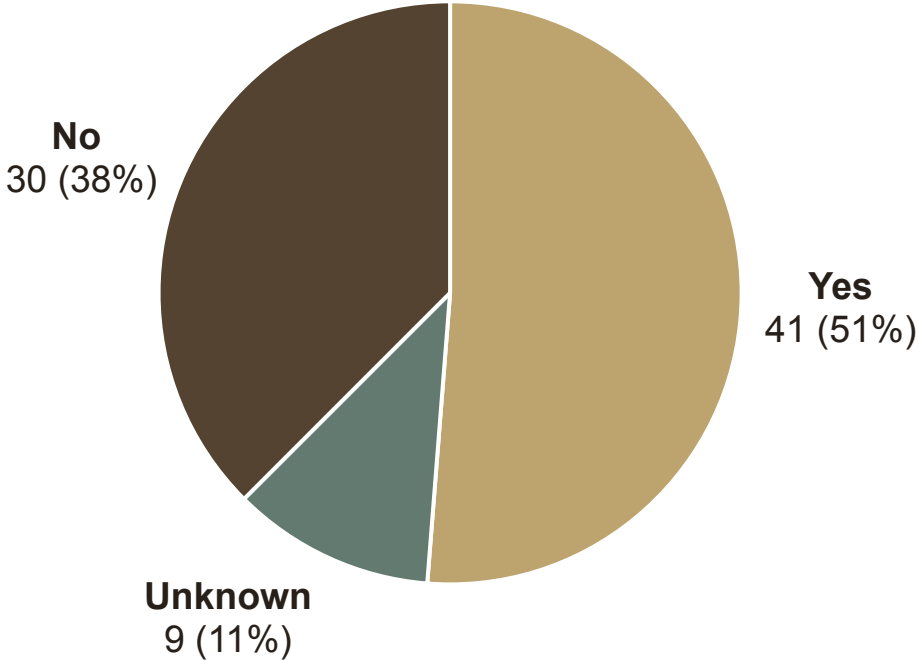


# Group - Involved Victims and Suspects

**Victims (n=118)**



**Suspects (n=80)**



# Homicide Circumstances and Group Involvement

	Group-Involved (n=68)		Not Group-Involved (n=33)		Unknown (n=18)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Ongoing group dispute	14	20.6%	0	-	1	5.6%
Internal dispute	11	16.2%	0	-	0	-
Instant dispute	8	11.8%	8	24.2%	2	11.1%
Ongoing personal dispute	7	10.3%	4	12.1%	0	-
Drug-related dispute	7	10.3%	3	9.1%	2	11.1%
Domestic	6	8.8%	10	30.3%	1	5.6%
Unknown	6	8.8%	0	-	11	61.1%
Robbery	4	5.9%	3	9.1%	0	-
Drug Robbery	2	2.9%	0	-	0	-
Drug Business	1	1.5%	0	-	0	-
Sex trade	1	1.5%	2	6.1%	1	5.6%
Accidental	1	1.5%	1	3.0%	0	-
Robbery/burglary dispute	0	-	2	6.1%	0	-

# Homicide Circumstances by Group Involvement

Circumstance	% of Homicides (n=119)	% Group Member Involved
Instant dispute	15.1%	44.4%
Domestic	14.3%	35.3%
Unknown	14.3%	35.3%
Ongoing group dispute	12.6%	100%
Drug dispute	10.1%	58.3%
Internal dispute	9.2%	100%
Ongoing personal dispute	9.2%	63.6%
Robbery	5.9%	57.1%
Sex trade	3.4%	25%
Drug Robbery	1.7%	100%
Robbery/Burglary dispute	1.7%	0%
Accidental	1.7%	50%
Drug business	0.8%	100%

# High Risk Groups and Networks

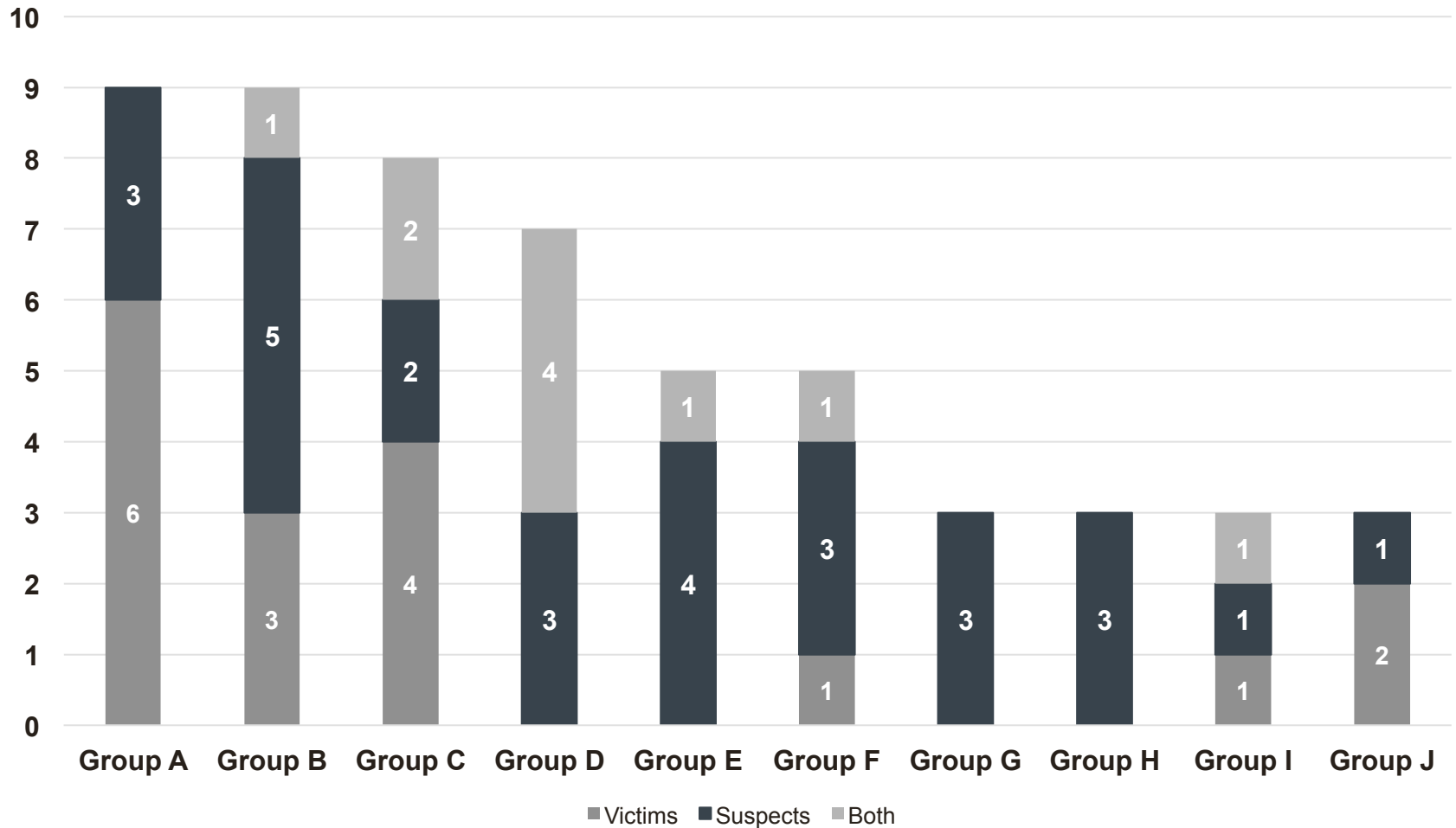
## **Summary Observations (1) : Groups, Gangs, and Networks at High Risk of Violence**

- **Oakland PD identified 66 groups and gangs currently active and at significant risk of involvement in violence as of 2017.**
- **These groups and gangs have an estimated currently active membership of 1540-1770 members (0.43% of Oakland's population).**
- **These groups tend to be primarily African American, primarily Latino, or primarily Asian, though some are racially mixed.**
- **Of these 66 groups, 10 were associated with the greatest amount of homicides (55) from January 2016 – June 2017. These 10 groups have an estimated currently active membership of 650-700 members.**

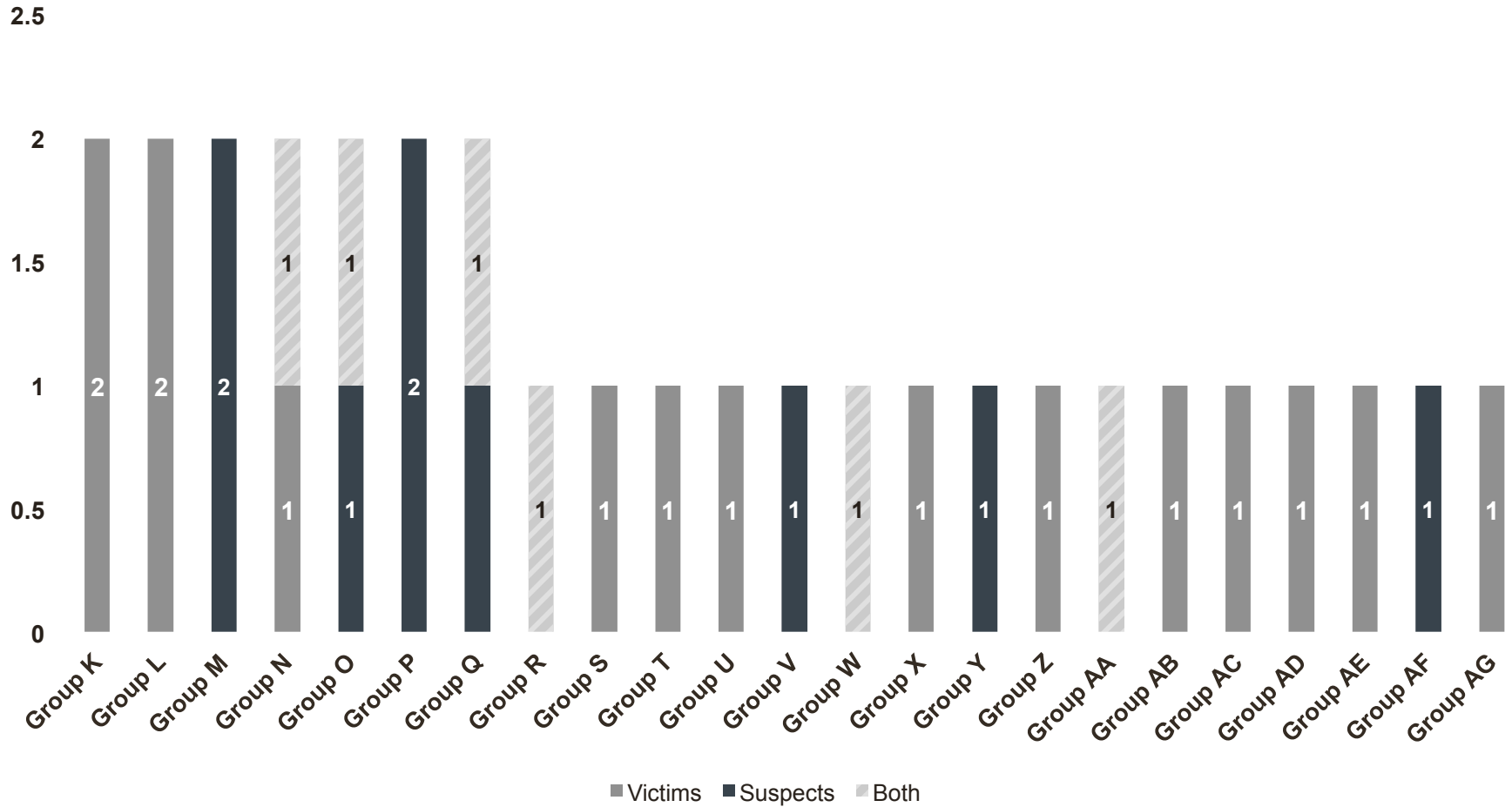
## Summary Observations (2) : Groups, Gangs, and Networks at High Risk of Violence

- Relative to 2012-2013 Problem Analysis, total group membership estimates increased significantly (from 1000-1200 total members to 1500-1700 total members).
- **OPD leaders attribute this increase to several factors, including:**
  - The emergence of two “umbrella groups” that developed large membership drawn from pre-existing groups and new members.
  - A significant increase in group intelligence from social media platforms frequented by group and gang members
- That said, the overall number of homicides during this period 2016-2017 is -30% less than the same time period in 2012-2013.
- Thus, increased group membership or OPD knowledge of group membership does not appear to be connected to rates of gun violence.

# Groups Involved in Three or More Homicides

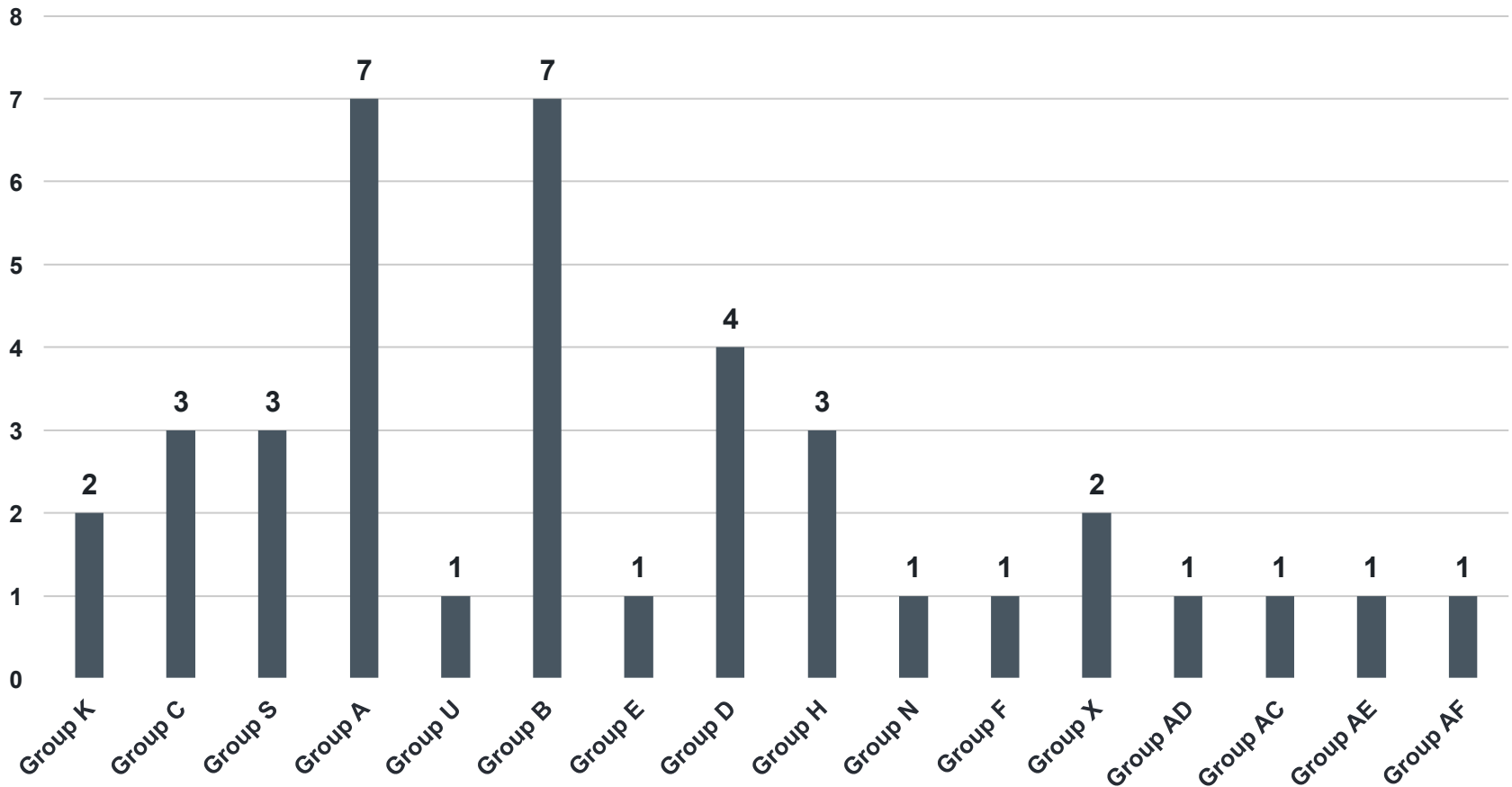


# Groups Involved in Two or Fewer Homicides

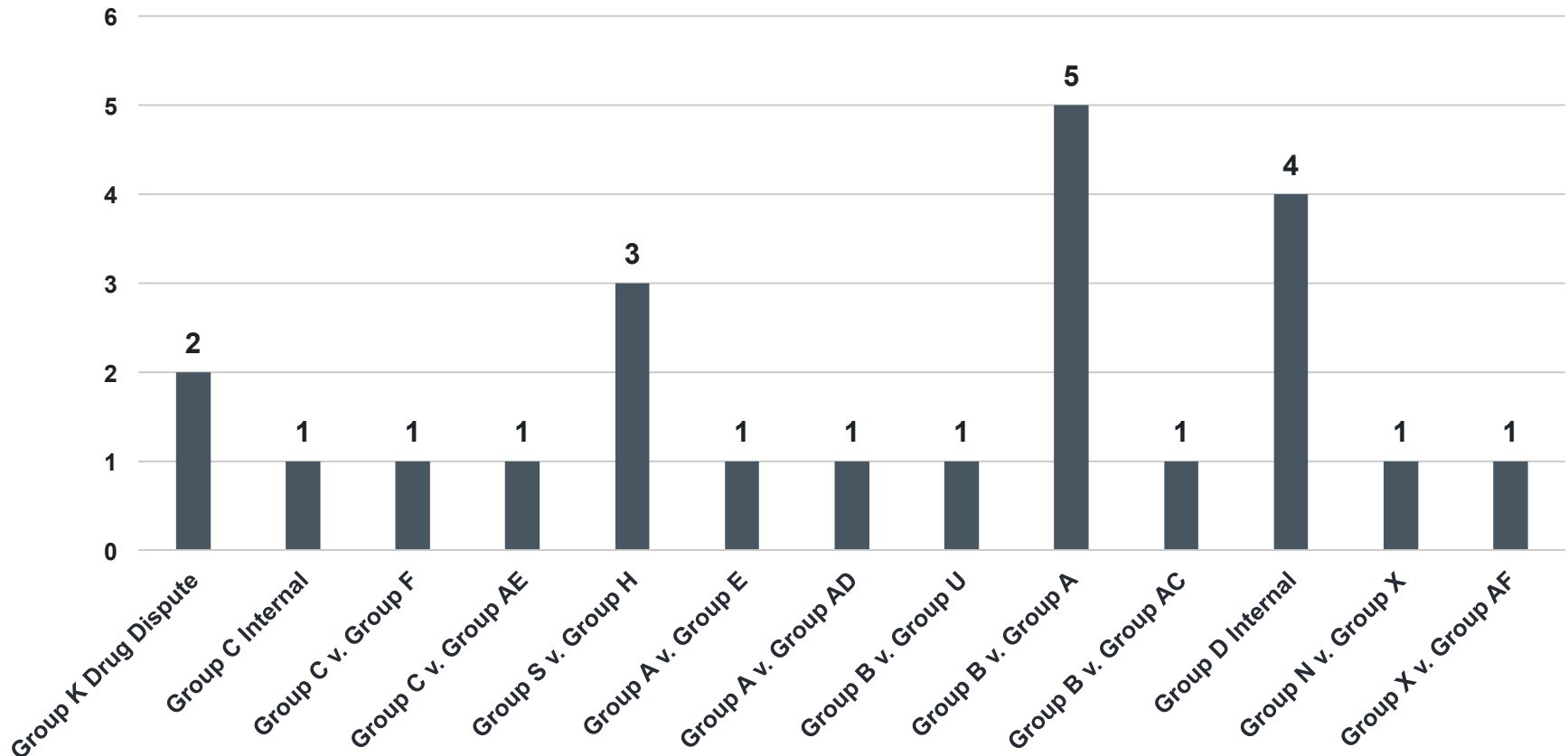




# Homicides Attributed to Specific Group Conflicts: Groups Involved



# Homicides Attributed to Specific Group Conflicts: Group Conflict Detail

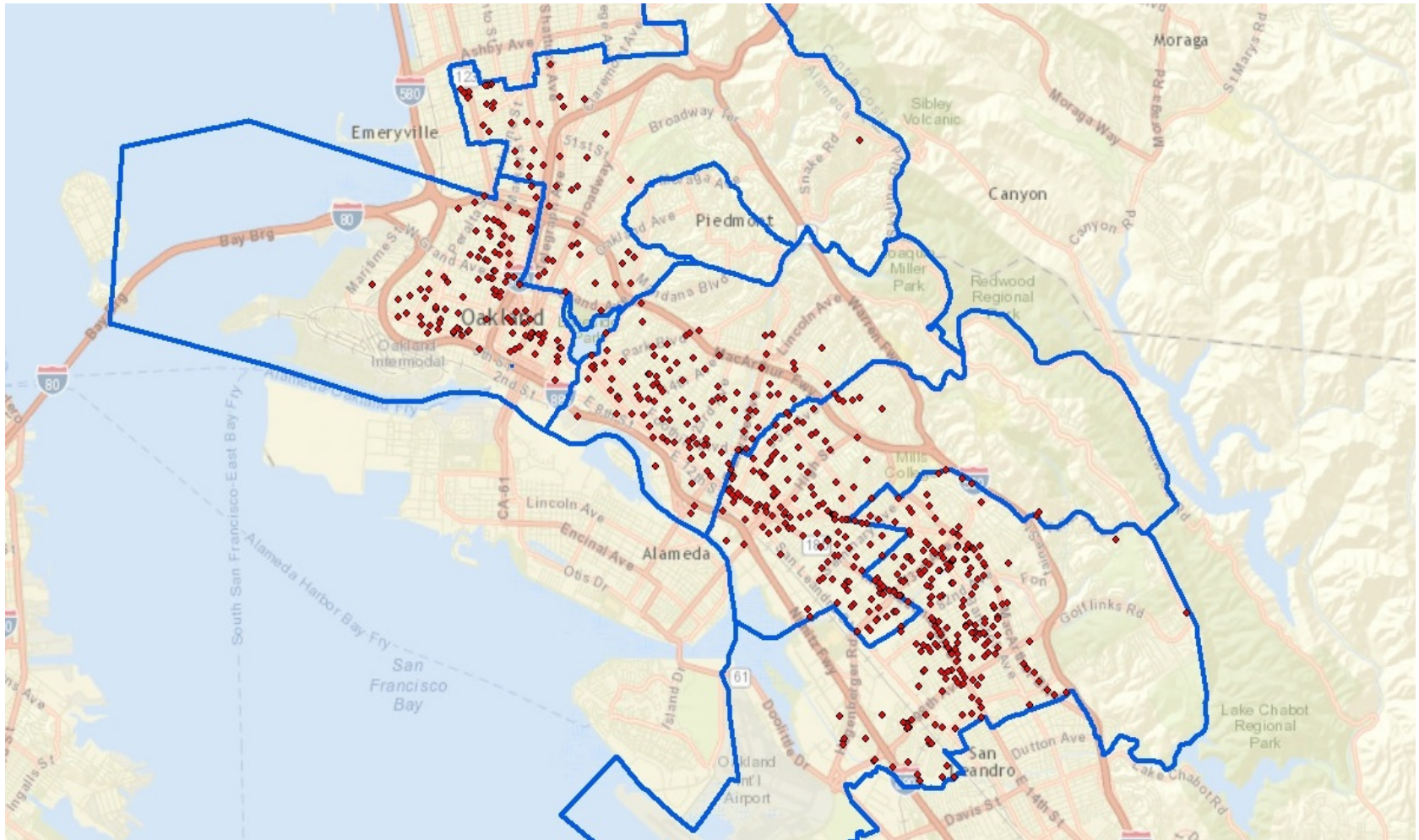


# **Violent Crime Density and Group Territory Maps**

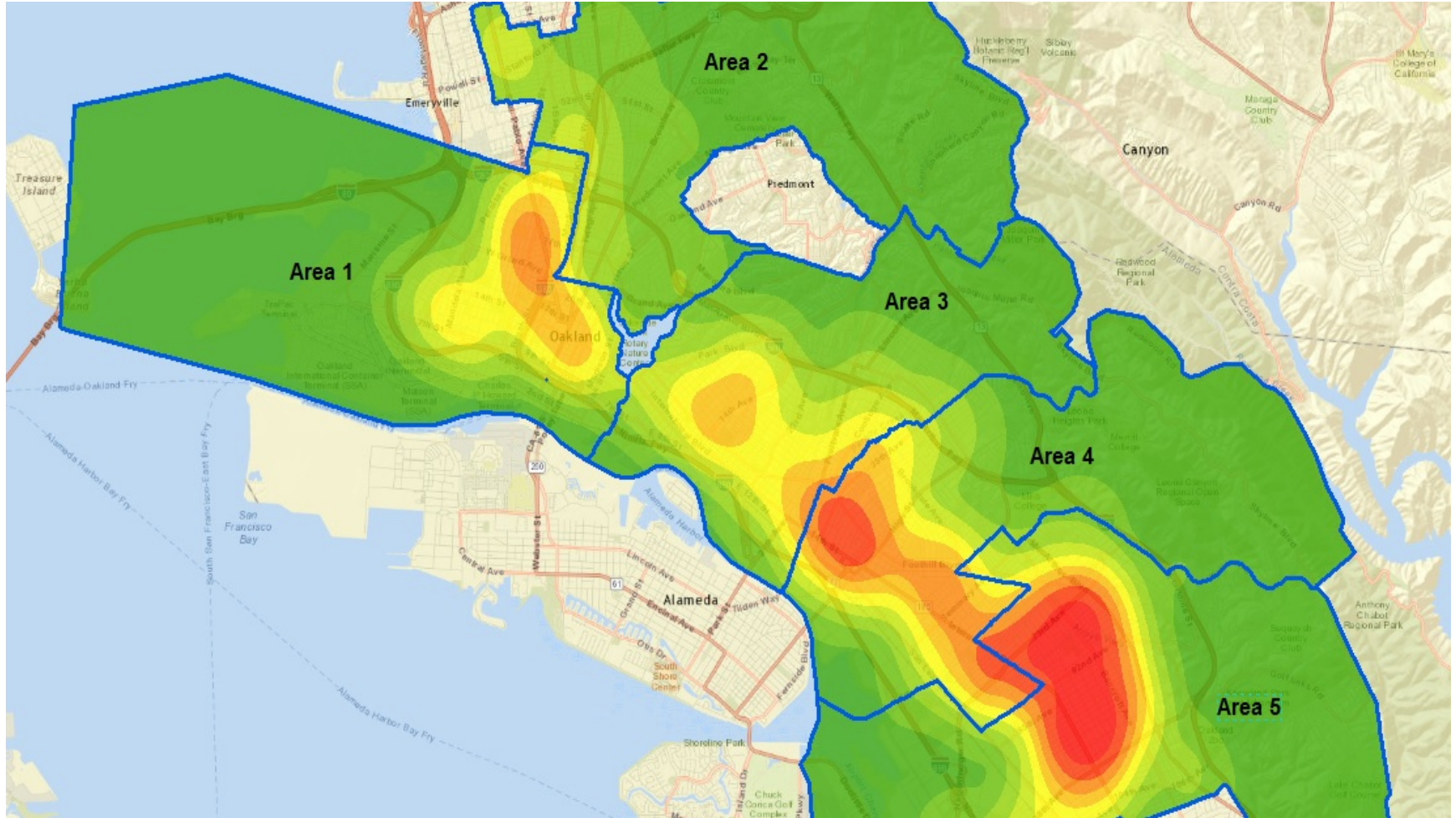
# Summary Observations: Violent Crime and Group Territories

- Homicides and firearm assaults are most heavily concentrated in Oakland PD beats 23X and 26Y (Area 4) as well as 30X, 30Y, and 34X (Area 5).
- Approximate territories for 66 groups and gangs active from 2016-2017 were identified by the Oakland Police Department.
- The group and gang territories identified cover 9.08 square miles, or 16.3% of Oakland's land area.
- Of the 686 homicides and firearm assaults from January 2016-December 2016, 37.0% occurred within gang territories.

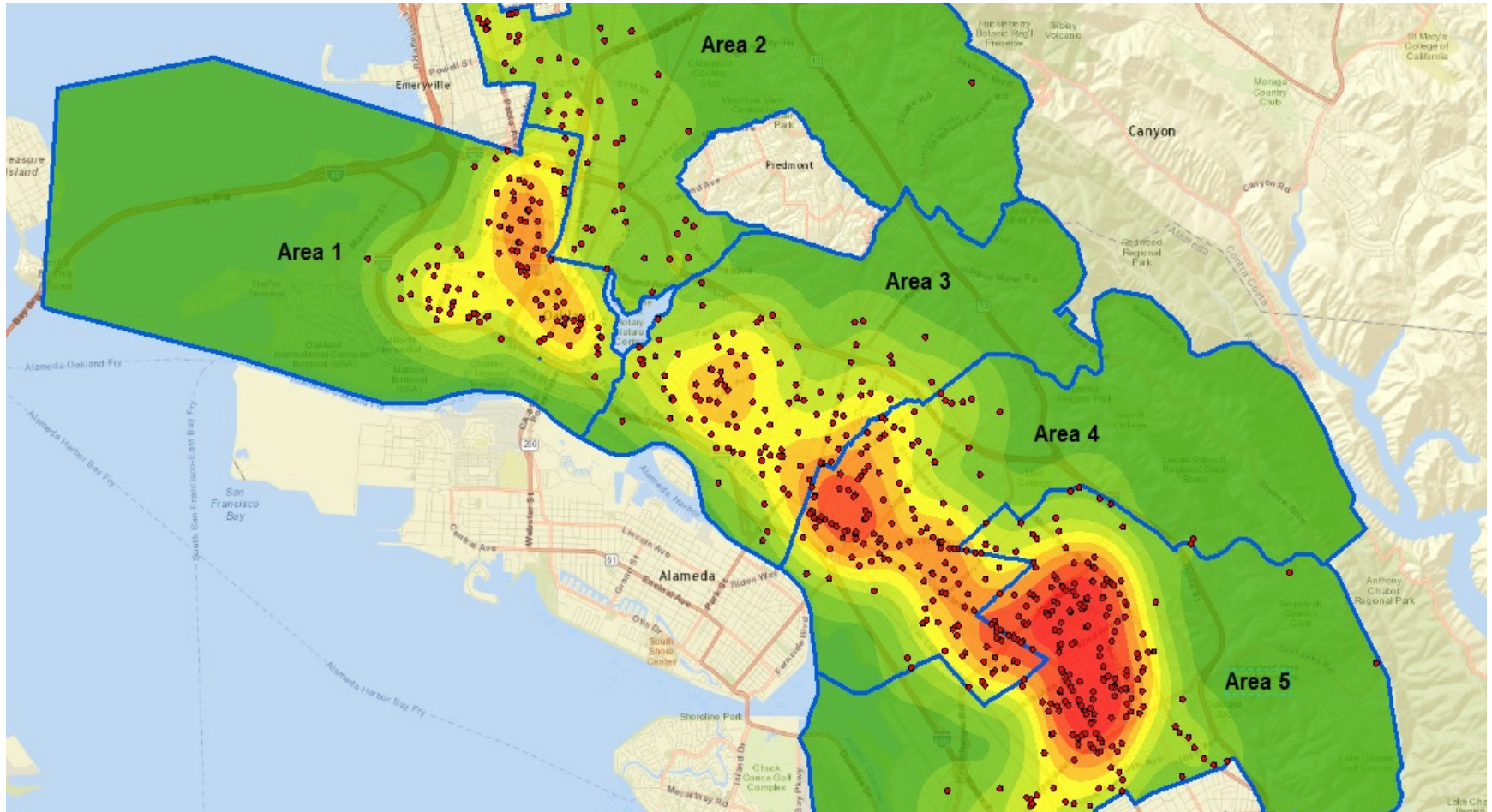
# Homicides & Firearm Assaults\* : 2016



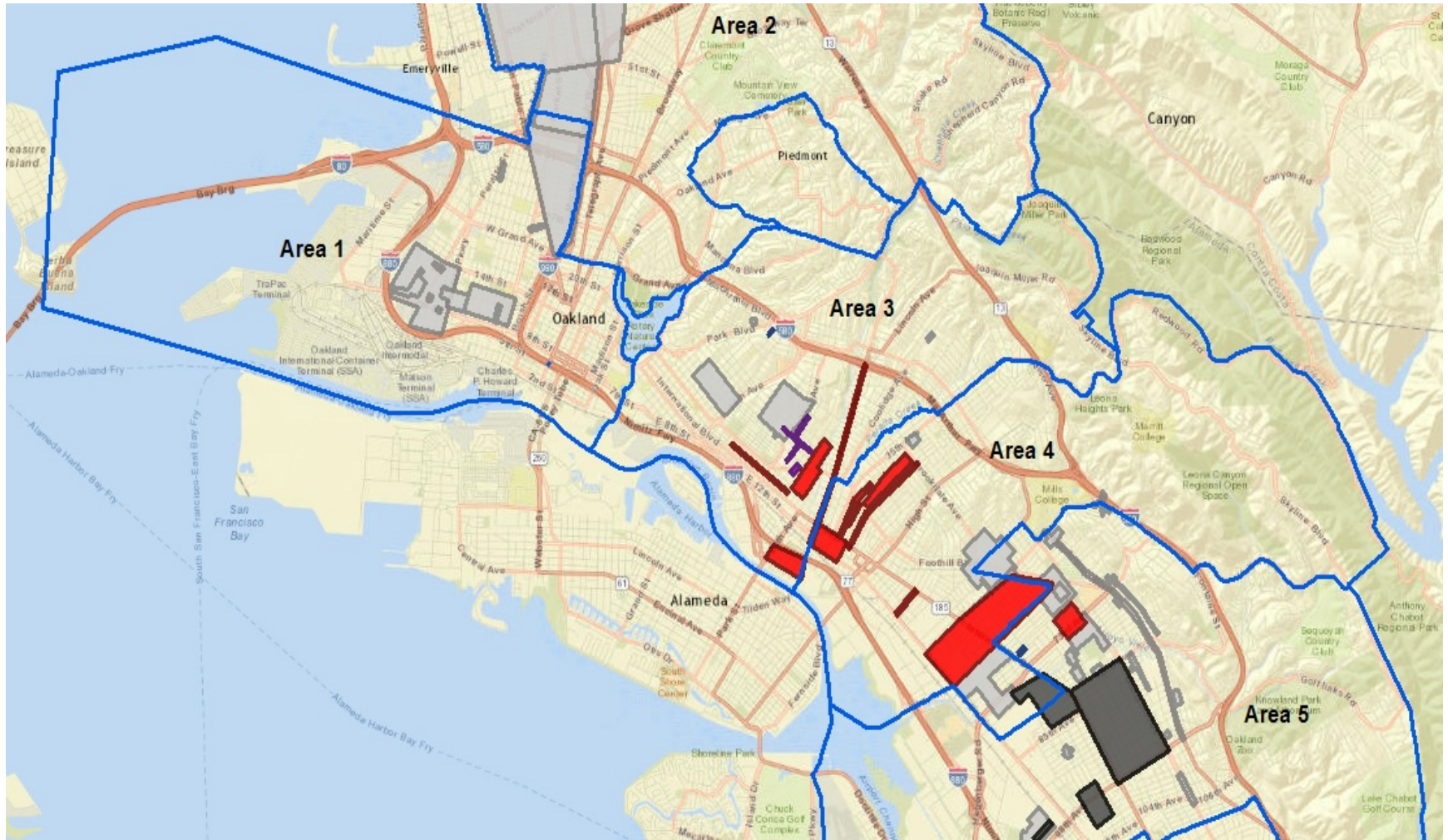
# Homicides & Firearm Assaults\*: 2016



# Homicides & Firearm Assaults\*: 2016



# Group and Gang Territories





# Group and Gang Territories



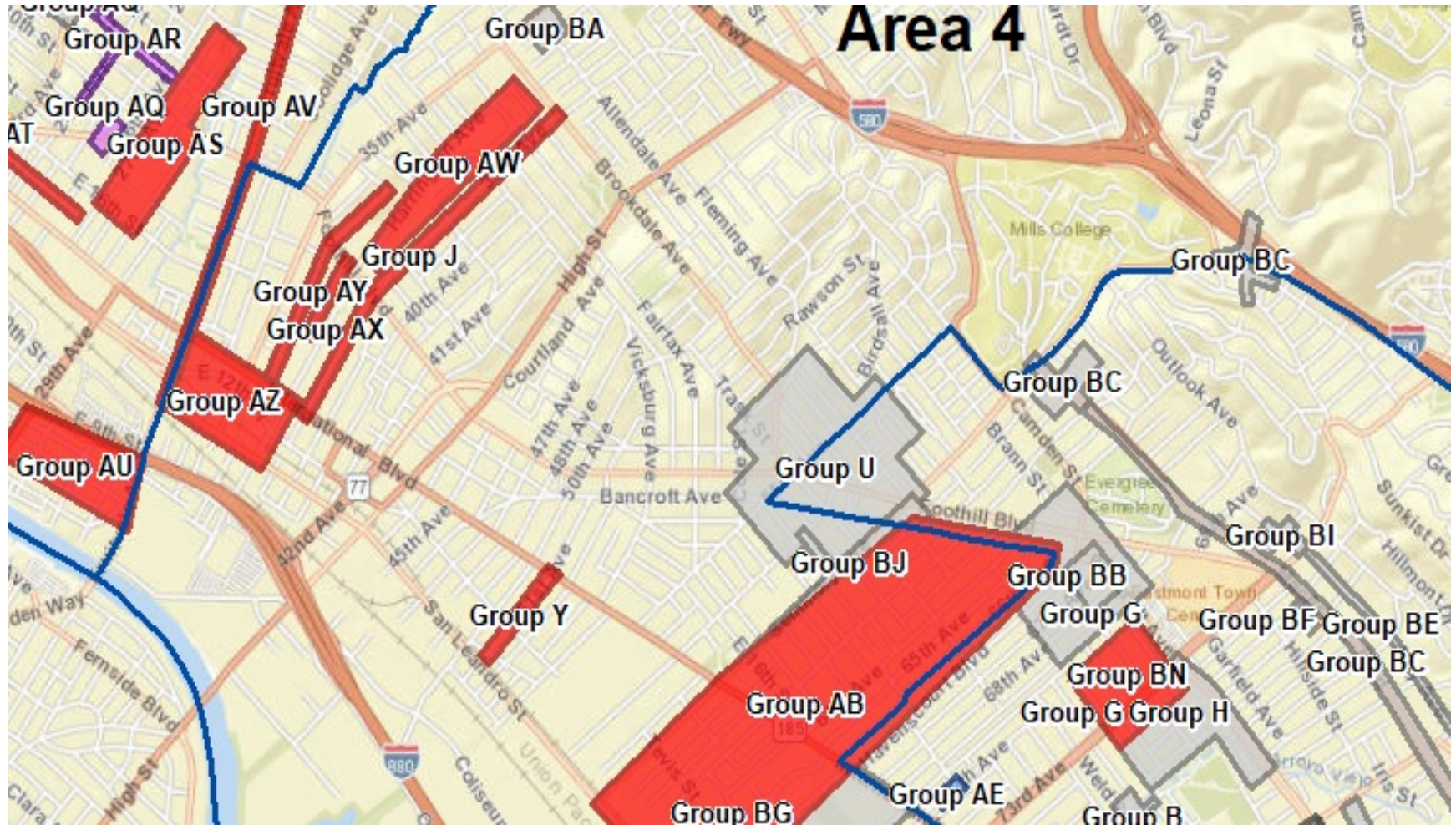
# Group and Gang Territories



# Group and Gang Territories



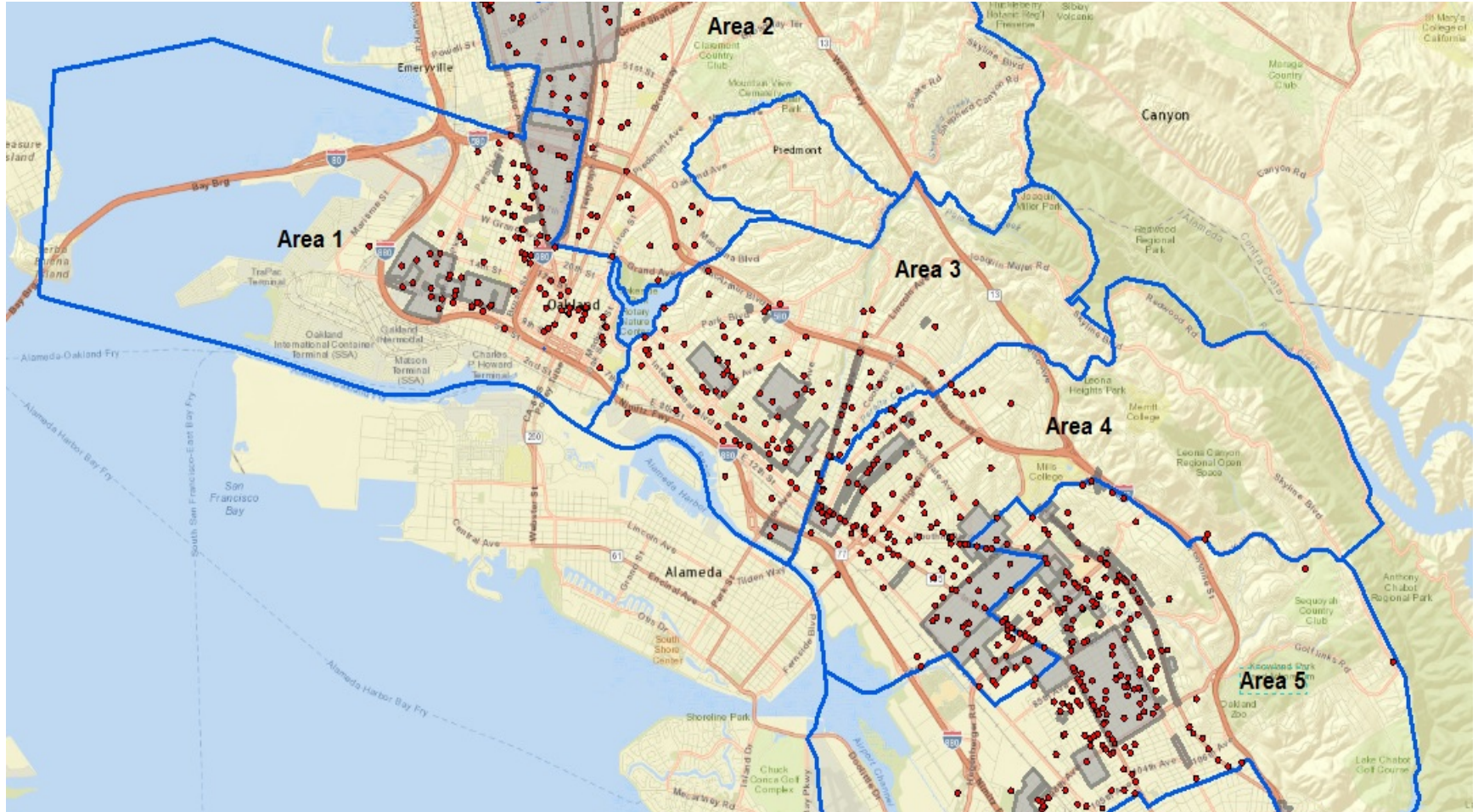
# Group and Gang Territories



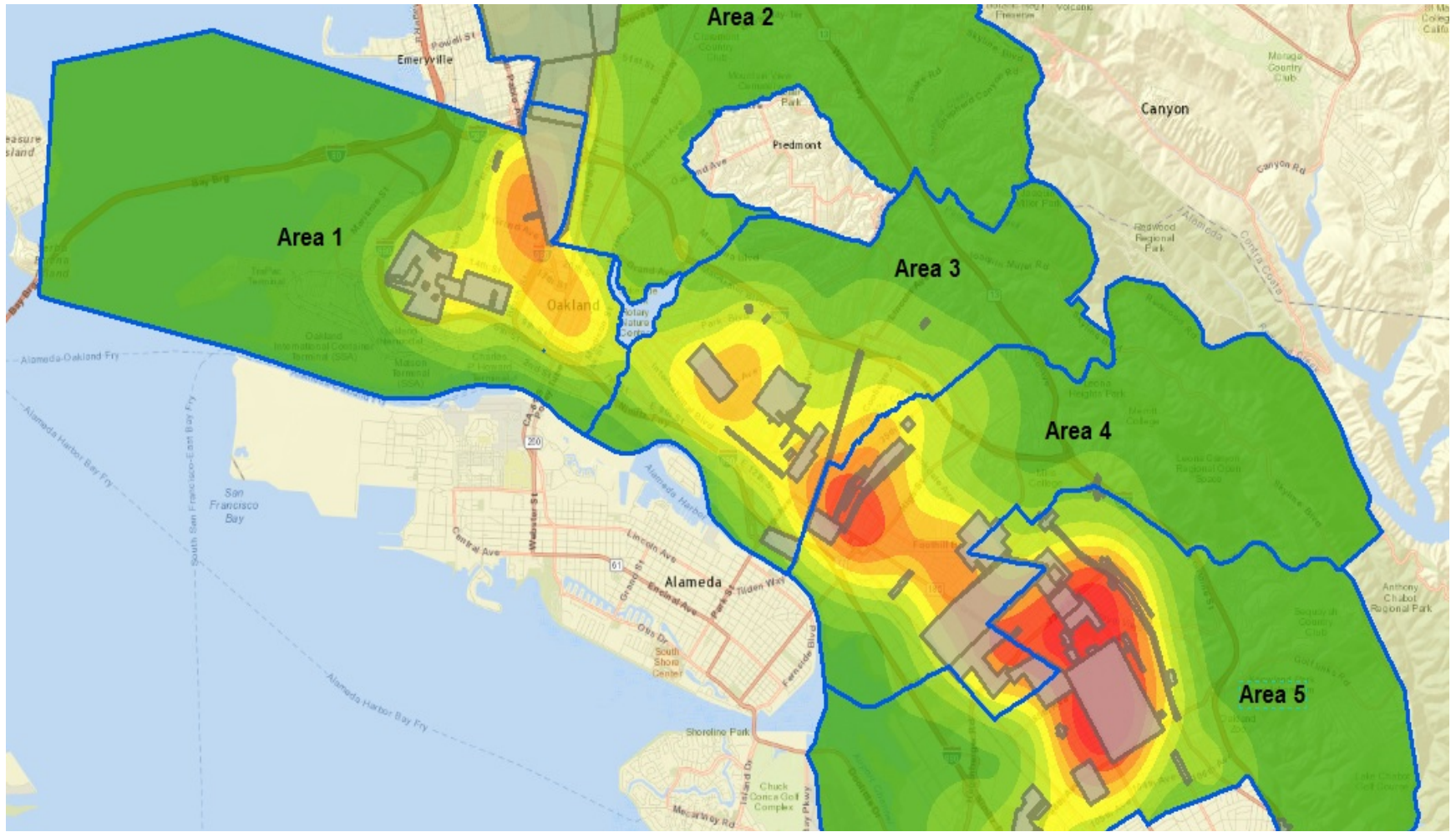
# Group and Gang Territories



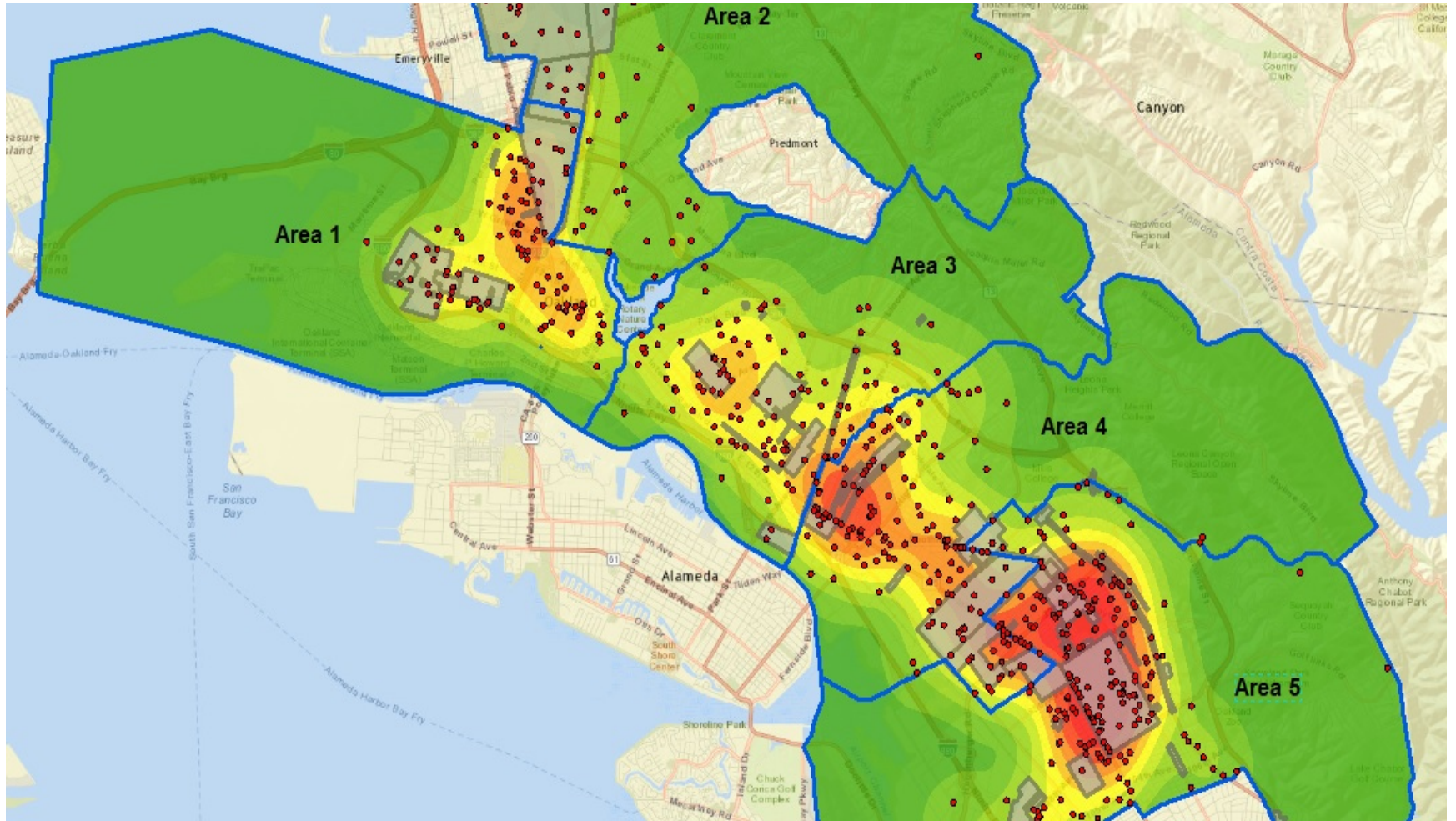
# Group and Gang Territories



# Group and Gang Territories



# Group and Gang Territories





# Summary Conclusions

# Summary Conclusions (1)

- **Gun violence is a long-term, durable problem** in Oakland.
- **Highest Risk Population:** Risk of violence in Oakland continues to be concentrated among African American and Latino men between 18-35, with extensive criminal justice system involvement and social connections to street groups and gangs. This population of at-risk young men is only 0.43% of Oakland's population.
- **Drivers of Violence:** The majority of homicides in Oakland continue to be driven by ongoing conflicts between these groups, between individual members, and by group members engaging in other types of crime.
- **Minimal Role of Drugs:** All categories of drug-related homicide combined represent only 13% of total homicides (15 incidents).

# Summary Conclusions (2)

## Compared to 2012-2013, in 2016-2017:

- The proportion of group member involved homicides is similar though the estimated range is slightly lower (from 59%-85% to 57%-72%).
- Victims and suspects average slightly more prior arrests.
- Victims are slightly older (31 v 32.5), and average two more prior arrests.
- Fewer suspects and victims are convicted felons (from 82% to 68%), and have been previously incarcerated (from 73% to 67%)
- Suspects have 1 fewer prior violent arrests and 1.5 fewer drug arrest than previously.
- Victims have 1.5 more prior property offense arrests.

## Summary Conclusions (3) : Recent Progress

- Oakland has made significant recent progress on homicide
- Oakland experienced -30% fewer homicides from January 2016-June 2017 compared to January 2012 to June of 2013 (the time period of the previous problem analysis).
- 2013-2017 marks only the second time in the last 30 years that Oakland has experienced 5 consecutive years well-below the long-term average of 107. Non-fatal shootings also declined significantly during this period.
- The five year average from 2013-2017 is 82 homicides, a -23% decline from the 30 year average.

# Initial Recommendations (1)

The timing of recent reductions in violence in Oakland (from 2013-2017) corresponds closely with several developments:

1. The implementation (October 2012) and scaling of **Oakland's Ceasefire Initiative**.
2. The development of **specialized units** at OPD (The Ceasefire Section) and **management practices** (The Shooting Review) specifically tailored to reduce shootings and homicides (2013-present).
3. The **revision and re-authorization of Measure Z** legislation (2014) to more specifically focus service and support resources on young people at the highest risk of violence as identified by the 2012-2013 problem analysis.
4. **Oakland Unite's development of support services** more focused on this target population with a greater emphasis on relationship building and addressing safety issues / reducing risk of harm (2014-present).

## Initial Recommendations (2)

- **Continue to Focus On Those in Greatest Need:** To continue making progress, Oakland's limited violence reduction resources should **be focused on this .43% at highest risk of violence** as guided by regular analysis of shootings incidents.
- **Continuous Assessment:** Due to the fluidity of violence in Oakland, there should be both weekly (shooting reviews) and annual assessments (problem analysis) of drivers of violence and gang/group involvement in violence.
- **Joint Focus:** This focus should be reflected in police and justice system efforts to address violence as well as the support and intervention strategies ultimately adopted by the Department of Violence Prevention.
- To the extent that police or outreach and support efforts focus on other target populations, they will be less effective at reducing shootings and homicides citywide.

# Acknowledgements

- This analysis represents the collective effort and knowledge sharing of The Oakland Police Department. CPSC would like to thank all of those involved for their hard work, generosity and commitment to this project
- Particular thanks to Deputy Chief Leronne Armstrong, Captain Ersie Joyner, Ceasefire Director Reygan Harmon, Lt. Tony Jones, Lt. Fred Shavies, Cpt. Roland Holmgren, Lt. Robert Rosin, Sgt. Anthony Tedesco, Sgt. Steve Valle, the Ceasefire Unit, Gang Unit, SIU 1 and SIU 2, Intelligence Unit, Area CRT Staff, homicide investigators and crime analysts.
- The crime data reflected within was primarily gathered and formatted by Nicole Freeman and Andrea Van Peteghem. Thanks as well to Lisa Barao, research assistant at Northeastern University, who supported much of the data collection and analysis reflected in the problem analysis.

# Sources

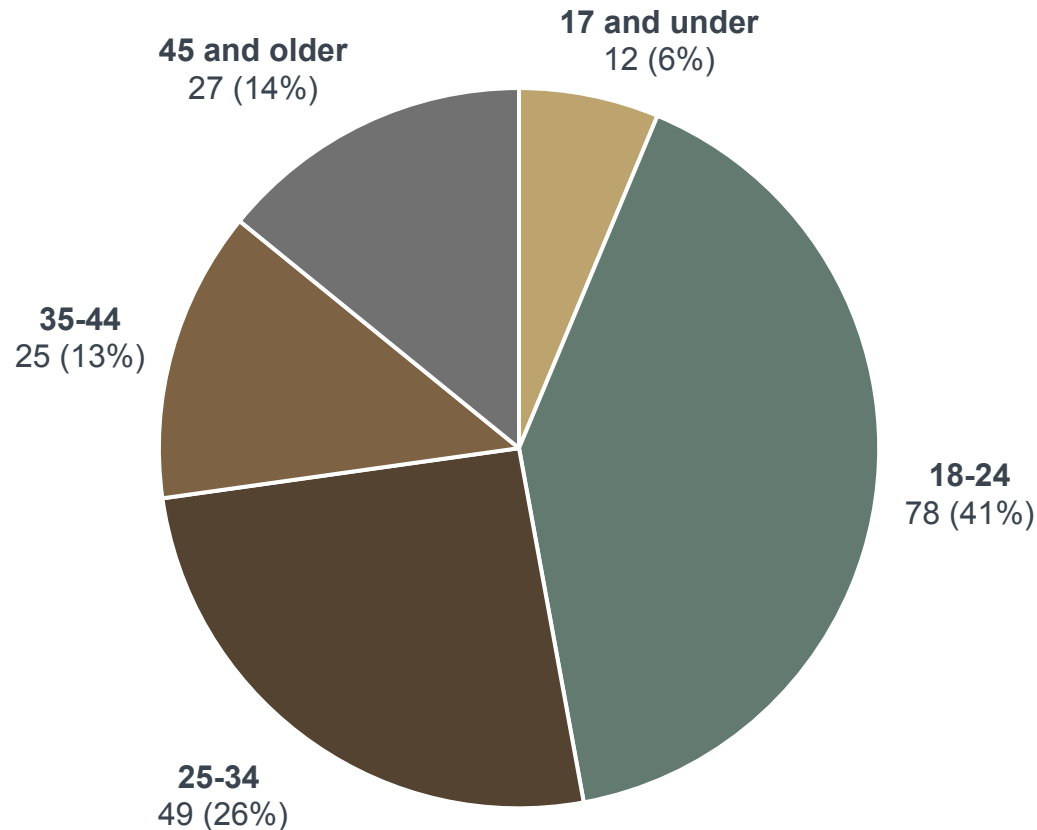
- All Oakland crime data was provided by the Oakland Police Department based on Uniform Crime Reports.
- All suspect and victim information was provided by the Oakland Police Department.
- All criminal history information is based on criminal history information contained in The California Law Enforcement Telecommunication System (CLETs).
- Group, gang and network information is based on working knowledge and intelligence of the Ceasefire Unit, Gang Unit, Special Investigation Units, Area Community Response Teams (CRTs) and homicide investigators.



# Appendix

# Age:

All Known Individuals Involved in Homicide ( $n=191$ )  
January 2016 - June 2017



# Victims Known to be Group-Involved: Sex and Race

	Victims Known to be Group-Involved (n=54)
Sex	
Male	90.74%
Female	9.26%
Race	
White	0.0%
African-American	72.2%
Hispanic	27.8%
Asian	0.0%

# Victims Known to be Group-Involved: Age

	Victims Known to be Group-Involved (n = 54)
Age	
17 and under	3.7%
18-24	50.0%
25-34	27.8%
35-44	7.4%
45 and older	11.1%
Mean Age	28.0

# Suspects Known to be Group-Involved: Sex and Race

	Suspects Known to be Group-Involved (n=40)
Sex	
Male	95.12%
Female	4.88%
Race	
White	2.4%
African-American	68.3%
Hispanic	26.8%
Asian	2.4%

# Suspects Known to be Group-Involved: Age

	Suspects Known to be Group-Involved (n=40)
Sex	
Male	95.12%
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Race	
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# Suspects Known to be Group-Involved ( $n=40$ ): Age

