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## Copy of Report: Gang fighting efforts too disjointed

### 3-part study to examine effectiveness

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LA Daily News

Although public and private groups have spent \$82 million to fight gangs in Los Angeles, the programs have had only limited success because of disjointed funding, a lack of accountability and poor coordination, a report released Wednesday says.

The first in a three-phase study by The Advancement Project said organizations have thrown money at gang programs - \$26 million on prevention or intervention and \$56 million on suppression - without gauging the effectiveness of the programs.

"The city does not have any entity to address youth violence and gangs," said Connie Rice, a noted civil rights attorney and co-director of the project. "While you have great individuals doing tremendous work, you have no entity, no department assessing the problems."

In March, the city allocated more than \$450,000 to fund the report by the nonprofit consulting group. An additional \$123,000 was approved Wednesday by the City Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development to continue with the report, the second phase of which will be released in the fall.

Police estimate there are 463 gangs with 38,811 members in Los Angeles County. In 2005, gang members were responsible for 244 homicides, 579 attempted homicides and 2,620 felony assaults countywide.

As of May, gang-related crime in Los Angeles was down 13 percent from the comparable period five years earlier, according to Los Angeles Police Department statistics. Police say programs like Jeopardy, geared toward at-risk youth, are working.

But the report presented to the City Council committee said more research is needed to determine if those types of programs are effective.

Meanwhile, violent crime dropped between 3 percent and 7 percent in areas where gang injunctions - which allow gang members to be arrested for meeting in certain neighborhoods and limit their ability to loiter - have been enforced.

There were eight injunctions filed in 2001; the 30th was recently filed.

"The city attorney has said this a very important tool for the LAPD to use, but it's only one component in the battle against gangs," said Jonathan Diamond, spokesman for City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo. "We don't argue that it's a silver bullet. It's a piece of the enforcement puzzle."

The report also found that, based on 2005 statistics, gang hot spots are more likely where the per-capita income is less than \$30,000; where fewer than 30 percent of the population have high school diplomas; and where more than 80 percent of the neighborhood is rental housing.

Councilman Tony Cardenas, who formed and chairs the committee, said he wants city leaders to be held accountable for not reaching their goals.

Once Rice's group finishes the report, the decision on whether to create a new city department headed by a gang czar will be discussed. Cardenas, who has said he has mentioned the idea to Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's office, said he believes he can put together a strong enough coalition.

"Every politician talks about getting tough on gangs, but what I'm doing is getting tough on our own departments," Cardenas said. "Suppression isn't where the money needs to go. It needs to go toward prevention."

L.A.'s latest gang-related shooting was Tuesday night, when a 20-year-old man was killed during what appears to have been a revenge attack in Westchester, police said.

The San Fernando Valley's latest gang shooting was Saturday, when a 20-year-old Reseda man was fatally shot at a house party in Canoga Park.

"I've had five homicides in the last two months in my area," said City Councilman Bill Rosendahl, whose district includes Brentwood, Marina del Rey, Pacific Palisades, Venice and Westchester.

"This is not about being soft on crime, or soft on youth," he said of the need to direct more funding toward prevention. "This is about holding everyone accountable. If we're going to get tough on gangs, we have to be tough on ourselves."

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