Case Study:
Violence Prevention in San Francisco

Project Summary

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors requested that HMR (in our role as the contract Budget and Legislative Analyst) examine how resources are allocated to violence prevention programs and analyze recent demographic trends within the City.

San Francisco has eleven City departments that operate and fund community-based organizations to provide an array of violence prevention services. HMR surveyed these departments to compile budget and operational data for their violence prevention programs and interviewed key staff to understand program design, performance, and planning. We then analyzed demographic statistics collected by federal and state agencies on crime and employment trends in San Francisco.

Our analysis allowed the Board of Supervisors to see for the first time how City funds and staff were allocated to violence prevention services, the types of programs offered, and the extent to which the performance of these programs was measured and reported to the public. Based on this information, the Board created a new citywide coordinating body for violence prevention.

Project Results

- HMR found that although the City increased spending on violence prevention programs from $38.5m in FY 2010-11 to $47.3m in FY 2014-15, the City did not have a coordinated planning process or efficient way to measure program performance.
- HMR found that the Board of Supervisors was under-represented in the City’s violence prevention planning process and needed better information to make appropriation decisions.
- HMR recommended establishing a citywide coordinating body for violence prevention programming, which was subsequently created by resolution of the Board of Supervisors.

Service and Topics Highlighted
Social services, violence prevention, crime, program evaluation, San Francisco, community based organizations