

Detroit crime falls after gang crackdown; In one year of agencies' joint program, homicides, shootings drop notably on city's northwest side.

Paul Egan. [Detroit News](#). Detroit, Mich.: [Aug 11, 2007](#). pg. A.3

Copyright The Detroit News. All Rights Reserved.

DETROIT -- Federal, state and local police claimed success Friday in a year-long crackdown on violent gangs in northwest Detroit.

Project Safe Neighborhoods Operation TIDE (Tactical Intelligence Driven Enforcement), a U.S. Justice Department program, brought together 10 agencies to focus on gun crimes.

U.S. Attorney Stephen Murphy said from May 2006 to May 2007, homicides in Detroit's northwest district dropped 43 percent, from 30 to 17, and nonfatal shootings dropped 26 percent, from 118 to 87.

That compared to an 8 percent drop in homicides and a 15 percent reduction in nonfatal shootings in the rest of Detroit during the same period, he said.

"We feel that the statistical correlation is intimately related to and a direct result of this historic cooperation," Murphy said.

As a result of the program, federal indictments were brought against alleged members of two drug gangs in the area, the Detroit Thug Lordz and the Joy Road Gang, officials said.

Officials plan to expand the program into Detroit's eastern district.

Valerie Goddard, special agent in charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in Detroit, credited public assistance in the increased enforcement and encouraged the public to continue calling in tips to (800) ATF-GUNS.

But Sandi Kanakis, who lives and works in the northwest district, said she has felt less safe since Detroit Police combined the former 6th and 8th precincts into the northwest district in 2005.

Closing the precinct at Grand River and McNichols left no police station north of I-96, and "we feel like orphans," said Kanakis.

"We have a huge prostitution problem, we have a huge drug problem, and more and more people are getting shot up," Kanakis said. "Statistics can be manipulated. People are barricaded in their homes."

Detroit Police Assistant Chief Robert Dunlap said the statistics show shootings are down across Detroit. Homicides are down 15 percent this year in the eastern and southwest districts, he said.

The program is to receive an award at a national crime prevention conference to be held in Detroit from Aug. 21 to 23, officials said. The conference will bring together about 1,500 law enforcement officials from across the country.

Other agencies involved in the program include the Michigan State Police, the Wayne County Sheriff's Department, the FBI, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and the U.S. Marshal.

You can reach Paul Egan at (313) 222-2069 or pegan@detnews.com.