

# OPERATION SUMMER GUARDIAN

## 2022 AND 2023 IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW AND INITIAL EVALUATION

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# Operation Summer Guardian 2022-2023

Initiative developed by  
the Milwaukee Police  
Department (MPD)

Proactive strategy to  
address gun violence

Built on the concept of  
“hot spot” policing

With a community  
engagement component

Focused on specific  
areas with a high  
concentration of Shot  
Spotter activations  
(2022) and other violent  
crime (2023)

# Evaluation Background

- Being conducted as part of the data work under the Violence Response Public Health and Safety Team (VR-PHAST)
  - Emphasis on violence from a public health perspective
- Led by the Medical College of Wisconsin, Comprehensive Injury Center, in collaboration with the Milwaukee Police Department
- Focus on:
  - program implementation
  - immediate program outputs
  - change in violence, including homicides and nonfatal shootings
  - planning for future implementation and recommendations

# Program Goals

To initiate proactive  
deployments in areas  
with a high  
concentration of  
violence

To provide enhanced  
visibility and engage  
community members  
in the deployment  
areas

To arrest individuals  
involved in firearm-  
related crime by rapid  
response to  
ShotSpotter activations

To demonstrate a  
reduction in gun  
violence in the  
deployment areas

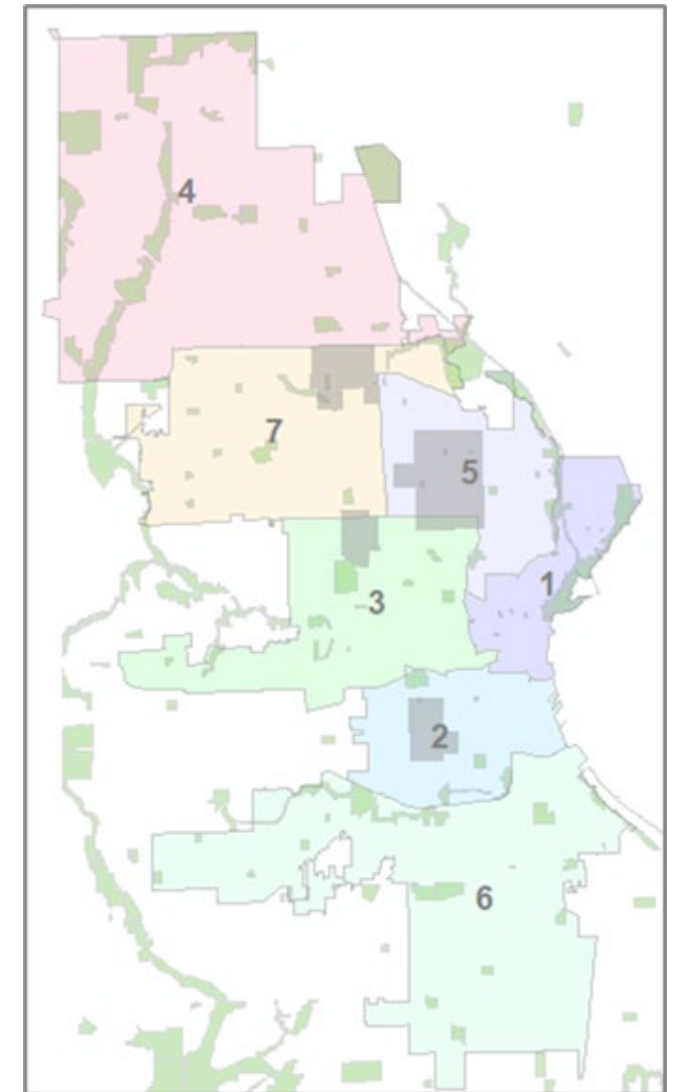
# Operation Summer Guardian 2022

# Program Implementation

- Concept based on “hot spot” policing which has evidence of as a strategy for crime reduction within a specific geographic area
- Modification to have a more direct community engagement component
- Not intended to be a heavy enforcement focus
- Deployments occurred between July 2 and October 2, 2022
- Deployments were across police districts 2, 3, 5, and 7

Zone	Primary Police District	Deployment Month
A	2	July
B	3	July
C	5	July
D	7	July
E	2	August
F	3	August
G	5	August
H	7	August
I	2	September
J	3	September
K	5	September
L	7	September

*Deployment Zones by Deployment Month  
Operation Summer Guardian 2022*



*Operation Summer Guardian 2022  
MPD Districts and General Deployment Areas*

# Program Implementation

- Deployment structure:
  - Marked specialty unit vehicles from the Special Investigation Division (SID) and the Tactical Enforcement Unit (TEU) each with two officers
  - Undercover SID vehicle with two plain clothes officers
  - Marked patrol vehicle with two officers from the district that was the focus of the deployments for the day
  - Marked SID supervisor vehicle
  - Total of 8 officers and a supervisor for each deployment
- Deployments were for the full shift during each deployment
- Deployments were Thursday through Sunday, for half shift (four hours); times varied but primarily between 1200 and 2200 hours

## Goal 1: To initiate proactive deployments in areas with a high concentration of Shotspotter activations

- 12 specific zones for areas identified based on the density of Shotspotter activations
  - Indication of shots being fired in a particular geographic area based on the gun shot detection system
  - Zones were reassessed each month
  - One zone per district for a week each month
  - Some overlap of zones
- 57 total deployments total over the 3-month period
- Training and communication as part of implementation



## Goal 2: To provide enhanced visibility and engage community members in the deployment areas

- Currently do not have a way to measure enhanced visibility in the area
- However, the after-action report identified specific situations in which community engagement occurred
- Examples
- Recommendation for future data collection from team and community members

## Goal 3: To arrest individuals involved in firearm-related crime by rapid response to ShotSpotter activations

- This was an initial stated goal of the effort, but this goal was not a primary focus
- Emphasis on presence and community engagement
- A total of 10 arrests were made during the deployments
- Examples

## Goal 4: To demonstrate a reduction in gun violence in the deployment areas

Multiple indicators were assessed related to this goal:

ShotSpotter activations based on the areas having a high concentration of activity prior to the intervention

**During the dates of deployment, 88% of the deployment zones did not have ShotSpotter detections.**

# Goal 4: To demonstrate a reduction in gun violence in the deployment areas

## Homicides and Nonfatal Shootings

- Number of homicides and nonfatal shootings (by victim) in the zones was higher than the same time period in 2021 (increased 37% combined), while the number in the area outside of the OSG zones decreased (down 19% combined)

Time Period				In OSG Area			Outside of OSG Area			Citywide		
				Homicide	NFS	Total	Homicide	NFS	Total	Homicide	NFS	Total
July 2 - Oct 2	Intervention	07/02/22 - 10/02/22	Count	16	69	85	45	173	218	61	242	303
	Pre-Intervention	07/02/21 - 10/02/21	Count	8	54	62	53	216	269	61	270	331
			% Change Intervention to Pre	100%	28%	37%	-15%	-20%	-19%	0%	-10%	-8%
	Post-Intervention	07/02/23 - 10/02/23	Count	12	82	94	41	173	214	53	255	308
			% Change Post to Intervention	-25%	19%	11%	-9%	0%	-2%	-13%	5%	2%
July 2 - July 1	Intervention Year	07/02/22-07/01/23	Count	44	223	267	123	618	741	167	841	1008
	Pre-Intervention	07/02/21-07/01/22	Count	43	181	224	163	652	815	206	833	1039
			% Change Intervention to Prior	2%	23%	19%	-25%	-5%	-9%	-19%	1%	-3%

Comparison of Operation Summer Guardian Area to Outside of the Area and Citywide for 2022 Deployment for Homicides and Nonfatal Shooting Victims

# Goal 4: To demonstrate a reduction in gun violence in the deployment areas

## Homicides and Nonfatal Shootings

- The OSG zones were higher during the implementation period in 2022 than the average of the prior two years (2020 and 2021), while the area outside of the OSG zones decreased comparing the same time period.

Area	Average 3-month periods July-Sept 2020 and 2021	Implementation July-Sept 2022	Absolute Change	% Change
OSG Area	67.5	83	15.5	23%
Outside OSG Area	243.5	216	-27.5	-11%
Citywide	311	299	-12	-4%

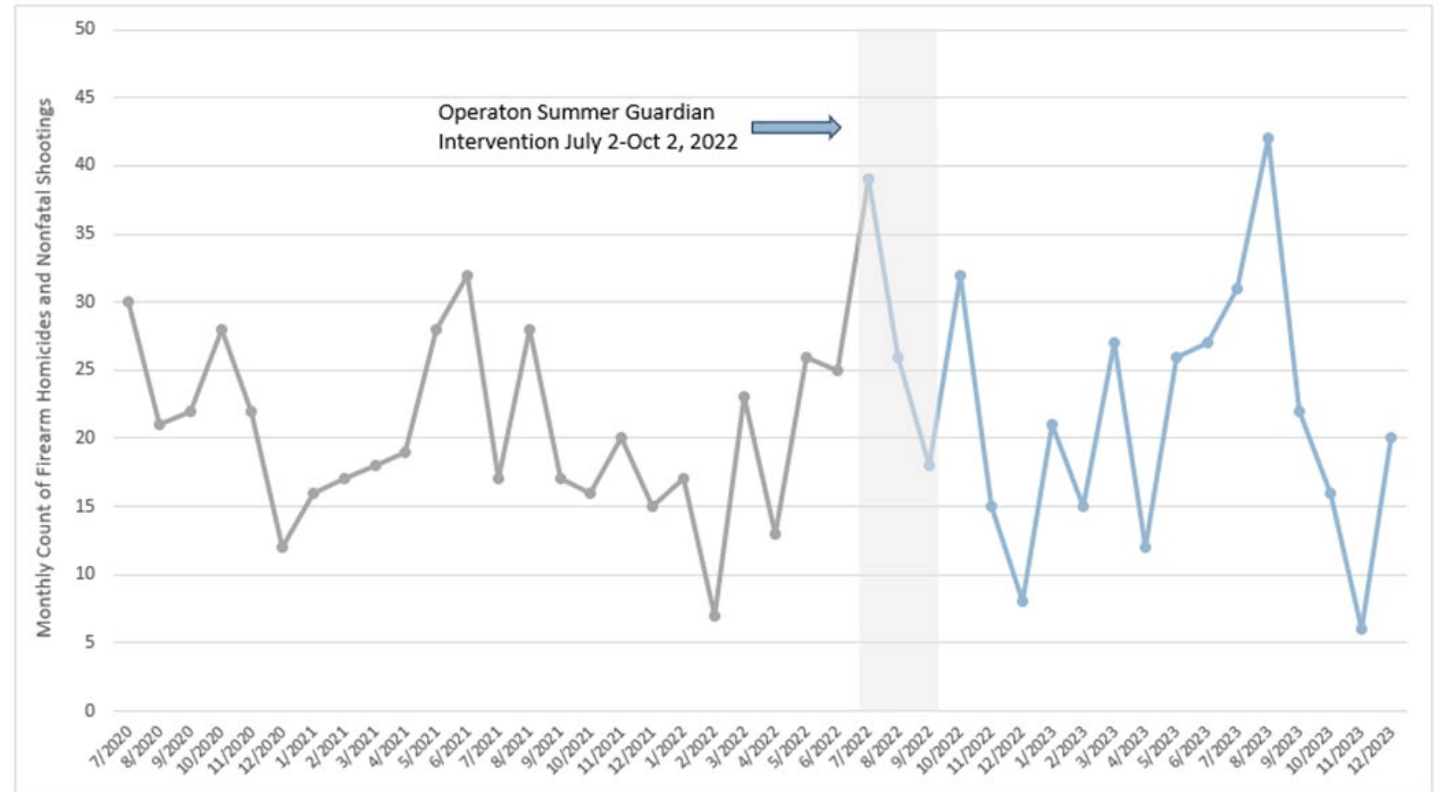
*Comparison of Operation Summer Guardian Area to Outside of the Area and Citywide for July – September During and Prior to 2022 Deployment*

- In terms of the individual zones during the 2022 OSG deployment, the volume of homicides and nonfatal shootings was relatively low with ~58% of the zones had between 0 and 3 homicides or nonfatal shooting incidents during the month that they were the focus of the deployment rotation. Approximately 50% had fewer homicide and nonfatal shooting incidents during the month of their deployment than their average number of incidents for the same time of year over the two previous years.

# Goal 4: To demonstrate a reduction in gun violence in the deployment areas

## Homicides and Nonfatal Shootings

- To better account for the trends in homicides and nonfatal shootings and to identify whether there was a significant effect from the intervention, an interrupted time series analysis was also conducted.
- The models did not identify a significant change in the trend in firearm homicides and nonfatal shootings in the OSG zones compared to prior to program implementation.



2022 Operation Summer Guardian Deployment Area Firearm Homicide and Nonfatal Shootings Victims by Month

# Recommendations

A series of recommendations were made for modifications to the implementation in summer 2023. The recommendations centered around:

- *Review the goals and structure of the implementation*
- *Consider adapting the approach to the deployment areas and size of the zones and day/time of deployments*
- *Review the assessment period utilized in zone selection*
- *More specifically identify and track activities during deployments*
- *Enhance community outreach and gather information from those involved in the initiative*
- *Share deployment plans and track how the zones overlap with other initiatives.*

Intent is to continue the evaluation process and enhance the information available for program follow-up

# Operation Summer Guardian 2023

*Objective: To effectively deploy uniformed personnel throughout identified geographical areas which are experiencing high volumes of shots fired (ShotSpotter) and violent crime.*

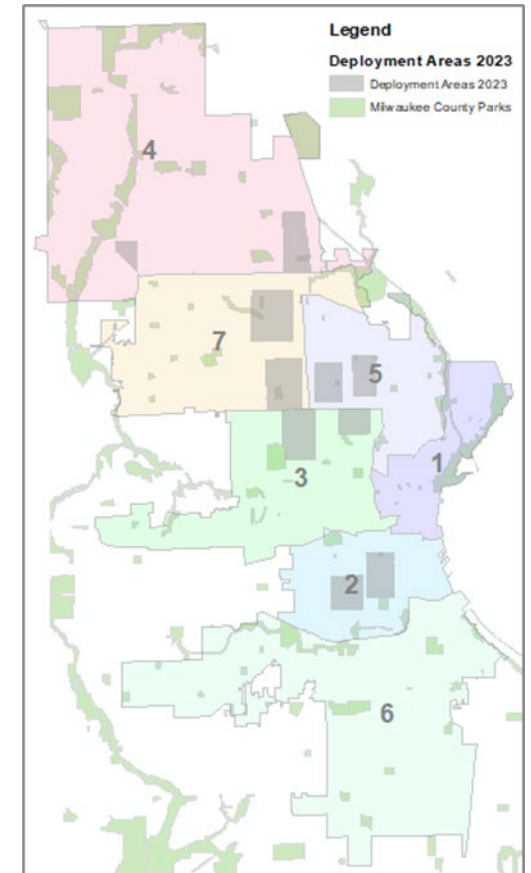


# Program Implementation

- Modifications in response to the 2022 deployment
- Still not intended to be a heavy enforcement focus
- Deployments occurred between July 6, 2023 to Sept 30, 2023
- Deployments were across police districts 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 (added district 4)

Zone	Primary Police District	# of Micro Hotspots
A	2	3
B	2	4
C	3	4
D	3	3
E	4	2
F	4	4
G	5	2
H	5	3
I	7	4
J	7	4

*Deployment Zones by Deployment Month  
Operation Summer Guardian 2023*



*Operation Summer Guardian 2023  
MPD Districts and General Deployment Areas*

# Program Implementation

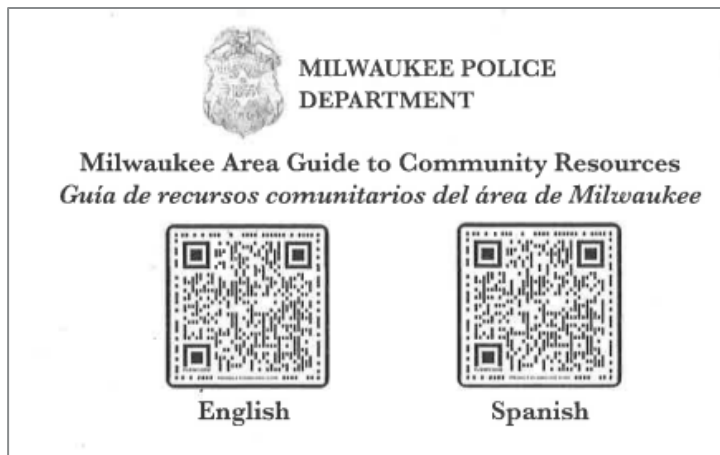
- Deployment structure – similar to 2022:
  - Marked specialty unit vehicle from the Tactical Enforcement Unit (TEU) with two uniformed officers
  - Marked patrol vehicle for each respective district, with two uniformed officers
  - SID also provided a supervisor to oversee the deployment, as well as both uniformed and undercover officers
- Deployments were Thursday through Sunday, for half shift (four hours); times varied but primarily between 0800 and 2400 hours
- Deployments were for shorter periods of time 15-20 minute intervals, with higher frequency
  - Key change over the previous year

# Program Implementation

- 2 specific zones per district with 2-4 smaller microhotspots in each zone
- Areas identified based on the density of Shotspotter activations and also including data on violent crimes such as firearm-related homicides and nonfatal shootings
- Zones were distinct and did not overlap
- Zones range from .23 to just over 1 square mile and hotspots were .02 to .12 square miles
- 51 total deployments total over the 3-month period
- Training and communication as part of implementation

# Community engagement

- Press conference held and press release issued
- Door hangers distributed
- Surveys administered
- More regular meetings



**During the 2023 OSG, officers completed 116 “Park, Walk and Talks” to engage with community members.**



Operation Summer Guardian 2023  
Community Message

# Community and Officer Survey

- Surveys were conducted to obtain feedback from community and officers related to OSG
- Number of responses was low, so should be viewed with caution, but give some initial indications of perceptions of the program
  - Officer N=8
  - Community N=17
- Important aspect of gathering feedback on the program and the implementation

## Community Survey

- 65% indicated they noticed at least somewhat of an increase in police presence
- 71% would like to see more police presence in their neighborhood
- 75% felt at least somewhat safer as a result of OSG (6% yes)
- 82% have at least some concerns about being out after a certain period of time
- 53% characterize the relationship between police and neighborhood as somewhat or very positive
- 88% would like OSG to be extended for a longer period of time

## Officer Survey

- 86% indicated that reducing violent crimes, shots fired, responding to Shotspotter, and community engagement were all the objectives of OSG
- 37.5% felt the deployment was effective, and specifically for reducing violent crime
- 67.5% did not see it as effective, citing no violent crime reduction or no change in perception of violent crime
- 43% felt there was an improvement in police/community relations
- Responses were split on whether the deployment should be repeated, but suggestions for change centered on time and focus of deployment

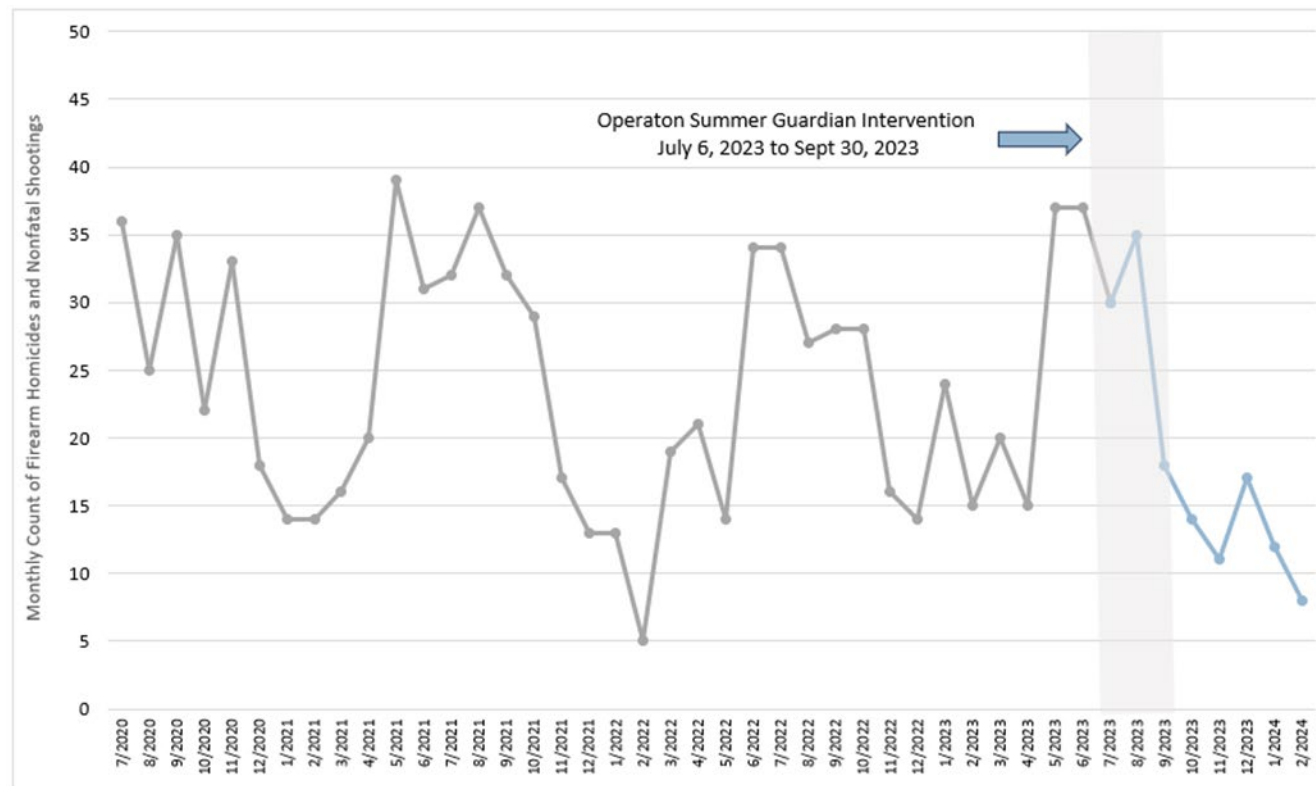
## Arrests and Firearm Recovery

- Arrests were again not a primary focus
- Emphasis on presence and community engagement
- A total of 45 arrests were made during the deployments
  - Examples
- Illegal firearms – 36 total recovered
  - 5 fully automatic
  - 6 were stolen firearms
- Recovery of drugs and stolen vehicles

# Gun Violence in Deployment Areas

## Homicides and Nonfatal Shootings

- To better account for the trends in homicides and nonfatal shootings and to identify whether there was a significant effect from the intervention an interrupted time series analysis was also conducted.
- The models did not identify a significant change in the trend in firearm homicides and nonfatal shootings in the OSG zones based on when the OSG program was implemented.



2023 Operation Summer Guardian Deployment Area Firearm Homicide and Nonfatal Shootings Victims by Month



# Gun Violence in Deployment Areas

## Homicides and Nonfatal Shootings

- During the intervention period of July 6, 2023 to September 30, 2023, the number of homicides and nonfatal shootings (by victim) in the zones was lower than the same time period in 2022 (down 6% combined), while the number in the area outside of the OSG zones increased (up 12% combined).

Time Period				In OSG Area			Outside of OSG Area			Citywide		
				Homicide	NFS	Total	Homicide	NFS	Total	Homicide	NFS	Total
July 6 - Sept 30	Intervention	07/06/23-9/30/23	Count	10	66	76	32	134	166	42	200	242
	Pre-Intervention	07/06/22-9/30/22	Count	12	69	81	28	120	148	40	189	229
			% Change	-17%	-4%	-6%	14%	12%	12%	5%	6%	6%
	Post-Intervention	07/06/24-9/30/24	Count	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
			% Change	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
July 6 - July 5	Intervention Year	07/06/23-07/05/24	Count	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Pre-Intervention	07/06/22-07/05/23	Count	41	253	294	75	436	511	116	689	805
			% Change	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
NA = Not available as of the time of this initial report. A follow-up analysis will be conducted once data are available through September 2024.												

*Comparison of Operation Summer Guardian Area to Outside of the Area and Citywide for 2023 Deployment for Homicides and Nonfatal Shooting Victims*

# Gun Violence in Deployment Areas

## Homicides and Nonfatal Shootings

- The OSG zones were lower during the implementation period in 2023 than the average of the prior three years (2020, 2021, 2022)

Area	Average 3 month periods July-Sept 2020-2022	Implementation July-Sept 2023	Absolute Change	% Change
OSG Area	95.3	83	-12.3	-13%
Outside OSG Area	169.7	181	11.3	7%
Citywide	265	264	-1	0%

*Comparison of Operation Summer Guardian Area to Outside of the Area and Citywide for July – September During and Prior to 2023 Deployment*

- Also examined the individual zones and hotspots which demonstrated variation

# Recommendations

A series of recommendations were made after the 2023 deployment. The recommendations centered around:

- *Additional and longer follow-up analysis*
- *More specifically identify and track activities during deployments*
- *Additional examples of positive interactions*
- *Zone boundaries*
- *Share deployment plans and track how the zones overlap with other initiatives*
- Intent is to continue the evaluation process and enhance the information available for program follow-up



# Questions and Comments