

# CASE STUDY

## TOLEDO, OHIO



*Driving violent crime down by strengthening partnerships, employing innovative technologies and policing strategies, and engaging community stakeholders*

In 2017, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) invited Toledo, Ohio, to participate in the National Public Safety Partnership (PSP). The PSP is a DOJ-wide program that helps participating cities address serious violent crime challenges through coordinated training and technical assistance over a three-year engagement. The PSP facilitates the development of data-driven, evidence-based strategies tailored to each city's unique local needs. Toledo participated in the PSP initiative through September 2020. Throughout its engagement, PSP Toledo worked to build capacity and reduce violent crime by:



- Utilizing the latest crime analysis techniques to identify violent habitual offenders and "hot spot" locations to enhance prosecution strategies
- Enhancing technology to maximize data sharing, mobile environments, and cameras to aid in the reduction of violent crime
- Building strategic collaborative efforts with local, state, and federal criminal justice and community partners to expand resources and enhance outreach efforts

## ABOUT TOLEDO

The City of Toledo, Ohio, is the county seat of Lucas County, Ohio. Toledo is a major Midwestern United States port city located in northwest Ohio, at the western end of Lake Erie, bordering Michigan. The city was founded in 1833 on the west bank of the Maumee River and was originally incorporated as part of Monroe County, Michigan Territory. It was re-founded in 1837, after conclusion of the "Toledo War", when it was incorporated in Ohio. It has become a city well known for its industry, particularly glass and auto assembly.

The population of Toledo as of the 2020 Census was 270,871, making it the 79th-largest city in the United States.<sup>1</sup> It is the fourth-most-populous city in the State of Ohio, after Columbus, Cleveland, and Cincinnati.

In 2020, the Toledo Police Department (TPD) budgeted for 633 sworn officers and 57 civilian support personnel. The Chief of Police's Office oversees three divisions: Support and Administrative Services, Operations, and Investigative Services. TPD's jurisdiction of 84 square miles is divided into eight patrol sectors; slight modifications to the borders of these sectors went into effect in October 2019. In 2020, TPD responded to 159,829 calls for service, with 200,125 incidents; 20 percent of these incidents were self-initiated.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). Retrieved from: [Census - Geography Profile](#)  
<sup>2</sup> 2020 TPD Annual Report. Retrieved from: [NIBRS \(toledopolice.com\)](#)

## PSP PARTICIPATION

Of the seven PSP core focus areas, Toledo chose four areas to expand capacity:

- Gun violence
- Increasing investigative capabilities
- Crime analysis
- Technology

The PSP helped Toledo establish the capabilities to excel in these focus areas, while also establishing effective partnerships to successfully reduce and respond to violent crime. Toward the end of its engagement, Toledo worked collaboratively with the PSP TTA team to develop a specific three-year strategic plan to continue efforts it initiated with PSP.

The following agencies were actively engaged in the Toledo PSP partnership and remain committed to reducing violent crime in Toledo:

- Toledo Police Department (TPD)
- Lucas County Prosecutor's Office (LCPO)
- Lucas County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)
- Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections Adult Parole Authority (APA)
- United States Attorney's Office (USAO-OHN) for the Northern District of Ohio
- United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)
- United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- United States Marshals Services (USMS)

## GUN VIOLENCE

Upon joining the PSP, Toledo's chief of police identified the need to focus on gun violence, as Toledo was experiencing an increase in gun activity. To do this, the Toledo PSP site analyzed current prevention and response practices; facilitated clearance of firearm backlogs through the ATF; and served as a mechanism to share strategies and technology to improve processes for prevention, investigation, and prosecution of gun crimes.

### Gun Crime Intelligence

During the 2017 PSP summit, the Toledo PSP site representatives discussed the benefits of moving the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) machine from the state crime laboratory in Bowling Green, Ohio, to TPD because the department was, by far, the largest consumer of NIBIN services. The transfer

## EXAMPLES OF TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO THE TOLEDO PSP SITE

Naval Postgraduate School's Annual Social Network Analysis Symposium (2018)

ATF Regional Crime Gun Intelligence Center's (CGIC) Multi-Site Training: Washington, D.C. (2018)

PSP Crime Analysis Community of Practice Meeting (2018-2019)

IACA Courses and Conferences (2018-2019)

IHIA Courses (2018-2020)

International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference (IACP): Police Foundation Track (2019)

Chicago Police Department Crime Fighters Conference (2019)

Gangs and Guns: Making Your Firearms Cases More Prosecutable (2019)

Peer to Peer Exchange with the Milwaukee Police Department: Crime Analysis and CGIC (2019)

FBI Cellular Analysis Survey Team (CAST) Basic Training (2019)

TPD's Investigations Bureau Case Management System Solution by NORIS (2019)

Peer to Peer Exchange with the Tampa Police Department: Violent Crimes Bureau/Chronic Offender Strategy (2020)

Advanced Course on Strangulation Prevention (2020)

CGIC Virtual Training (2020)

## PSP PARTNERS



was successful in early 2018 and through PSP, TPD set out to establish new processes and policies with the state crime laboratory to enhance gun violence investigations and analysis through the establishment of a Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC). The goal of the CGIC was to improve the time between collection of evidence to entry/submission into the NIBIN system. At program initiation, the estimated turnaround time for NIBIN entry was up to eight months. It was also important to have quick turnaround of NIBIN searches and leads. To achieve the desired improvements in processing time, TPD created positions solely responsible for analyzing, investigating, and prosecuting NIBIN leads.

## OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

Transfer of the NIBIN machine to TPD

Established CGIC capacity

Evaluated TPD's non-fatal shooting investigation policies and practices

TPD also realized the need to develop a Gun Crime Intelligence Task Force (GCITF), the purpose of which was to organize and lead sustainable efforts into investigating gun crime in Toledo. The GCITF became operational in November 2019 and is staffed by a sergeant supervisor and four TPD detectives. Additionally, ATF assigned an agent part-time to the GCITF and an FBI agent participates in weekly case status meetings. In FY2020, TPD applied for and was awarded the Law Enforcement Crime Gun Intelligence Center grant.<sup>3</sup> Through this grant, TPD aimed to hire a full-time analyst and NIBIN technician. The technician position would be a civilian who would take over work that another analyst was currently doing. In the first six months of the GCITF operations, TPD's Crime Lab accomplished significant milestones. Specifically, over the nine-month period from July 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020, (as compared to the same period the previous year—July 1, 2018, to March 31, 2019) TPD experienced the following changes:

- **66 percent increase** in crime gun test-fired casings being entered into NIBIN
- **57 percent increase** in triaged recovered casings being entered into NIBIN
- **228 percent increase** in unconfirmed leads (hits or correlations) from NIBIN entries
- **325 percent increase** in confirmed (firearms examiner positive) leads from NIBIN entries

Additionally, during the five-month period from November 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020, the GCITF opened/updated **90 percent more** investigations compared with the same timeframe during the previous year.

### Violent Crime Reduction/Prevention Pilot Project in the Junction Neighborhood

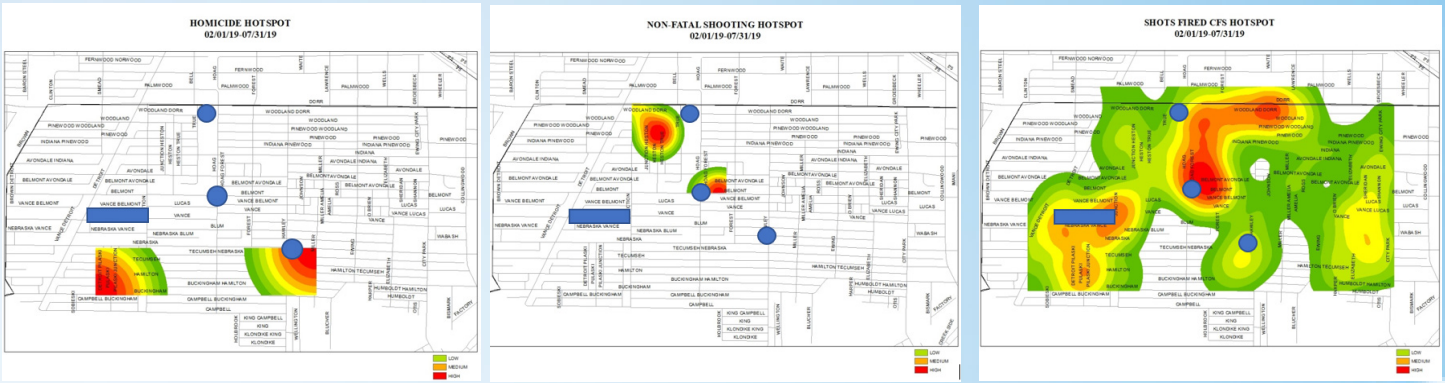
During the PSP engagement, PSP assisted Toledo in understanding and identifying crime issues and crime patterns. As a result, TPD selected a geographical area—Junction Neighborhood—to focus efforts and conduct a pilot project. The pilot involved all PSP partners, including federal law enforcement agencies and the state parole authority, using a multifaceted approach to address violent crime. The Junction Neighborhood covers approximately two percent of the City of Toledo's land mass and includes approximately three percent of the City of Toledo's population, yet, prior to the pilot project, it accounted for:

- 7.1 percent of the city's homicides (a rate 2.5 times higher than the rest of the city)
- 14.1 percent of the city's nonfatal shooting incidents (a rate of 5.4 times higher than the rest of the city)
- 9.7 percent of the city's "shots fired" calls for service (a rate of 3.5 times higher than the rest of the city)

Using various data sources, including TPD's computer-aided dispatch (CAD) and record management system (RMS) data, TPD analysts, with the assistance of PSP, conducted spatial analysis to identify four violent crime hotspots (see graphics below) within the neighborhood. The pilot project included an increased visible presence and an increase in TPD's community engagement activities. In addition, partners looked for vacant houses, junk automobiles, and additional nuisances to resolve or refer to other city departments.

3 Bureau of Justice Assistance Crime Gun Intelligence Center Expansion. Retrieved from: [Crime Gun Intelligence Center Expansion | Bureau of Justice Assistance \(ojp.gov\)](#)





Comparing violent crime rates during the year of the pilot project versus the prior year, homicides were down by 25 percent and shots fired calls for service were down by 15 percent (see adjacent table). When comparing the outcomes to the prior three-year average, nonfatal shootings were down by 25 percent and shots fired calls for service were down by 20 percent. It is important to note that nonfatal shootings were up by 38 percent in the one-year comparison and homicides were up by 13 percent in the three-year comparison. Digesting these results showed that Toledo's pilot project is promising and could be replicated to further analyze the outcomes. Following its PSP tenure, TPD planned to extend this approach to other areas of the city.

## INVESTIGATIONS

Upon joining the PSP, Toledo's chief of police identified the need to focus on improving investigative capabilities and enhancing processes of TPD's Investigations Unit. It was important that TPD evaluate its current investigative practices to understand areas for improvement related to major crime and violent crime investigations.

During a review of its major crimes investigations, TPD recognized a need to send an Investigations supervisor to the scene of any nonfatal shooting. TPD initiated a change and updated its policy to reflect this essential practice. TPD also discovered the need to hold monthly meetings to review cases with the Investigations Unit and the prosecutor's office. By conducting these review meetings, TPD's detectives were able to give advice and ask questions throughout the process.

Through the review of TPD's violent crimes investigations, TPD addressed the need for a review of weapons under disability arrest cases. TPD instituted an evaluation by ATF task force officers and the Lucas County Prosecutor's Office. These arrests are also evaluated by the USAO-Toledo Branch through the Prosecutor-to-Prosecutor Program (P3) to determine which court would be the best for prosecution.<sup>4</sup> TPD also wanted to focus its community outreach and strategic patrol strategies within reporting beats with the most frequent shooting incidents. To assist with this, TPD initiated the gunshot detection technology pilot program. With grant strategy assistance provided by PSP, TPD applied for and received a Technology Innovation for Public Safety (TIPS) grant in September 2018, which it used to acquire a gunshot detection system to help identify locations of shootings and recover more casings for NIBIN.

4 See the Federal Partnership section for more information about the P3 Program in Toledo.

### ONE-YEAR PILOT PROJECT OUTCOMES VS. PRIOR YEAR TIME PERIOD

Homicides	Down 1	-25%
Non-Fatal Shootings	Up 3	38%
Shots Fired Calls for Service	Down 33	-15%

### ONE-YEAR PILOT PROJECT OUTCOMES VS. PRIOR THREE YEARS AVERAGE

Homicides	Up 0.33	13%
Non-Fatal Shootings	Down 3.67	-25%
Shots Fired Calls for Service	Down 47.67	-20%

## OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

Established monthly meetings to review all cases and provide presentations to the unit or the prosecutor's office

Updated policy to ensure an Investigations supervisor responds to all non-fatal shooting scenes where a person is shot

Developed an evaluation process through the Prosecutor-to-Prosecutor Program (P3) to determine which court (state or federal) is best for prosecution

Implemented a gunshot detection technology pilot program

Toledo began using the gunshot detection system on June 25, 2019, in a targeted area of North Toledo. During the first week of use, officers responded to 14 shooting incidents, of which 11 would have gone undetected if not for the new system. Using data from the system, the department created heat maps for gunshot detection alerts and presented these to command staff at monthly CrimeStat meetings. In the first six months of the pilot program, the department confiscated 36 guns and made more than 50 arrests.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, using analysis of data gathered by the gunshot detection system, Toledo was able to identify several aspects of a Scott High School senior's fatal shooting on July 14, 2020. Specifically, TPD was able to identify when the shots were fired, how quickly the shots occurred, that the shooter was likely moving west to east in a vehicle, and that there was very likely only one shooter.<sup>6</sup> After 10 months of use, TPD had responded to about 750 incidents featuring more than 3,000 gunshots. In total, TPD arrested nearly 70 people and confiscated more than 50 guns. In May 2020, the Toledo City Council approved a second year of funding for Toledo's gunshot detection system.<sup>7</sup>

Overall, TPD made great strides in its investigations by continually working to learn and grow in this area.

## CRIME ANALYSIS AND TECHNOLOGY

During the PSP engagement, Toledo identified crime analysis and technology as areas to enhance capacity.

### Building Crime Analysis Capabilities

During the second year of the PSP engagement, Toledo sought to obtain a baseline understanding of the site's current capacity, practices, and areas for improvement related to crime analysis. Through PSP subject matter expert (SME) support, TPD recognized various areas to evolve its crime analysis unit. TPD was able to develop analyst-ready tables directly from its RMS that increased the unit's efficiency and modified its analyst's daily workflow. This process increased analyst efficiency through automation and included additional geographic fields and analyst-specific fields.

In September 2018, the National Guard counter-drug force provided TPD's Vice Unit with two analysts to support drug crime prevention. The University of Toledo also provided an intern to create a database examining charges and analyzing data to help prosecute firearm felonies. Additionally, TPD wanted its analysts to develop advanced analytical and mapping skill sets. PSP supported training through the International Association for Crime Analysts (IACA), Fundamentals in Intelligence Analysis Training (FIAT), and social network analysis training from the Naval Postgraduate School. These trainings provided TPD's analysts the opportunity to build advanced analytical techniques throughout the engagement. The department also wanted to implement the use of a reporting software to automate routine reports. TPD began utilizing reporting software that allowed the Criminal Intelligence Section (CIS) to create and maintain a repository of reports and an automation method to deliver the reports throughout the department.

Lastly, TPD created a data warehouse for the production of regularly scheduled reports that benefit the department in many ways, such as supporting patrol, investigations, and proactive policing strategies.

### Increasing Technological Capabilities

Throughout the PSP engagement, TPD was committed to increasing its technological capabilities. The department did not have an internal IT unit, which often hindered its capacity to accomplish many tasks in house. In 2018, TPD began reviewing its current IT technology, equipment, and related resources to identify potential gaps. In early 2019, the City of Toledo hired an

### OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

Attainment of core competencies (discipline-specific) in place-based, offender-based, and real-time analytics that drive the crime-fighting mission.

Convened a working group to guide IT decision-making for each division

Purchased additional data storage

5 See <https://www.wtol.com/article/news/crime/shotspotter-program-taking-guns-off-streets/512-1e7753ba-715e-43a6-805d-07933c4462d6> for additional information

6 See <https://www.toledoblade.com/local/courts/2020/05/27/prosecutors-use-shotspotter-evidence-in-homicide-case-toledo/stories/20200527126> for local news coverage of the case and gunshot detection analysis.

7 See <https://nbc24.com/news/local/council-approves-second-year-of-shotspotter-for-tpd> for additional information.

information, communication, and technology director. An IT governance structure was implemented in which TPD participates. The governance structure allows TPD to set priorities based on operational goals and objectives. In addition, TPD convened a working group to guide IT decision-making for each division. This working group reviewed the existing IT request list to remove outdated requirements, identified priorities for major IT requests, and determined the status of request implementation. TPD received approval from the City of Toledo to hire a police department civilian technologist to help fill gaps identified during the review of its technology practices.

Developing an IT modernization strategy helped the department create a roadmap for its priorities. The City of Toledo's Information, Community, and Technology (ICT) Governing Board worked on a 5-year IT strategy to meet the needs of all city services. Internally, TPD is working toward a 10-year IT strategy to meet anticipated needs. TPD added a communications and technology director to lead the board, which is made up of representatives from TPD leadership and end-users from all areas of the department. TPD also purchased additional data storage to help over the next five years.

## FEDERAL PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration with local and federal partnerships, as well as other members of the criminal justice system, is a core focus of PSP.

The USAO-Toledo Branch adopted the DOJ initiative known as the Prosecutor-to-Prosecutor Program, also known as the P3 Program. Toledo's version of the P3 Program was created by the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio. Through this program the

USAO screens cases and shares information with the District Attorney and TPD to determine which prosecution venue (state or federal) would be better suited for each case. To help with this, the site created case adoption cards that identify the cases that meet the guidelines for federal prosecution and a point of contact for questions.

To increase collaboration, the Toledo PSP partners instituted regular meetings that incorporated TPD's CrimeStat meeting and the USAO's Violent Crime Gun Case Review process. These meetings ensured partners were sharing the most recent violent crime data. The TPD ATF task force officer and agents from the ATF office in Toledo review all TPD firearm-related arrests during these meetings to determine whether the cases meet the elements for successful prosecution in federal court. These meetings provide a better understanding of the cases involved and has been an integral part of the PSP engagement that will continue in the future.

Comparing the two-year pre-PSP engagement (2016–2017) average with the PSP engagement average for 2018 and 2019 reveals the office adopted more cases than previous years and made great strides, especially pertaining to 18 U.S.C. § 922 and 924 firearms cases. Specifically, these included the USAO-Toledo Branch's indictments for the following:

- Federal illegal firearms (sale of, possession, straw purchases, etc.) (18 U.S.C. § 922) cases **increased 212 percent**.
- Federal possessing, using or carrying a firearm during any crime of violence or drug trafficking cases (18 U.S.C. § 924) **increased 233 percent**.
- Federal drug trafficking cases (21 U.S.C. § 841) **increased 126 percent**.

## ENGAGING COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

During the initial PSP site visit, TPD noted a poor relationship with the community, due in large part to problems with race relations. The department's mission statement expresses the desire to build community engagement: "The mission of the Toledo Police Department is to enhance the quality of life in the city of Toledo by working in partnerships with the community to preserve life, enforce the law, provide quality services, reduce the fear of crime, and promote joint problem-solving for safe, secure neighborhoods." As such, TPD's community engagement strategies and collaboration with stakeholders was an ongoing effort.

### OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

Development of a state/federal case review process.

Developed a regular PSP Stat Meeting



A strength of TPD is its ability to work with various community stakeholders. The Toledo Code Enforcement Response Team (CERT)<sup>8</sup> is an example of collaborative partnerships that improved community engagement. CERT is a collaborative task force of city departments that work together on many initiatives. For example, from the beginning of the PSP engagement, there were conversations about violent crime associated with after-hour clubs. Through the three-year PSP engagement, the CERT team-initiated contact with these businesses and shut them down. A number of these businesses were located in the Junction Neighborhood pilot program area.

## OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

Developed and implemented a strategy that brings together diverse partners including law enforcement, researchers, business leaders, and residents to analyze crime drivers and pursue strategies that reduce crime, spur revitalization, and build community-police collaboration.

Additionally, through the PSP, TPD's community service officers received problem-oriented policing (POP) training, including attendance at the POP conference, which helped them develop the Junction Neighborhood pilot project. Lastly, TPD created profiles on its website for each sector's community service officer. Each officer's sector page is different and includes information about the officer, activities that are occurring in the area, and scam alerts.

## KEY LESSONS FOR SUCCESS

**Creating a Collaborative Working Environment:** Toledo criminal justice agencies identified the need to function as a coordinated system to address violent crime. To sustain this effort, Toledo's criminal justice agencies will continue to work together in efforts to increase case clearances and monitor violent crime offenders returning to the community.

**Developing and Implementing Data-Driven Policing Strategies:** TPD identified the need for technology, crime analysis, and the GCITF to drive decisions about the allocation of tactics, resources, and investigations with the purpose of reducing gun violence. The foundation for driving toward the strategic outcome is effective technology, sound analytics, and intelligence-led decision-making on effective and efficient policing strategies.

**Community Stakeholders are Key:** Throughout the engagement, TPD determined that violence is more than just a policing issue. The solutions to violence will come not only from law enforcement, but also from city and state agencies, nonprofits, businesses, and the community. It is critical that informed community stakeholders continue their work with TPD to reduce violent crime. Disrupt the Cycle: Preventing crime and intervening in the cycle of violence before lives are shattered is an integral component of TPD's strategic plan. Disrupting the cycle of violence is key, as Toledo and its stakeholders work together to prevent violence and maintain the reductions in violence that they have already achieved.

## CONCLUSION

The Toledo PSP site made significant progress in enhancing its collaboration, knowledge, and practices to aid in the reduction of violent crime in the city. The PSP helped Toledo gain understanding, awareness, and processes to enhance its systems for confronting violent crime. Throughout the engagement, TPD participated in various courses, trainings, and peer learning opportunities. They found the knowledgeable subject matter experts, peer visits, and collaboration with local and federal partners invaluable for sharing ideas and learning best practices. Toledo's innovative pilot project in the Junction Neighborhood increased community buy-in, and the city will be able to apply this strategy to other areas in the city. Although challenges still exist, the foundation that PSP brought to Toledo helped it become more efficient in crime analysis, investigations of gun crimes, and working with its federal partners and community stakeholders. TPD and its partners have put forth an ambitious three-year plan to continue the work to reduce violence in the community.



8 The City's Code Enforcement Response Team (CERT) is a collaboration between city, county, and state departments to address nuisance properties in the City of Toledo. Members include TPD, City of Toledo Department of Neighborhoods, City of Toledo Law Department, Ohio Investigative Unit, Lucas County Land Bank, Toledo Fire Rescue Department, Lucas County Health Department, Lucas County Prosecutor's Office, and the City of Toledo Division of Building Inspection.