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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Contact: Linda Russell

901.385.4230

lrussell@memphiscrime.org

## **REPORTED GUN CRIMES CONTINUE TO DECLINE**

Reported gun crimes were down 17.3 percent during the first three quarters of 2018 (January – September) compared to the same time period last year in the city of Memphis and unincorporated parts of Shelby County, according to figures from the Project Safe Neighborhoods G.U.N. (Government United for Non-Violence) Unit. The latest figures build on a 15.3 percent decline during the first half of the year (January – June).

From January through September of this year, there were 3,659 reported crimes with guns compared to 4,422 during the same period in 2017.

The latest gun crime figures are consistent with preliminary violent crime figures from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for the first three quarters of 2018 released by the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission and the University of Memphis Public Safety Institute last week. Those figures showed murders in Memphis down 17.6 percent compared to last year (down 14.5 percent countywide) and reported robberies in Memphis down 12.4 percent (down 11.3 percent countywide).

Reducing gun crime is a major focus of the local Operation: Safe Community plan, the development of which was spearheaded by the Crime Commission.

Bill Gibbons, president of the Crime Commission, noted that a number of objectives under the plan currently being implemented could be getting the word out to the street level about the consequences of engaging in gun crime and deterring acts of violence with guns. Specifically, he noted vigorous enforcement of tough federal gun laws, enactment of stiffer state sentences to curb illegal possession of firearms, ramped up data-driven deployment of law enforcement resources, and the FED UP. Gun Crime. Max Time media campaign, which has the goal of changing behavior.

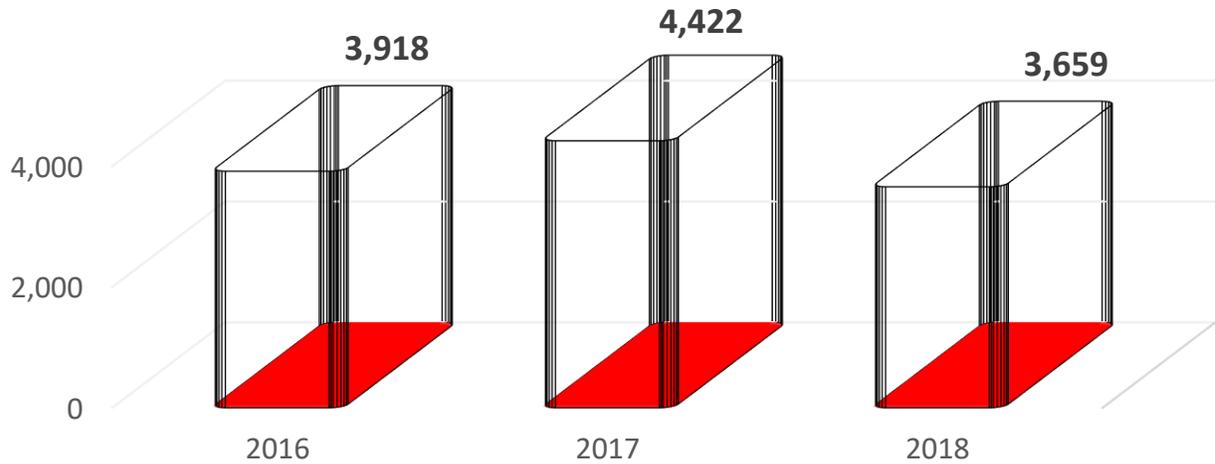
"Word may very well be getting out that engaging in gun violence is just not worth the price. We may be changing the behavior of some," said Gibbons.

U.S Attorney Mike Dunavant stated, "Last year, the U.S. Attorney's Office announced the expansion and reinvigoration of the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) initiative, which is a highly successful and proven violent crime reduction strategy. Through our partnerships with federal and local law enforcement and the Shelby County DA's Office to target firearms offenses and prevent additional crimes by public awareness of real consequences, we have seen a steady reduction in the number of reported gun crimes."

"These sustained decreases in reported gun crimes and major violent crime categories are encouraging, and shows that our return to proven enforcement policies under PSN is working. We have dramatically increased the number of firearms prosecutions over the last year, and the welcome outcome has been improved public safety. Putting the right people in prison incapacitates the most violent offenders, upholds the rule of law, deters criminal conduct with a strong message of significant consequences, and makes us all safe," said Dunavant.

The chart below reflects reported gun crimes for the first three quarters of 2016, 2017, and 2018.

## NUMBER OF REPORTED GUN CRIMES IN MEMPHIS AND UNINCORPORATED SHELBY COUNTY<sup>1</sup> - JANUARY - SEPTEMBER



<sup>1</sup> Reported gun crime incidents in city of Memphis and unincorporated parts of Shelby County.  
Source: Project Safe Neighborhoods G.U.N. Unit

<sup>2</sup> A 17.3 percent decrease compared to 2017 and a 6.6 percent decrease compared to 2016.

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**About the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission ([www.memphiscrime.org](http://www.memphiscrime.org)):** The Memphis Shelby Crime Commission is an independent, non-profit 501(c) (3) organization that “quarterbacks” the work of the Operation: Safe Community (OSC) plan and its partners. It is funded through the generous contributions of many private sector donors. Ben Adams, CEO of Baker Donelson law firm, serves as chair of the board, and Bill Gibbons serves as president of the Commission.

**About Operation: Safe Community ([www.operationsafecommunity.org](http://www.operationsafecommunity.org)):** Launched in 2007, Operation: Safe Community (OSC), spearheaded by the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission, is a community-based crime reduction initiative. Operation: Safe Community is chaired by Shelby County District Attorney General Amy Weirich.