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ENQUIRER IN-DEPTH

Black-on-black crime is not a new problem, but it's getting a new focus from city leaders who say

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

"We're all in this together. Even if you live in West Chester or Sharonville, Cincinnati is the economic center, and it must be viewed as a safe, clean place to live and do business." **JAMES CRAIG** CINCINNATI POLICE CHIEF



Aiesha Landrum, of Avondale, carries her son Khyren, 4, and his walker as they leave her apartment for Khyren's physical therapy appointment at Children's Hospital. The boy was shot when he was caught in crossfire March 20. THE ENQUIRER/JOSEPH FUQUA II

By Mark Curnutte
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A CALL TO ACTION: MAJOR PLAYERS

Khyren Landrum is learning how to walk and climb steps again in physical therapy. He clings to the handles of his walker or railings, wincing when he puts any weight on his left foot.

The 4-year-old Avondale boy - caught in suspected gang crossfire and shot March 20 while walking home with his mother from a park - sustained a bone fracture and nerve damage when a bullet blasted through his left hip and out his buttocks.

"He doesn't want to go outside. He doesn't want to be away from me," is how Aiesha Landrum, 30, describes her son since the shooting. "He never said much before. Now he doesn't say anything."

Khyren, for his part, says of the day near the park, "I got shot."

There have been three more homicides since Khyren was shot March 20, bringing the city's total to 12 for the year. Five African-Americans, ages 17 to 21, were shot April 1 on Rockdale Avenue in Avondale, just blocks from where Khyren was hit.

As the little boy works to recover, his shooting is the catalyst for unprecedented public attention being paid in Cincinnati to the decades-old problem of black-on-black crime. A special session of City Council will be held 6 p.m. Monday to discuss a topic previously discussed as only a tangent to economic development or Downtown safety.

The meeting comes at a time when homicides in Cincinnati increasingly involve a black victim and black assailant. An Enquirer analysis of city crime data shows that since the start of 2005, 86.1 percent of homicides in which an arrest was made are cases of black-on-black violence, up from 75.1 percent from 2000 through 2004.

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Council member Christopher Smitherman wants the city to devise a comprehensive plan to address black-on-black violence. He and fellow council member Charles Winburn introduced a motion to add \$300,000 of city money to the reward pool for Crime Stoppers leads.



Council member Cecil Thomas, a 27-year Cincinnati Police officer, is chairman of the Public Safety Committee. He wants full funding restored to Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence and, in an email to Smitherman, called it the comprehensive anti-violence program Smitherman seeks.



Cincinnati Police Chief James Craig, the first outsider and African-American to lead the department, has called for more citizen cooperation with police and wants more production from the CIRV street outreach workers.

Report: Crime lab is outdated

Design firm says fix will cost at least \$16.5 million

By Sharon Coolidge
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If Hamilton County taxpayers want to be sure criminals go to jail, they'll need to pay at least \$16.5 million to renovate the cramped crime lab in Corryville - and that's the cheapest alternative, experts have told the county.

The better solution would be a new \$35 million addition. The best option? A new \$56 million crime lab more than double the size of the current Corryville facility.

Oh - and they'll need to hire at least 13 new lab workers and investigators immediately.

Those are the recommendations by Detroit-based Crime Lab Design, a consulting firm brought in by the county. Their \$95,000 report was obtained by The Enquirer under a public records request. The company specializes in designing crime labs.

The Enquirer last year revealed that the county's crime lab was cramped and understaffed, putting criminal convictions at risk.

The report confirmed The Enquirer's findings, warning overcrowding was "jeopardizing the integrity" of evidence. Evidence that could be used in trials is stored in open corridors, leaving it vulnerable to contamination. The lab could even lose its accreditation, which could make prosecuting cases more difficult, the report said.

The lab is so understaffed that some cases are never investigated. The report did not elaborate; the authors did not return calls. Top law enforcement officials say no cases have been compromised that they know of.

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EPA fighting legacy of its own success

Political environment less friendly than 40 years ago

By Dina Cappiello
Associated Press

WASHINGTON - A polluted drainage ditch that once flowed with industrial waste from Lake Charles, La., petrochemical plants teems with overgrown, wild plants today.

A light-rail line zips past the spot where a now-defunct Portland, Ore., gasoline station advertised in 1972 that it had run out of gas.

A smoking Jersey City, N.J., dump piled with twisted, rusty metal has disappeared, along with the twin towers of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan that were its backdrop.

Forty years after the Environmental Protection Agency sent an army of nearly 100 photographers across the country

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