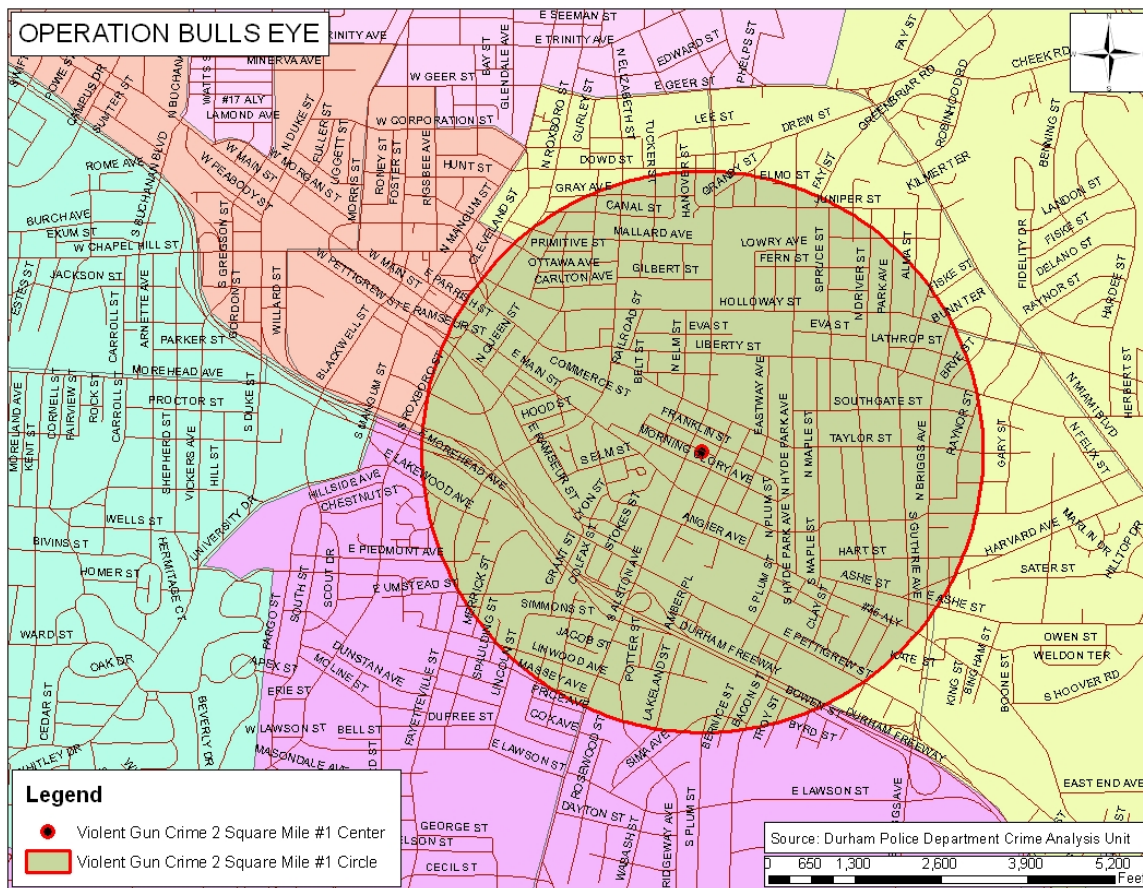


Message to the community from Durham Police Chief Steven W. Chalmers

Operation Bull's Eye

The Durham Police Department is in the process of launching a new initiative called "Operation Bull's Eye," which will focus resources on a two-square mile area for the next year. This is the first time we have done such an intensive project bringing together resources from throughout the community to address crime and social issues in one specific area of the city.

We chose the "Operation Bull's Eye" target area by analyzing "shots fired" calls and violent gun crime in Durham from May 1, 2006 to April 30, 2007. We also checked the addresses of validated gang members throughout the City. We discovered that while this area makes up two percent of the City's area, it accounts for almost 20 percent of the violent gun crime, "shots fired" calls and gang members in the City of Durham. More than 20 percent of arrests for such crimes as prostitution, possession of stolen goods and drugs also take place in this particular area. We believe this is an area where an intensive, concentrated effort can make a significant difference in the lives of residents. I believe that reducing crime in this area will reduce overall crime in Durham and make our city safer for all residents.



In recent weeks, members of the Police Department have discussed this initiative in great detail with City department heads, leaders of the Partners Against Crime and North-East Central Durham groups, members of our Latino outreach initiative, the faith community, the Durham Crime Cabinet, the RBA (Results Based Accountability) Initiative and other organizations. We have gotten positive responses and commitments to partner with us in this initiative. Community involvement will be crucial in order for “Operation Bull’s Eye” to be successful.

Our primary goal is to improve the perception of safety in the target area while reducing violent, property and juvenile crimes. We will also be employing prevention and intervention strategies to target the social issues such as poverty, unemployment and underemployment, substandard housing and lack of education. The Police Department is committed to using aggressive enforcement, community outreach and education in this area.

We anticipate that it will cost approximately \$225,000 to maintain a visible police presence in this area for the next year. We will use overtime funds as well as part of a federal grant to pay for supplemental officers. These officers will work varying schedules, which will be periodically adjusted to meet the needs of the community.

Officers have already started going door-to-door to the more than 3,400 addresses in the target area to provide residents with bilingual information about “Operation Bull’s Eye.” We are also providing residents with a list of telephone numbers for the Durham Police Department and other agencies that deal with quality of life issues, crime prevention information and brochures about some of our programs. The officers are talking to residents to find out about their concerns and to urge them to become actively involved in this initiative.

Starting next week, officers from several police divisions will be conducting covert and overt operations in the target area to reduce crime. Officers will also be highly visible while doing license checkpoints, serving warrants and responding to calls.

During the upcoming year we will be working with the Salvation Army and John Avery Boys and Girls Clubs to provide more programs for youths. Officers will be doing streetlight assessments to improve lighting in the area and they will start Park Watch and Neighborhood Watch programs throughout this area. We will be working closely with members of our Latino outreach initiative to address the issues of this area’s Latino residents. We will also partner with the N.C. Division of Community Corrections to monitor juvenile and adult probationers in this area. These are just a few of the programs and partnerships that will be a part of “Operation Bull’s Eye.”

I want to assure the community that the focus on this initiative will not take away from crime-fighting efforts in other parts of the city. Patrol officers will still be available to answer 911 calls and we will continue to serve all residents of Durham with pride and professionalism.

I am soon retiring as Durham's chief of police and I am pleased and proud that "Operation Bull's Eye" was started under my command. I intend to remain actively involved with youth and mentoring programs in the "Operation Bull's Eye" target area after I retire. I would urge anyone who wants to be part of this program to call the Police Department's Community Services Bureau at 560-4438 for more information.