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I'm with Troy Nash.

Let's not bother with this new murder task force if all we get are explanations for why homicides are way up in Kansas City over last year.

It's got to offer solutions, too, Nash told fellow Kansas City Council members last week as they established a 29-member Commission on Violent Crime.

Yes, Nash is right. Only I'd go him one better.

The commission will have been a failure if its report fails to suggest ways to get guns out of the hands of the thugs responsible for most of the killings.

Look, we already know that poverty and lack of opportunity are the root cause of most violent crime. Study after study has shown this, and whatever the commission suggests to provide hope would be more than welcome.

But we're closing in on 100 murders in Kansas City this year, already surpassing 2004's total of 91.

We shouldn't overlook the obvious. In nearly every case, the victim died of bullet wounds.

Now, before the gun lobby gets overly exercised because I have the bad manners to point this out, let me agree with them on one thing.

Guns don't kill people. People kill people.

People with guns, all too often.

And if somehow we could reduce the number of guns in the poor neighborhoods where the most killings have occurred, then wouldn't it follow that the murder rate would go down?

As a matter of fact, there was a groundbreaking study a dozen years ago that proved that very point.

In the midst of a killing spree much like our current one, a big-city police department set out to see whether gun crime would decline if police made a concerted effort to confiscate illegal guns in a crime-ridden hot spot.

So for 29 weeks, four officers worked six hours of overtime each night focusing entirely on gun seizures in an area where the murder rate was 20 times the national average.

The result: a 65 percent increase in gun seizures and a 49 percent decrease in gun crimes in that 80-by-10 block area.

The murder rate plummeted and drive-by shootings were virtually eliminated.

Likewise, researchers from the University of Maryland found there was no spillover from the area where the study was conducted.

In other words, the crackdown didn't move the killing elsewhere. It cut the actual number of murders.

Surveys showed that area residents felt safer and more positive about their neighborhood.

The experiment was a huge success and is still cited by criminologists as a model for fighting gun crime.

And where did this groundbreaking study take place, if you didn't suspect it already?

That's right. Right here in KC.

The Kansas City Gun Experiment, as it is known, became the basis for successful crime-fighting programs in other cities.

However, when the federal funding that underwrote the effort ended, so did the saturation program.

Luckily it was also about that time that the murder rate was in decline nationally owing to a good economy.

Now we have another spike in Kansas City homicides.

The new commission must find answers to many questions.

First on the list ought to be "what about the guns?"

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