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New York City: Shootings Reach Historic Low Amid Data-Led Policing

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Shootings across New York City have dropped to their lowest level in decades, as local authorities credit a focused, data-driven approach that targets illegal firearms and violent gang networks.

In the first half of 2025, New York City recorded just 449 shooting incidents, a 26% decrease compared to the same period in 2024. This marks the lowest mid-year tally since

the NYPD began tracking such data in the early 1990s.

Mayor Eric Adams and NYPD officials attribute the decline to aggressive gun recovery efforts and targeted interventions based on crime analytics. “We are not waiting for a shooting to happen,” Adams stated. “We’re using data and intelligence to prevent it.”

At the heart of the strategy is the Gun Violence Suppression Division, launched in 2016. The unit uses digital tools and social media analysis to trace illegal firearm transactions and connect criminal activity to gang affiliations. This proactive strategy, police say, has disrupted dozens of potential retaliatory attacks in recent months.

Detective Mike Alcazar, a former NYPD gang officer, explained the shift: “Instead of waiting until after a shooting, the department is building long-term cases on known offenders and pulling them off the streets before they act.”

Over 4,000 firearms have been seized in the past year, and key figures in several gang networks have been indicted through investigations led by the suppression unit.

Another key factor behind the falling numbers is the partnership between local precincts and community-based violence interrupters. Groups such as Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence (BRAG) have worked alongside law enforcement, mediating disputes and discouraging retaliation within neighborhoods hit hardest by gun crime.

While some critics warn of potential over-policing in minority neighborhoods, city leaders argue that the results speak for themselves. “We’re saving lives,” said NYPD Commissioner Edward Caban. “Each shooting prevented is a tragedy avoided.”

The city’s approach follows a broader national trend. Several major U.S. cities, including Chicago and Los Angeles, have seen declines in gun violence in 2025, although not all have implemented strategies as focused as New York’s.

Experts caution that sustaining these gains will require continued investment in both enforcement and community engagement. “You can’t arrest your way out of the problem,” said Professor David Kennedy, a criminologist at John Jay College. “But smart enforcement combined with community trust can lead to real change.”

New York City’s strategy is now being looked at by other municipalities hoping to replicate the model. As the city heads into the second half of the year, both officials and residents

remain cautiously optimistic that the downward trend will continue.