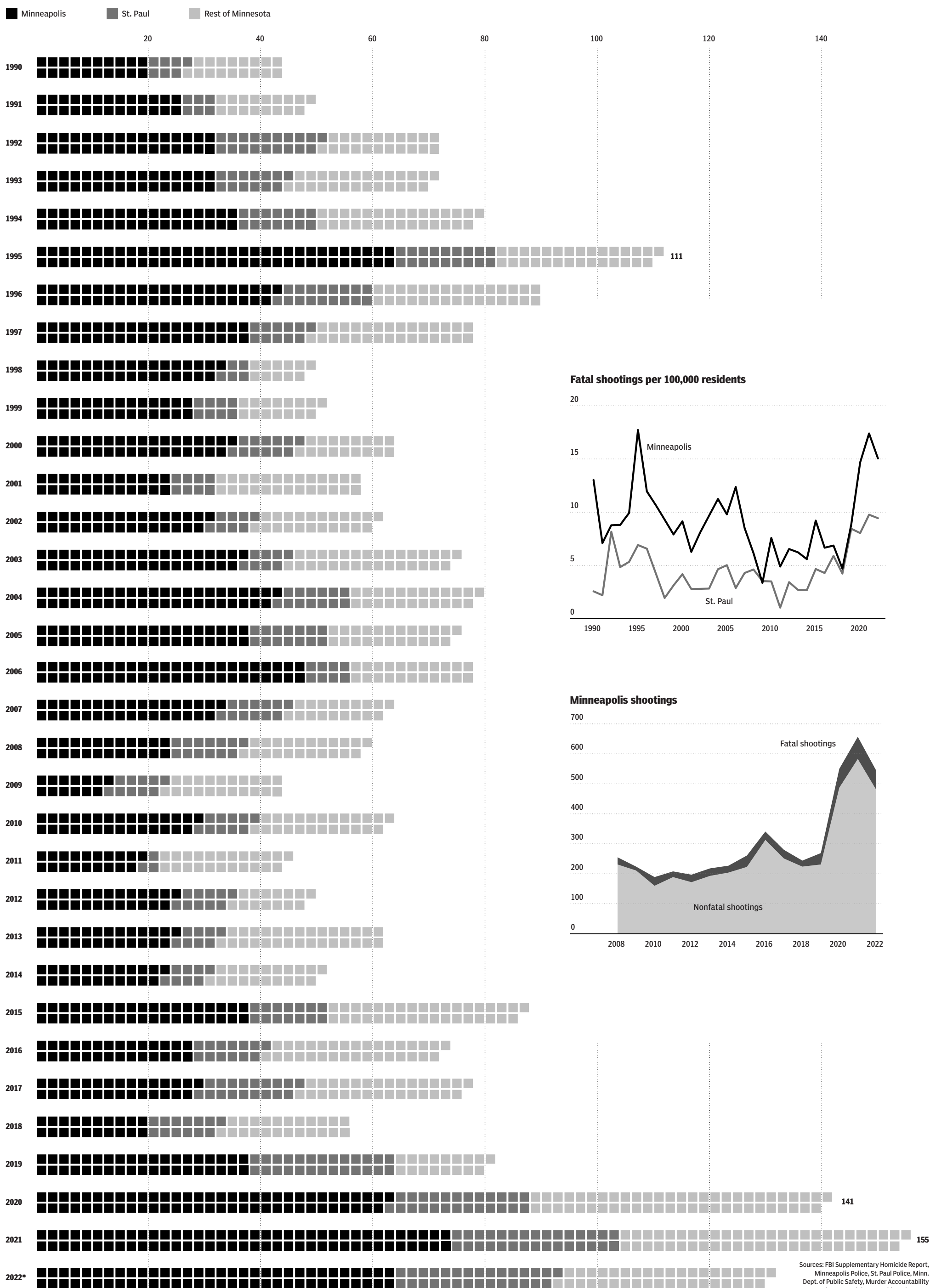
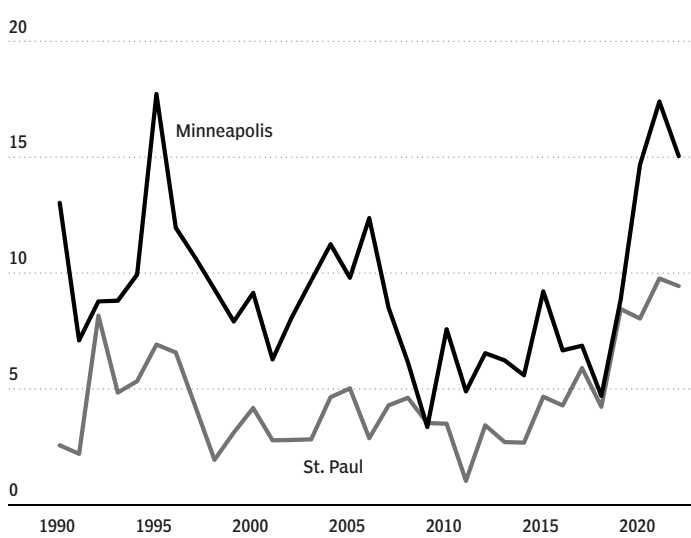


FATAL SHOOTINGS IN MINNESOTA

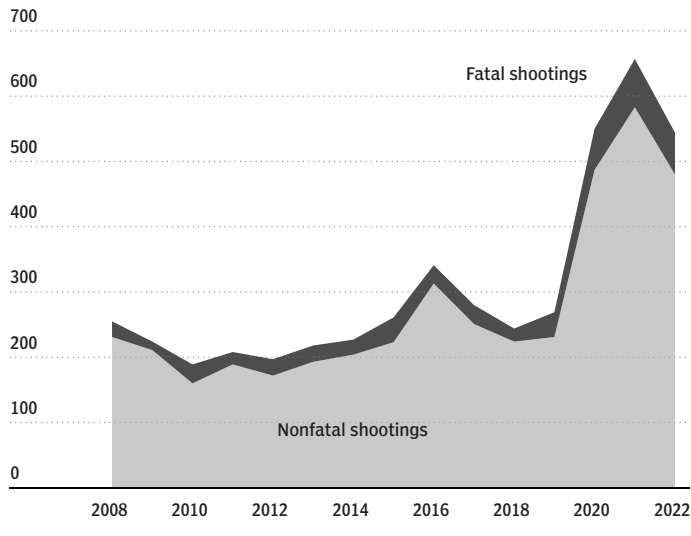
Gun homicides in Minnesota have surged to record levels since 2020, reaching rates not seen since the 1990s. Nonfatal shootings have also reached historic highs.



Fatal shootings per 100,000 residents



Minneapolis shootings



Sources: FBI Supplementary Homicide Report, Minneapolis Police, St. Paul Police, Minn. Dept. of Public Safety, Murder Accountability Project, Gun Violence Archive, The Trace
Graphics by YUQING LIU • Star Tribune

Numbers include murders and non-negligent homicides, mostly involving handguns. 2022 numbers from outside the Twin Cities are preliminary.

Weathersby remembers being dragged to the ground before she heard the shots. Bodies fell, and glasses crashed. Drinks splashed all over her.

She was in Phillips' line of fire as he shot his way out of the bar. When a bullet from his gun hit her, it felt like a hammer crashing down on her foot. Weathersby braced for more bullets as panic set in. She felt trapped and couldn't peel the bodies away to escape. In those frantic moments, she thought another patron was using her as a human shield. More than a year later, seeing footage of the shooting during Phillips' trial, Weathersby realized the man used his body to shield hers. He took a round in the leg and survived.

Weathersby soon broke away and stumbled out of the bar, crying out for her sister and boyfriend. She saw

Wiley's body, and others who had been wounded.

She knew she had to call the police, but her panic didn't allow her to remember the number. She tried 311 and 411 before finally dialing 911.

A police squad car arrived 3 minutes after the first shot rang out.

"Do you guys see anybody with a gun?" St. Paul Police officer Joshua Needham asked.

"I can't breathe!" Weathersby shouted as her sister applied pressure.

"Stay put. I have to figure out who else has been shot," Needham said.

Moments after the last shots rang out, a patron pounced on Brown, pummeling and trying to disarm him before security intervened.

Outside the bar, Phillips rose to one leg and hopped toward a Honda Civic. He briefly crawled inside before tumbling backward on the

street in a futile attempt to stand. When police found him, bystanders were trying to stop the blood gushing from his leg.

It didn't take long for police to find 017520MC. The butt of the pistol, red with blood, poked out from a pouch behind the passenger seat of the car, which police had ordered towed.

St. Paul investigators swabbed for DNA samples, collected fingerprints and test-fired the gun to compare ballistic evidence. They found no link to previous shootings.

The U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) traced 017520MC's life span from Eagle Pass, Texas, to Blaine and to Horton, the gun's original purchaser. They discovered that Horton had bought it and two other

9mm pistols from the Blaine Fleet Farm on the same day.

Days later, ATF agents talked to an employee at Frontiersman Sports in St. Louis Park, who said that Horton had been there that day to buy more guns. Staff at the store suspected that he was a straw purchaser: He had parked his car to avoid surveillance cameras, used a learner's permit instead of a driver's license and made multiple purchases of firearms over two days, paying in cash. When he left the store, Horton waved gun boxes in the air to people waiting outside.

Horton returned to that store hours after a federal agent spoke with its staff, trying to buy another gun. The salesperson intentionally stalled.

When agents searched Horton's home four days later, he admitted to

See **GUNS** on A10 ►