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URGENT

## Kenosha shooting strains tie between Black residents, police

Associated Press

Aug 28, 2020



Protesters prepare to march against the Sunday police shooting of Jacob Blake Thursday in Kenosha. Until the Kenosha has been largely untouched by the level of demonstrations that had been seen in nearby Milwaukee  
Morry Gash, AP

Associated Press

**KENOSHA, Wis.** — Until the police shooting of Jacob Blake, the bedroom community of Kenosha had been largely untouched by the level of

demonstrations that were seen in nearby Milwaukee and Chicago after the death of George Floyd.

Like other places in America, Kenosha's Black residents saw inequality in the way police treated them. But there had been nothing like the shooting that left Blake, who is Black, paralyzed. An officer shot Blake in the back Sunday as the 29-year-old leaned into his SUV, three of his children seated inside.

Now the city of 99,000 residents along Lake Michigan finds itself as the latest flashpoint in a larger discussion about racism and police brutality in the U.S.

"We've had some situations where we've thought the Police Department hasn't been treating some minorities fairly. This incident, it's just changed," said Anthony L. Davis, president of the Kenosha NAACP branch.

The shooting, captured on cellphone video, led to several nights of protests and unrest, with some people destroying buildings, setting fires and hurling objects at police, who responded at times with tear gas. On Wednesday, a 17-year-old from a nearby Illinois community killed two demonstrators, according to authorities.

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Kenosha Alderman Anthony Kennedy, who is Black, said he often works with police to the benefit of the neighborhood he represents and was surprised by

what he saw on the video.

"Watching that video of Mr. Blake, you should be angry," Kennedy said. "There's no way you can have any humanity and not respond with anger, frustration. I'm that angry. I'm that hurt. I'm that frustrated. I have a responsibility to be that and still try to be constructive and build my community and maintain the quality of life of my constituents.

"Be angry and vocal, but when you're done be with me so we can build this city."

 Teen charged in Kenosha killings stalls return to Wisconsin

About 11% of Kenosha's 99,000 residents are Black, but only about seven of the police force's 207 officers are African American. Kenosha's white population is about 67%, while 89% of the city's police officers are white.

Ray Roberts, a data scientist who has lived in the city about a decade, said he and other Black residents face very different rules when dealing with police than white residents do.

"If you're a white guy, a firefighter with an open (alcohol) container and gun in your car and you get pulled over, you get dropped off at the firehouse," said Roberts, 38. "If you're Black, that might be the end of your life — you get shot or you might face 20 (years in prison)."

Tensions simmered Thursday as a number of businesses remained boarded up and some motorists shouted at law enforcement driving around Kenosha.

"The police here are terrible and they treat Black people awful," said Jacob Conway, a 22-year-old white Kenosha resident who said he has joined protests every night since the shooting. "They harass them, and everything."

At least four people have been fatally shot by Kenosha police since 2003. One — Bobby Sherrod — was Black. He was shot in 2005 by an officer who believed

Sherrod had just broken the neck of Sherrod's 5-year-old son. A prosecutor deemed the shooting justified.

Kenosha saw a peaceful protest several days after Floyd's death in May after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed a knee into Floyd's neck for several minutes as the handcuffed Black man pleaded for air. A late June Back the Blue rally in Kenosha that was organized to show support for law enforcement was disrupted by anti-police brutality protesters. One protester was tackled to the ground. No arrests or injuries were reported.

Davis, with the NAACP, said officers need better training on how to deescalate encounters like the one with Blake, who refused officers' commands to stop before opening his SUV's door and reaching inside. Officers had responded to a report of a domestic dispute when they encountered Blake. Authorities have not said whether Blake was part of the dispute.

"When emotions are running that high, who talks to you?" said Davis, 66. "It's going to take a lot for you to calm yourself down and that's where the police — we feel — should have taken the opportunity to help Mr. Blake."

The area where Blake was shot is the dividing line between a historically white neighborhood and a historically black neighborhood.

Wide disparities in income between white and Black residents of Kenosha, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Chicago and other major metropolitan areas in the Midwest have helped create "underlying frustration and anger in the minority communities in these cities," said Don Grimes, an economics specialist at the University of Michigan.

Yet some elected officials and professionals in Kenosha either believe racial discrimination doesn't exist in the area or refuse to openly acknowledge it, said Roberts, who spent three years in the Coast Guard and six years in the Army where he served in Afghanistan.

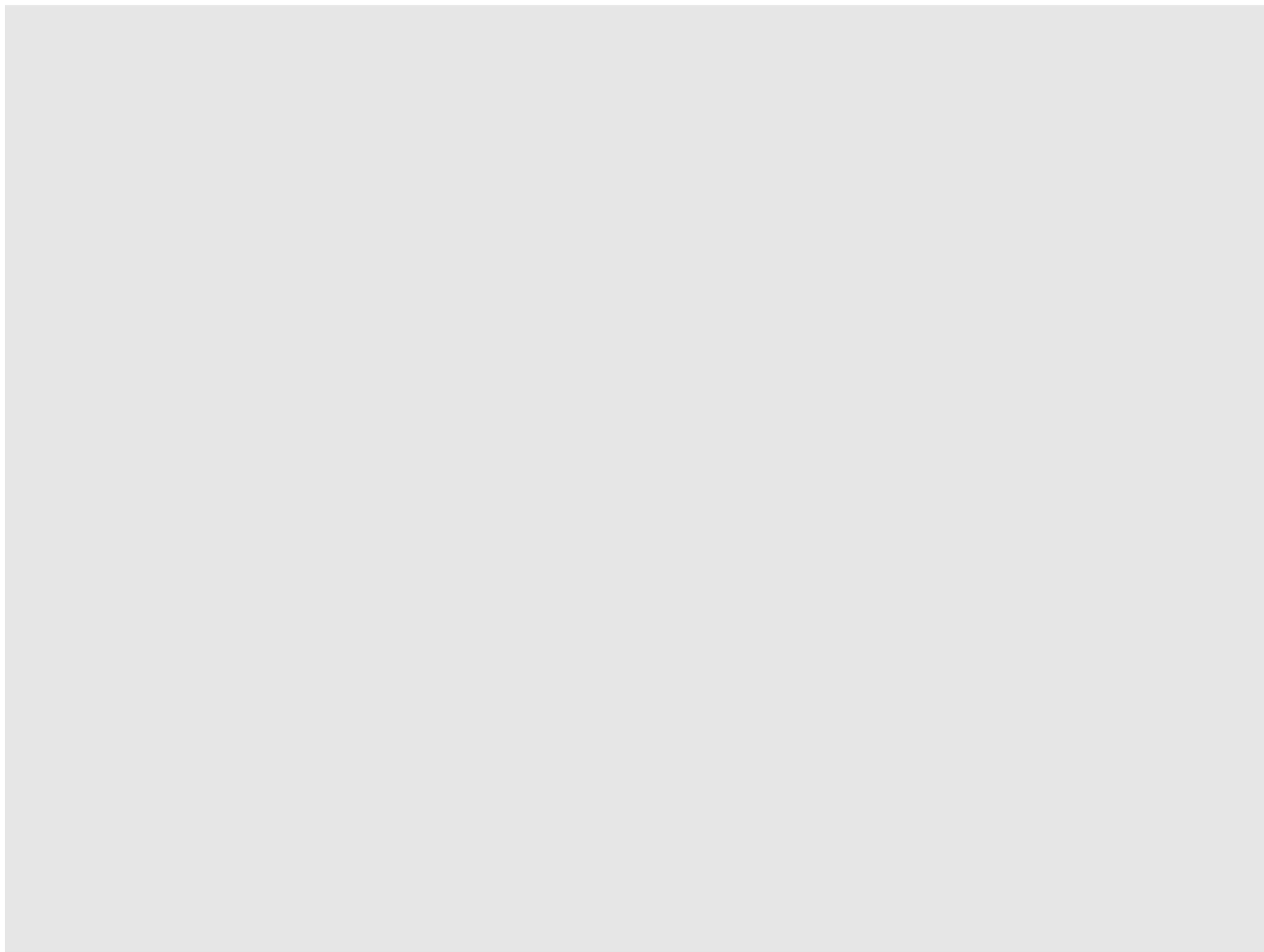
"It's gotta get worse before it gets better," he said. "I think some of this has to happen. There's so much fakeness going on.

"There are casualties in war, and that's what's going on now."

## Gallery: Thursday in Kenosha after the police shooting of Jacob Blake

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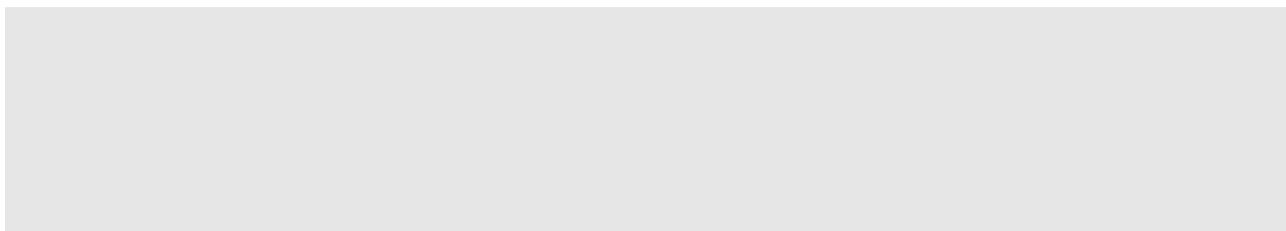
### Gallery: Thursday in Kenosha after the police shooting of Jacob Blake

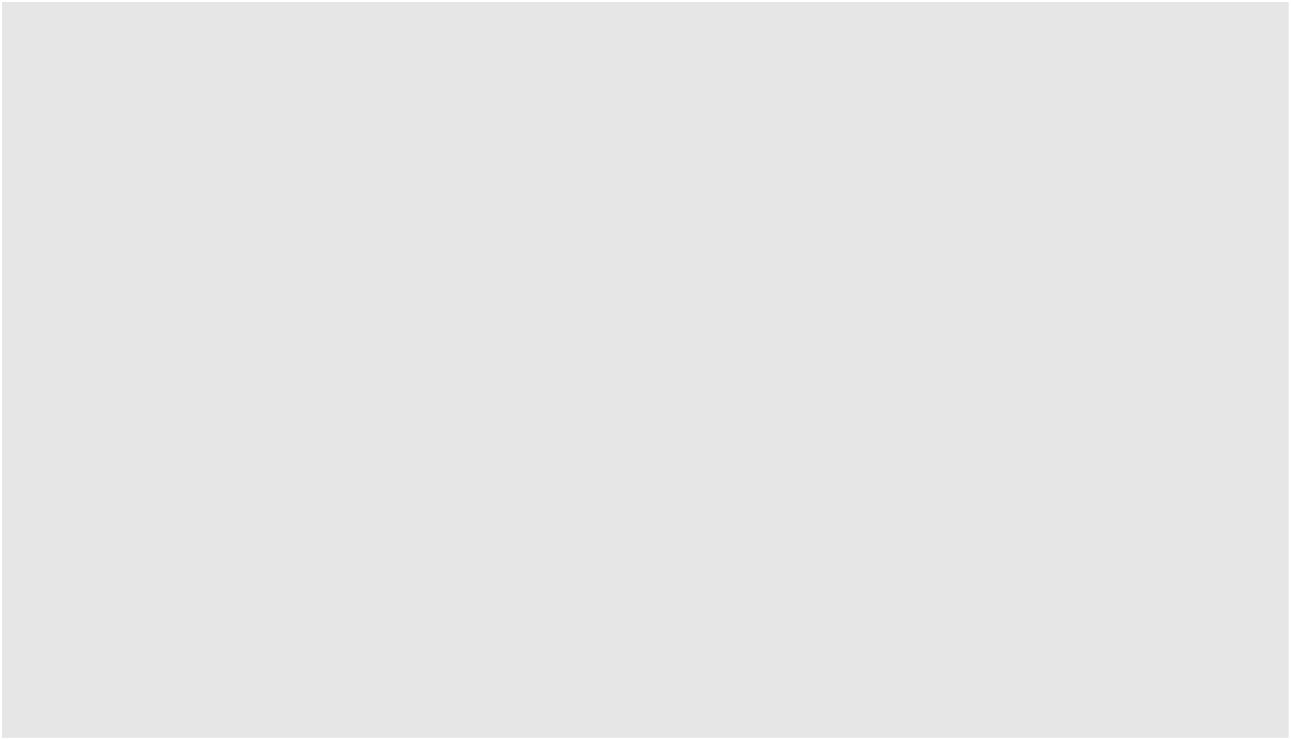


Protesters prepare to march against the police shooting of Jacob Blake, Thursday in Kenosha.

AP Photo/Morry Gash

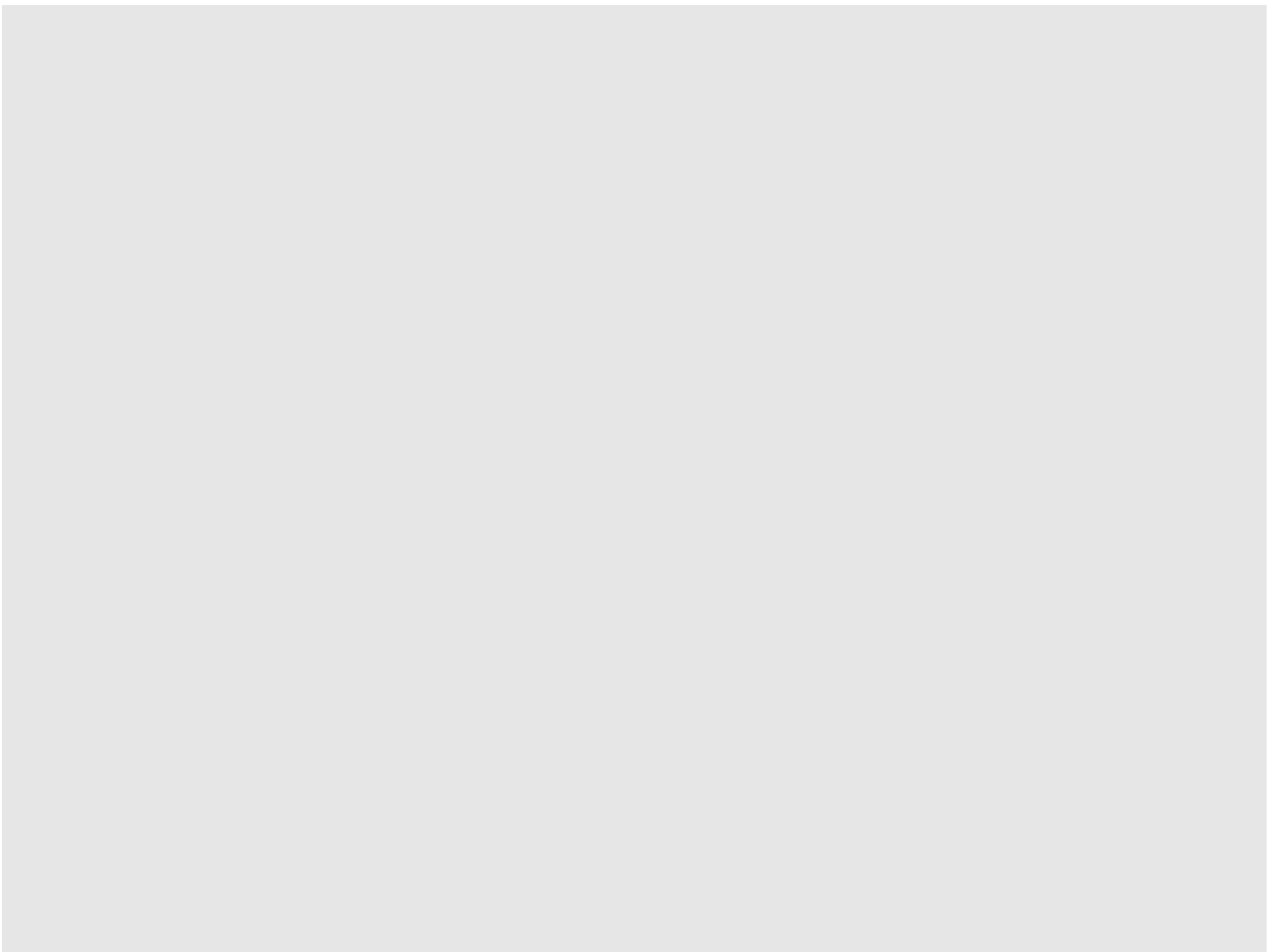
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Gov. Evers speaks during a press conference at the Public Safety Building in Kenosha on Thursday,  
Sean Krajacic, Kenosha News

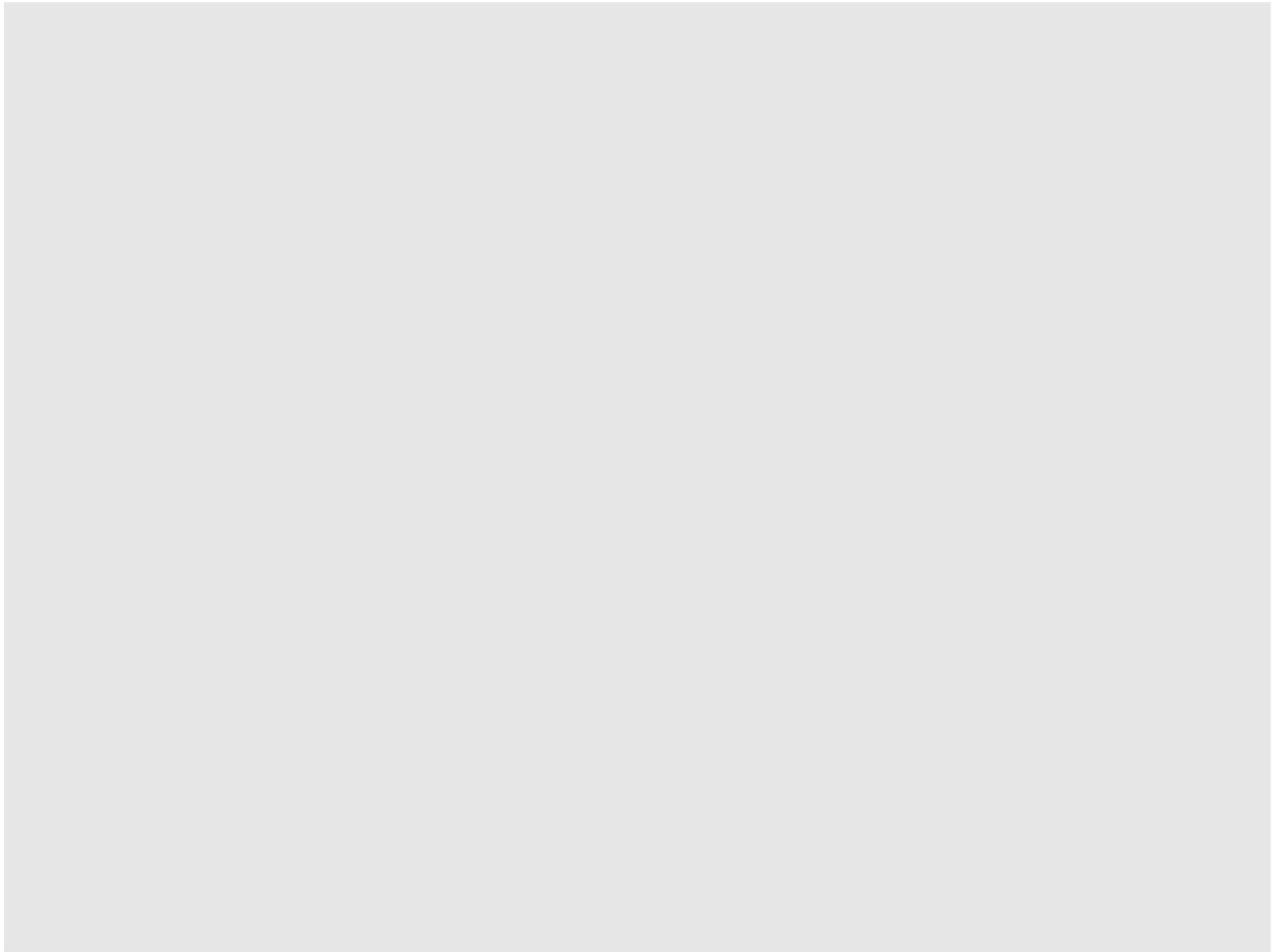
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Alderman Anthony Kennedy, right, bows his head as he listens to during a press conference on Thursday at the scene were a man was killed amidst the protests.

Sean Krajacic, Kenosha News

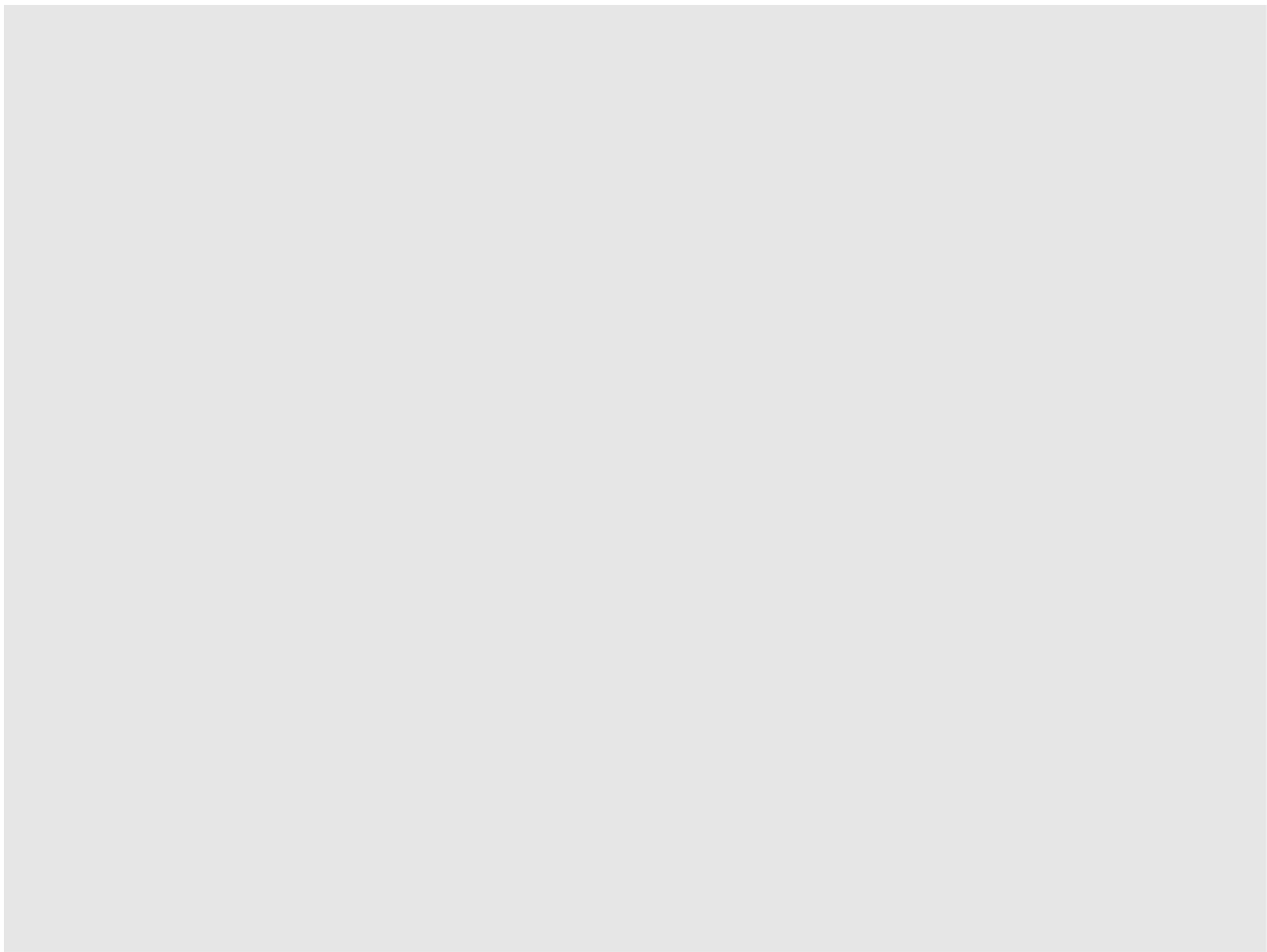
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The Rev. Jessie Jackson speaks during a press conference Thursday at the scene were a man was killed amid protests over the shooting of Jacob Blake earlier this week in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

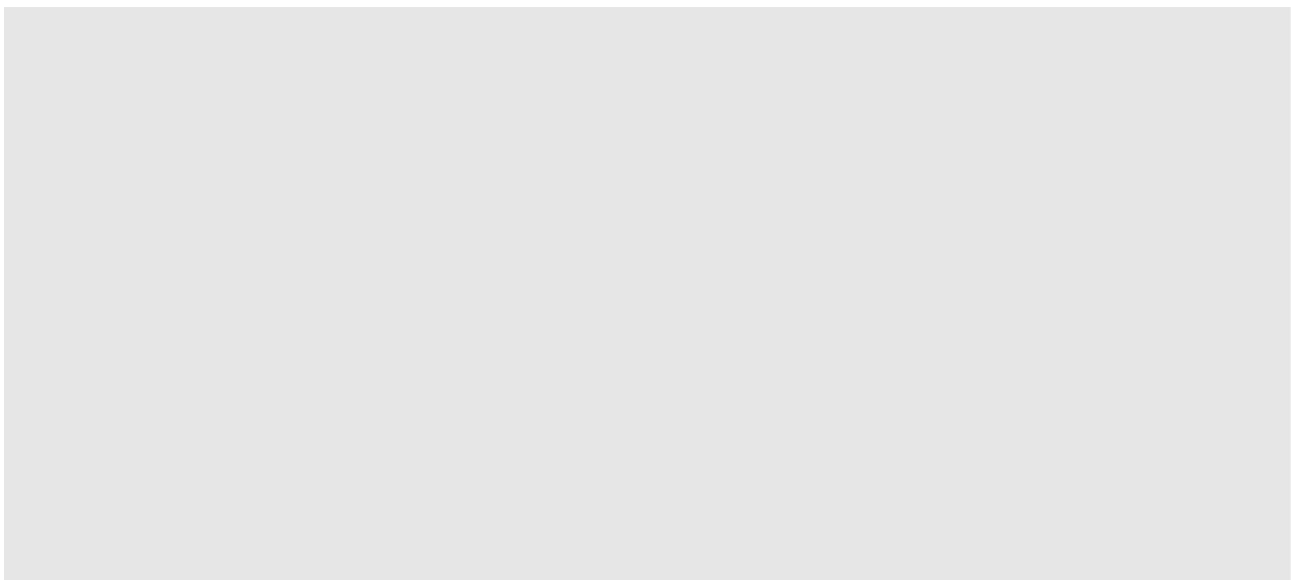
Sean Krajacic, Kenosha News

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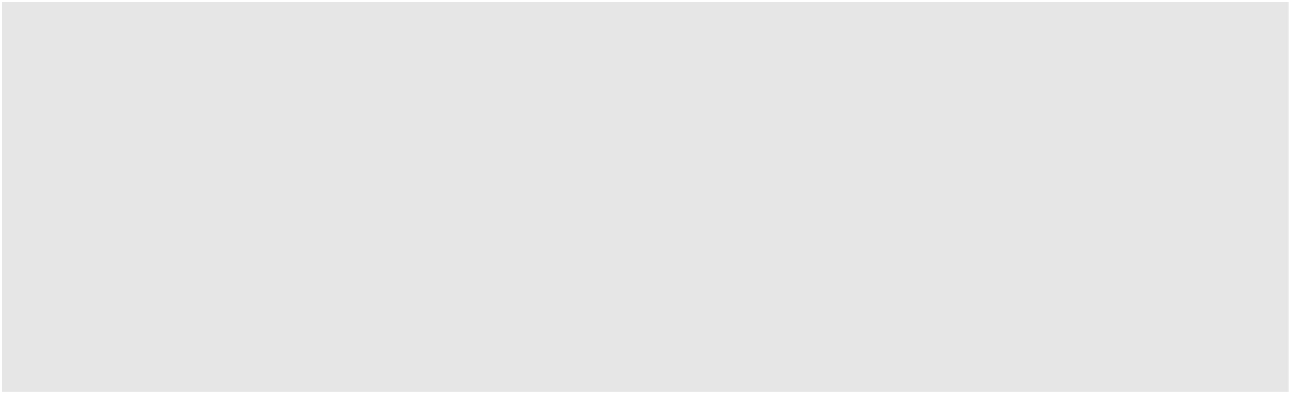


The Rev. Jessie Jackson speaks during a press conference on Thursday at the scene were a man was killed amidst the protests.

Sean Krajacic, Kenosha News



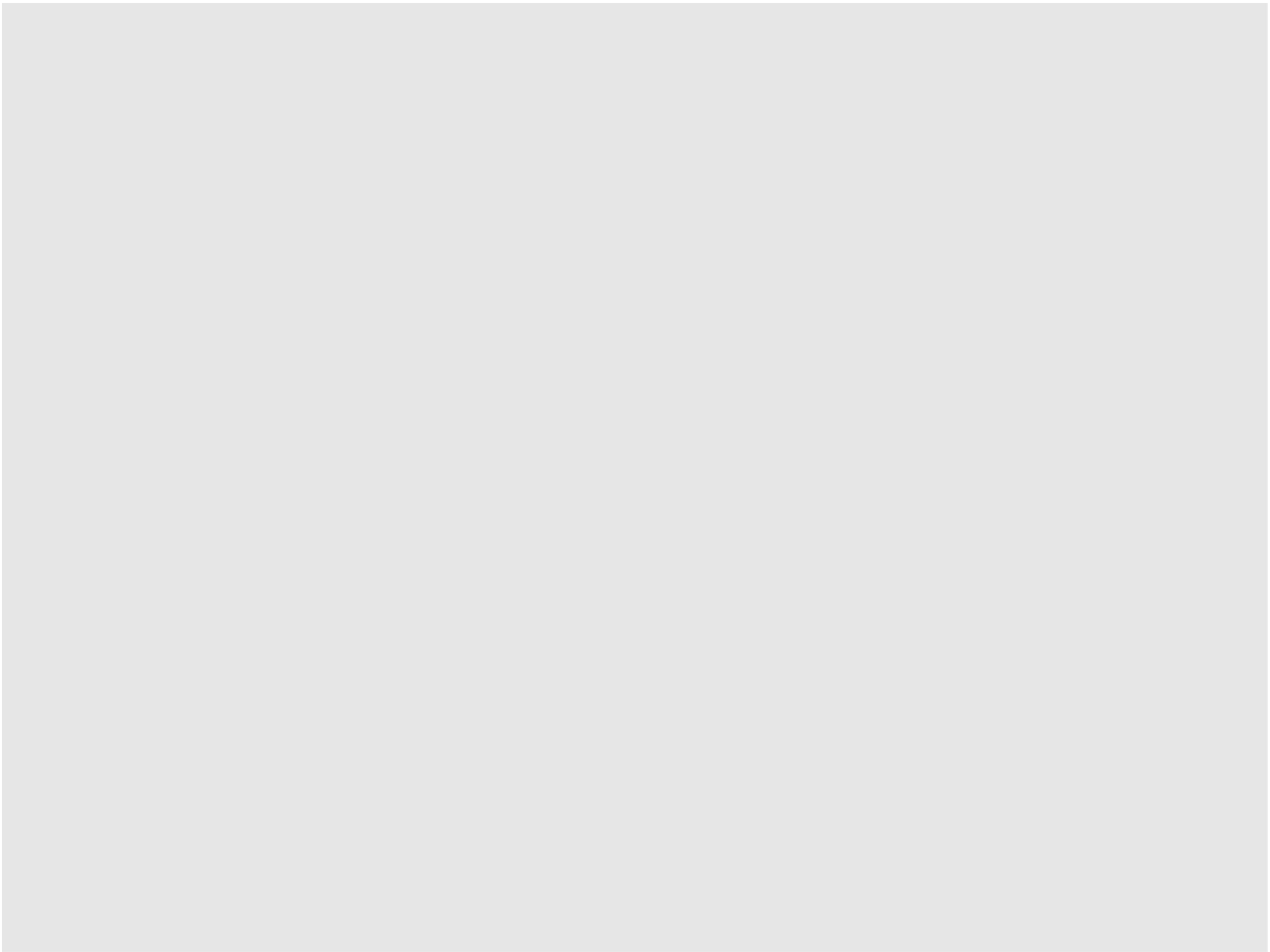




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Sean Krajacic, Kenosha News

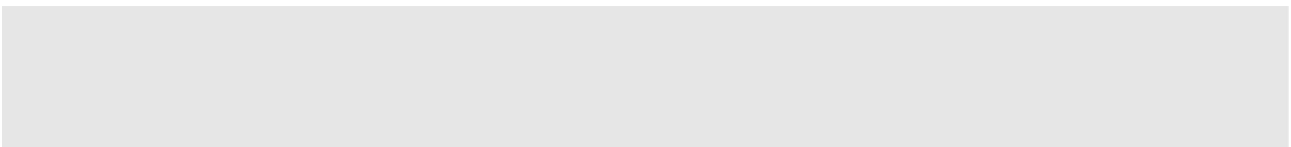
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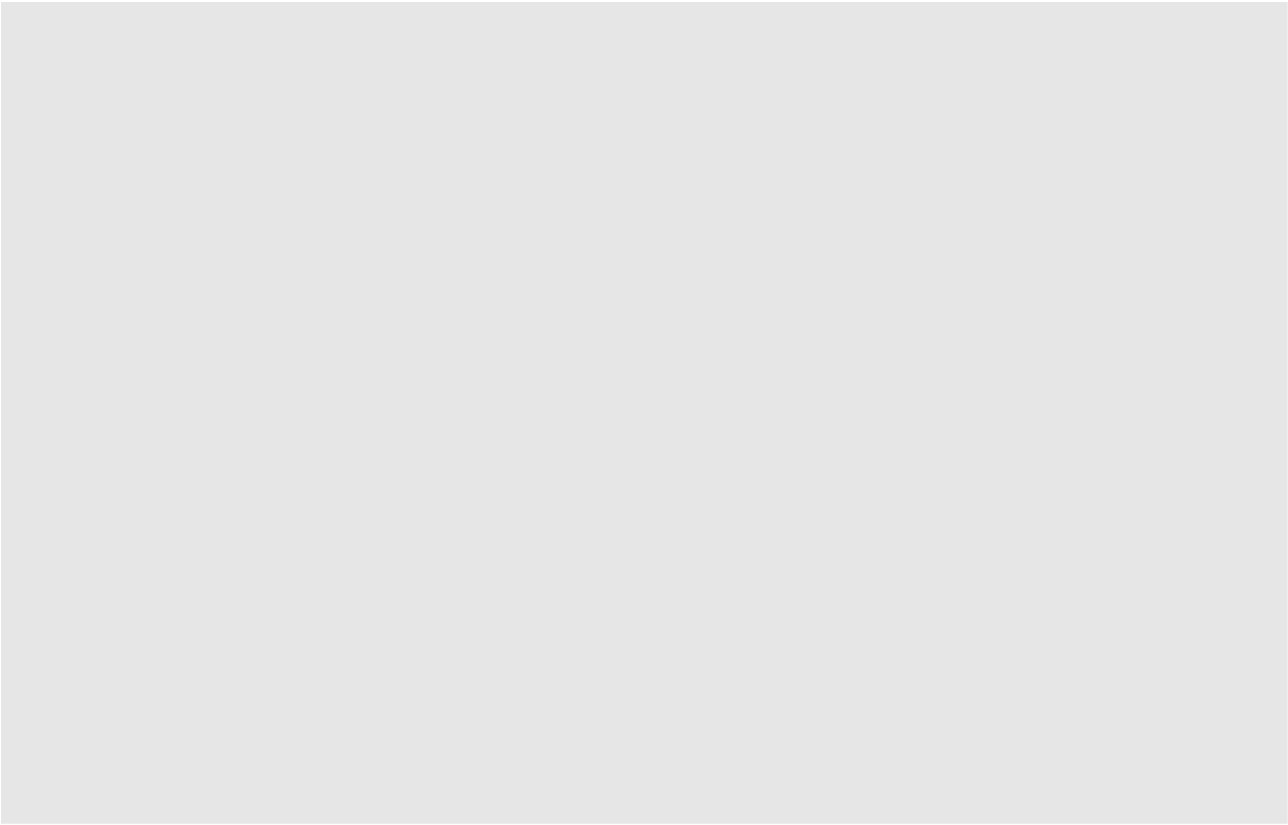


Kenosha Mayor John Antaramian speaks during a press conference Thursday.

Sean Krajacic, Kenosha News

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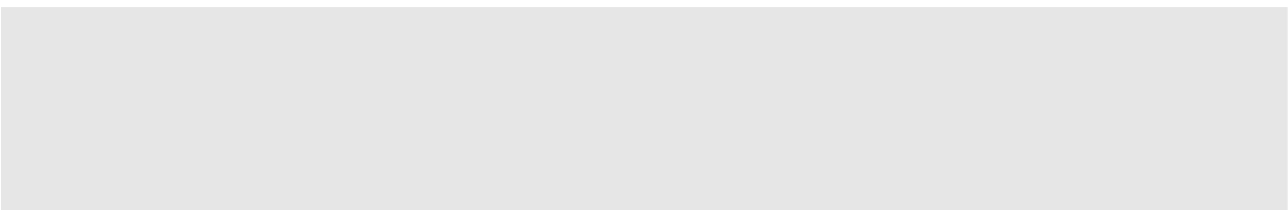


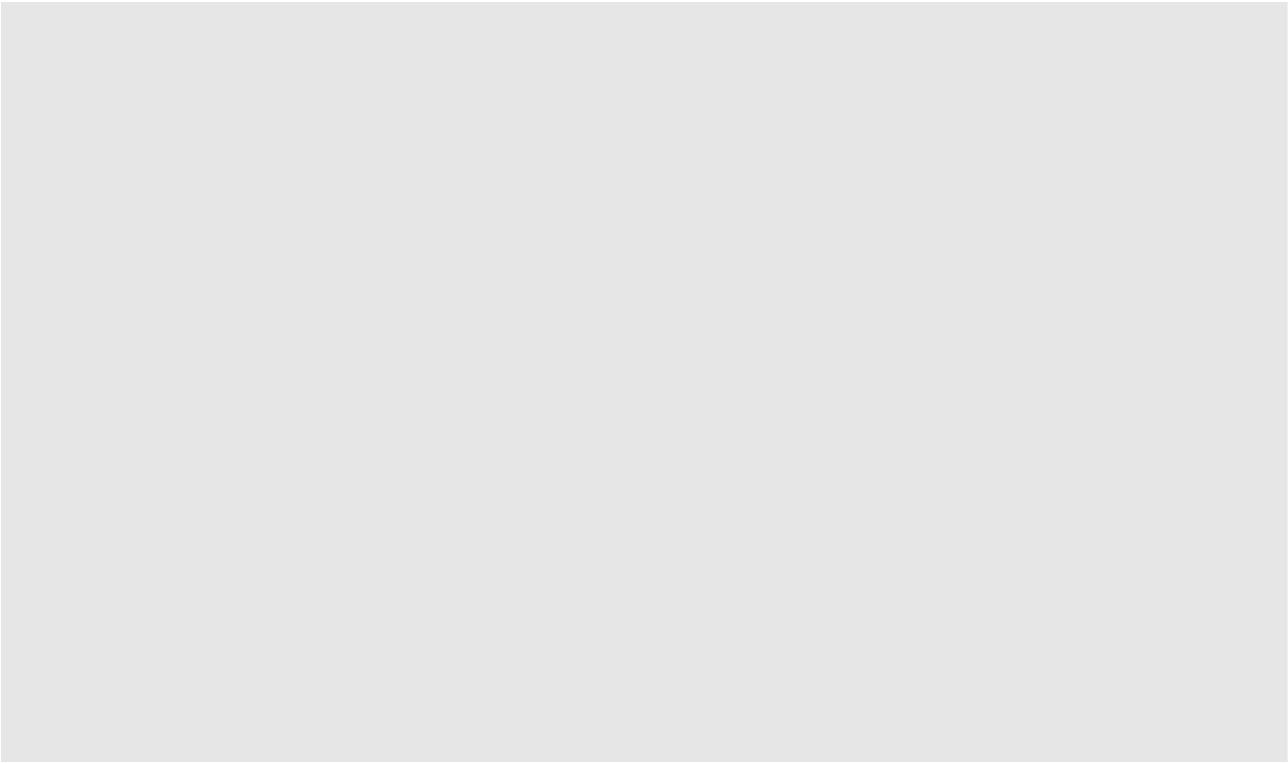


Protesters march in front of a fence marking the outside of the law enforcement compound at the corner of 56th Street and 10th Avenue on Thursday evening.

MIKE JOHNSON/KENOSHA NEWS

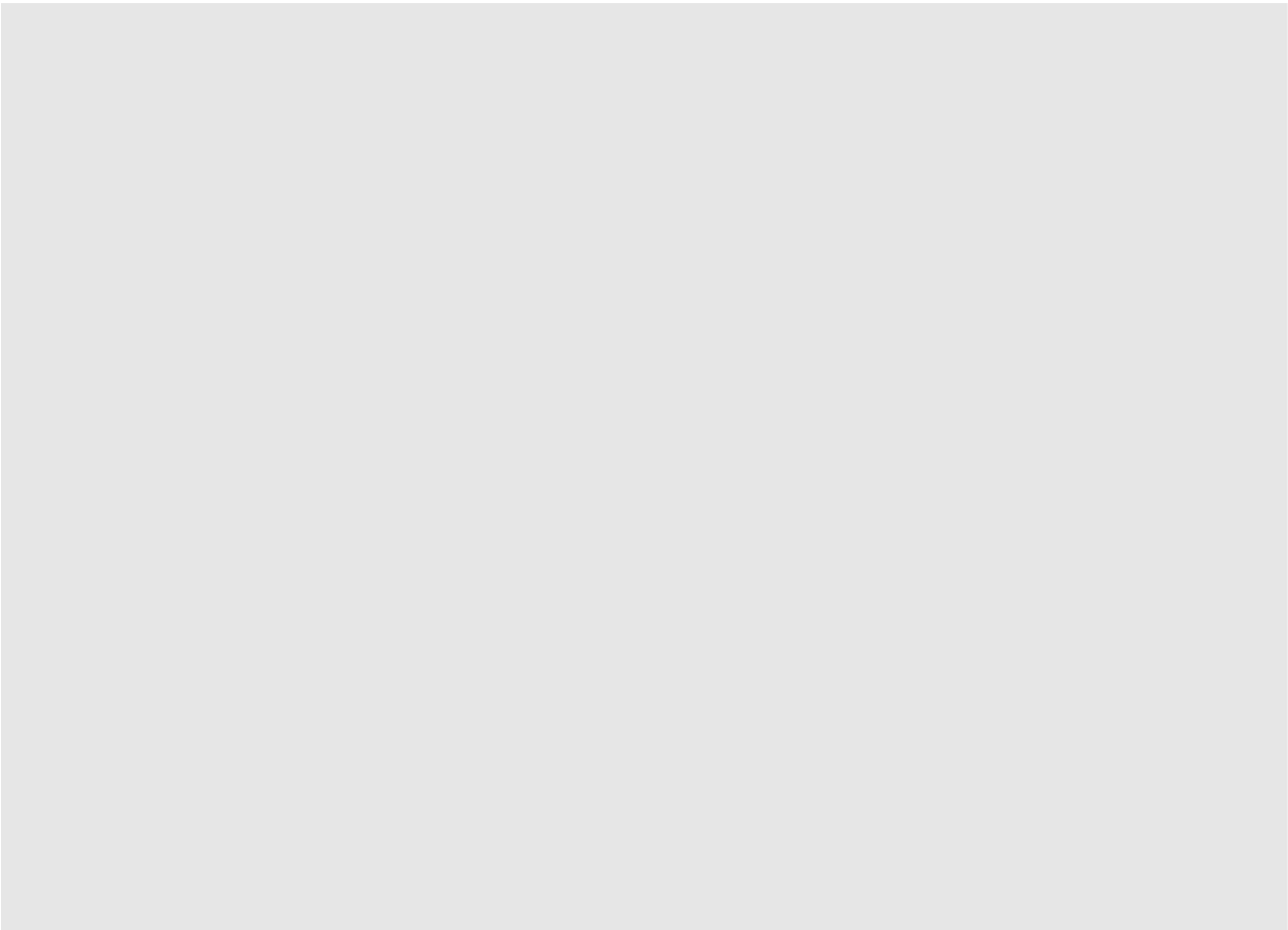
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A mural shown Thursday in Kenosha amid a week of protests following the police shooting of Jacob Blake.

Kenosha News Staff

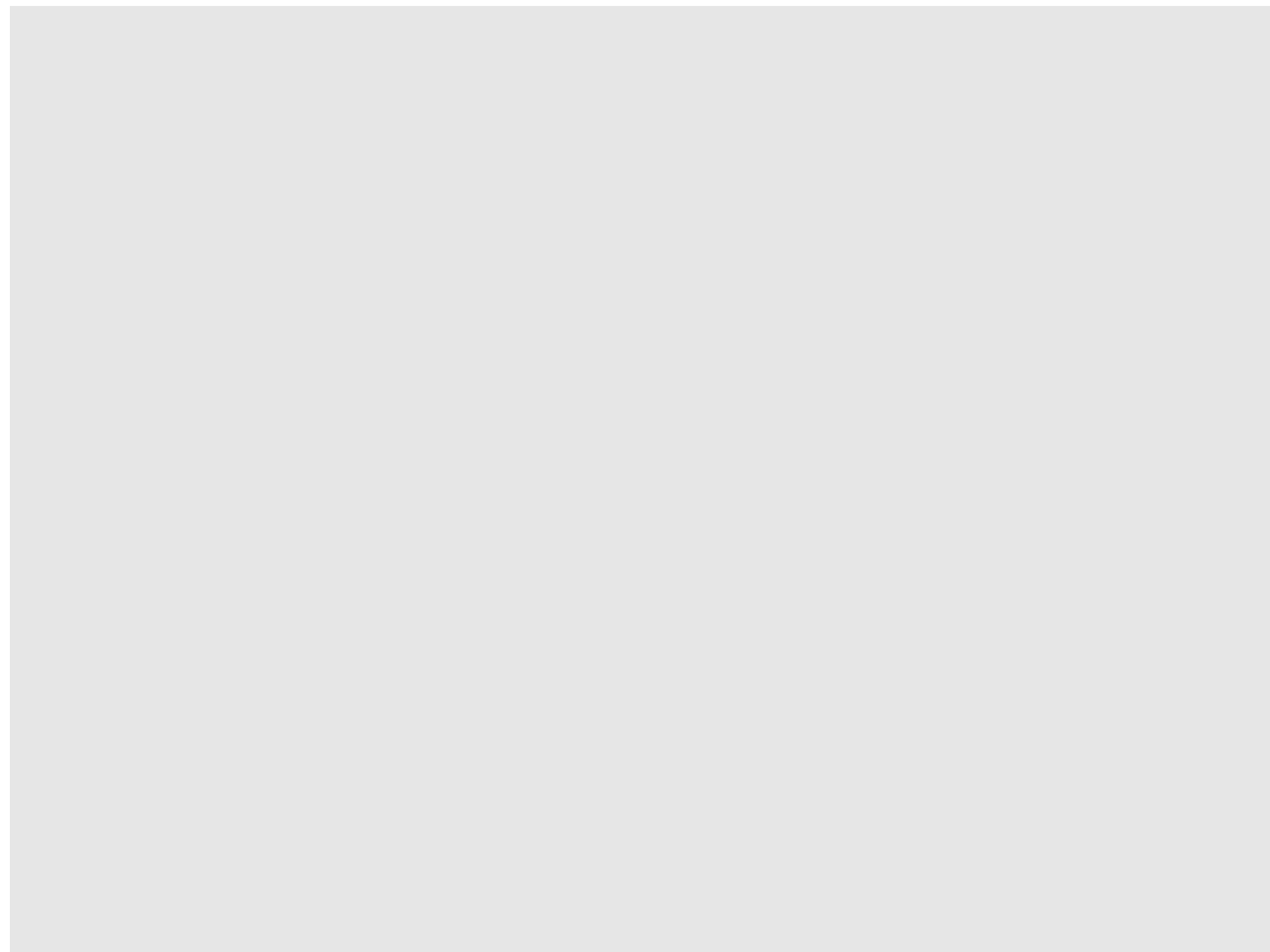


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A boarded up business is shown Thursday, amid a week of protests following the police shooting of Jacob Blake.

Kenosha News Staff

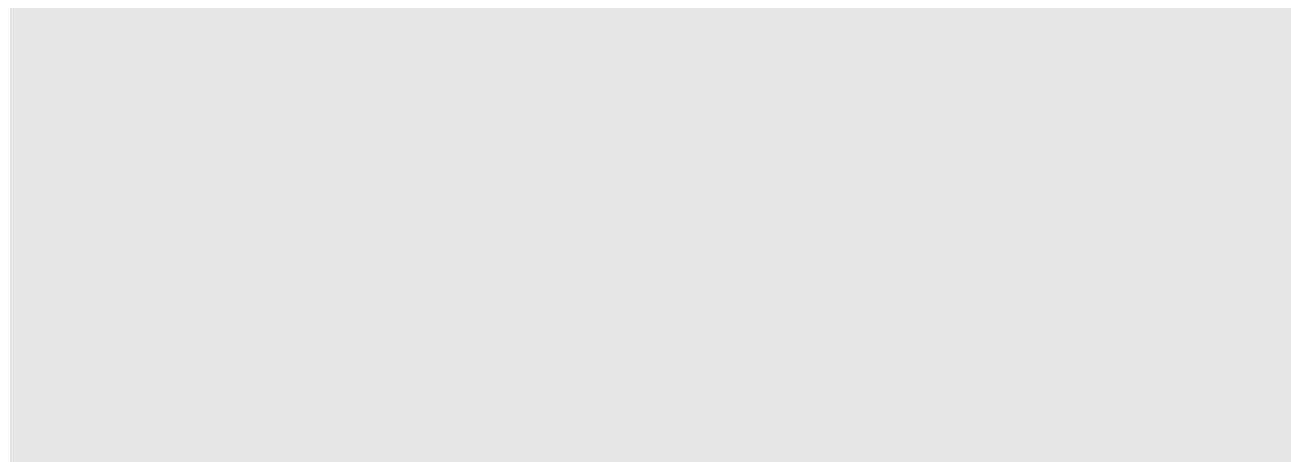
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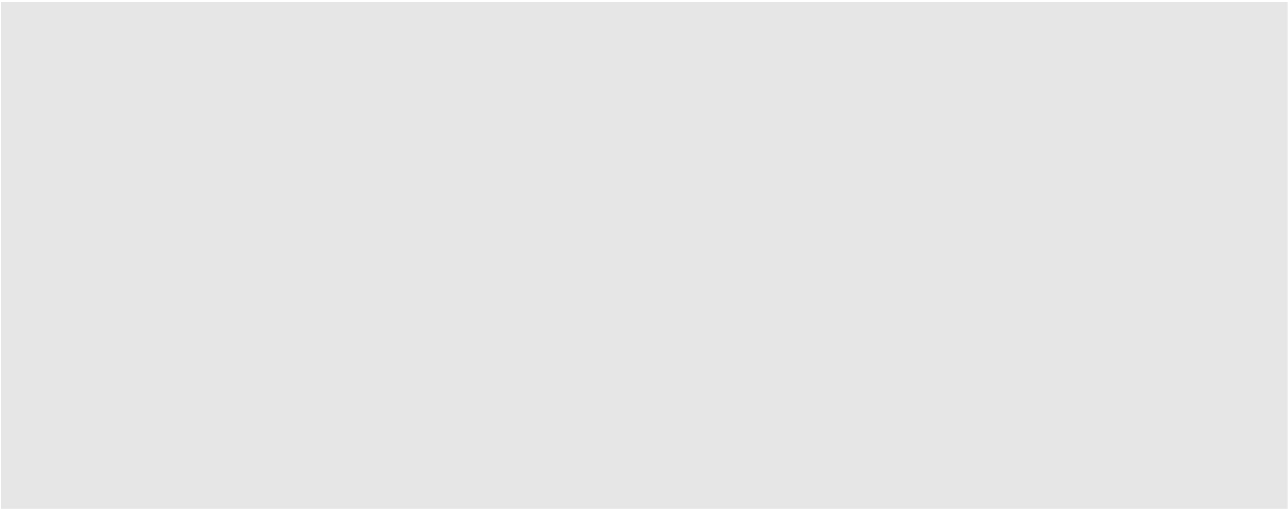


A boarded up business is shown Thursday, amid a week of protests following the police shooting of Jacob Blake.

Kenosha News Staff

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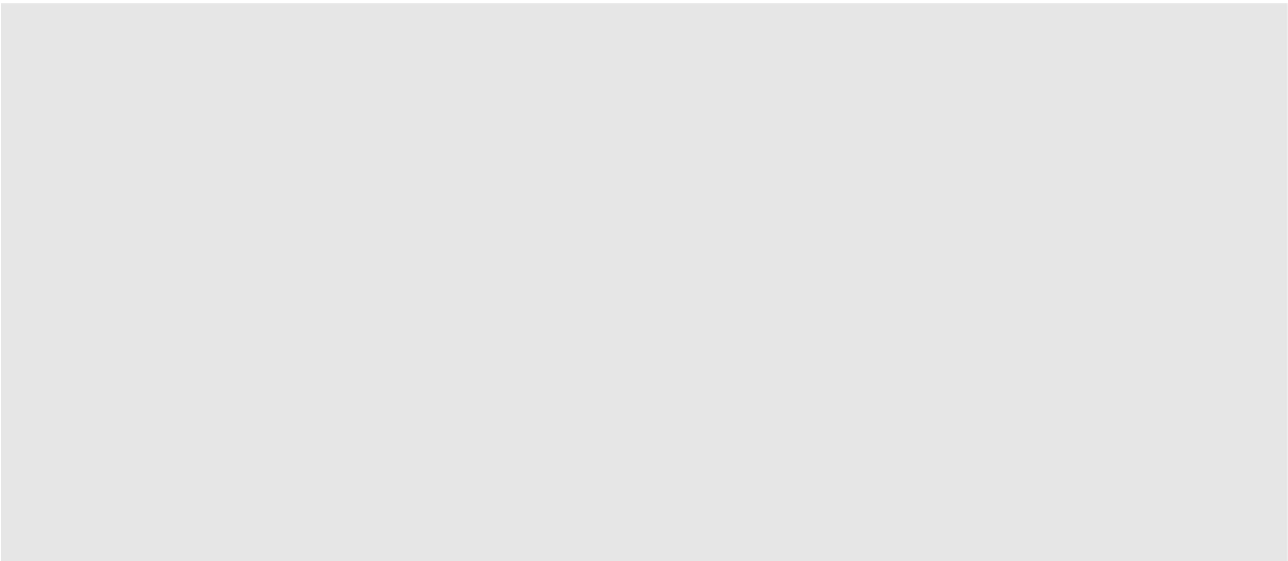


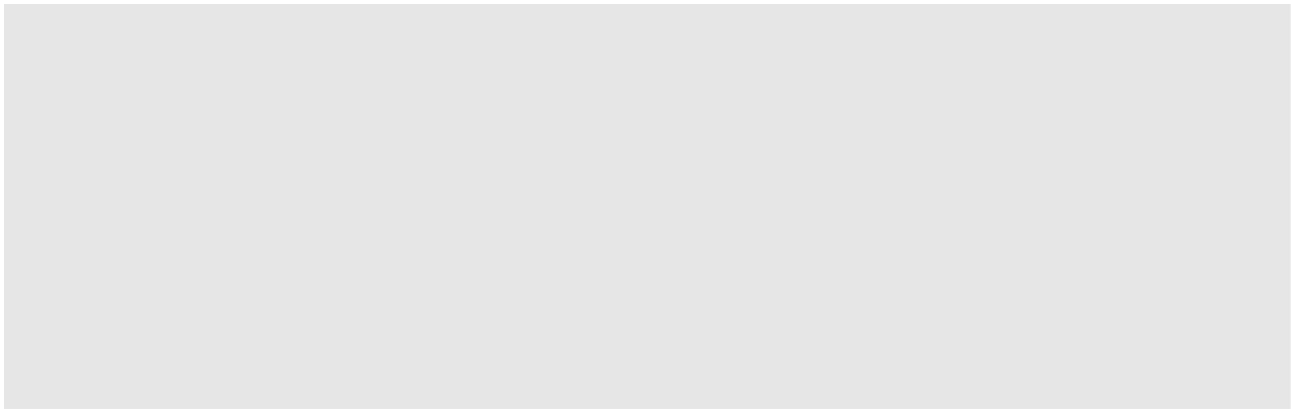


Kenosha County Sheriff David Beth speaks Thursday during a press conference.

Dan Truttschel, Kenosha News

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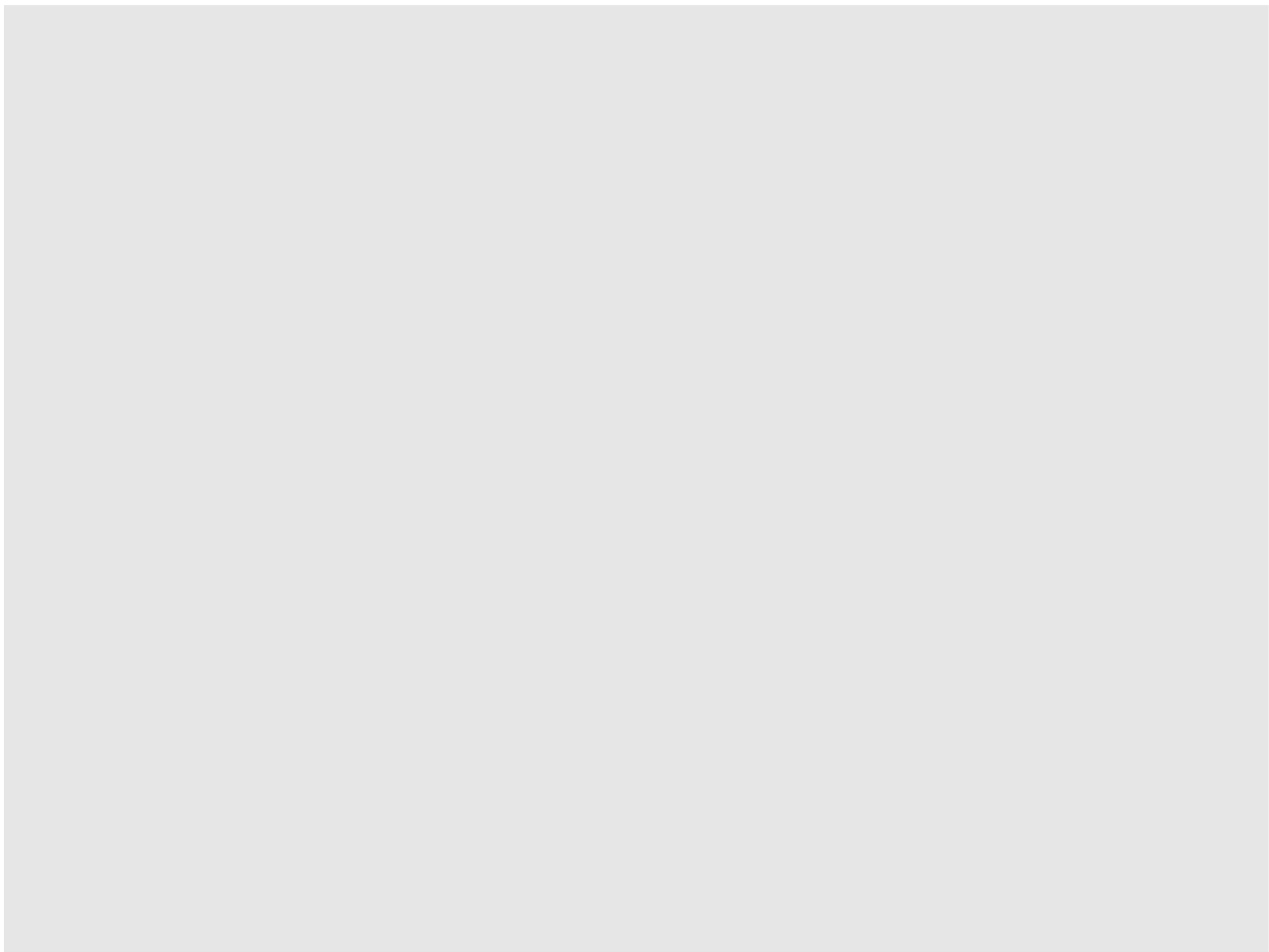




Rev. Jessie Jackson, center, listens to questions from reporters, following a press conference near 63rd street and Sheridan on Thursday in Kenosha. Rev. Jackson arrived Thursday to address the unrest in Kenosha that stemmed from the shooting of Jacob Blake by a Kenosha Police Officer on Sunday and the shooting deaths of two protesters. At right is Bishop Tavis Grant, the field director for Rainbow Push.

Angela Peterson/Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel via AP

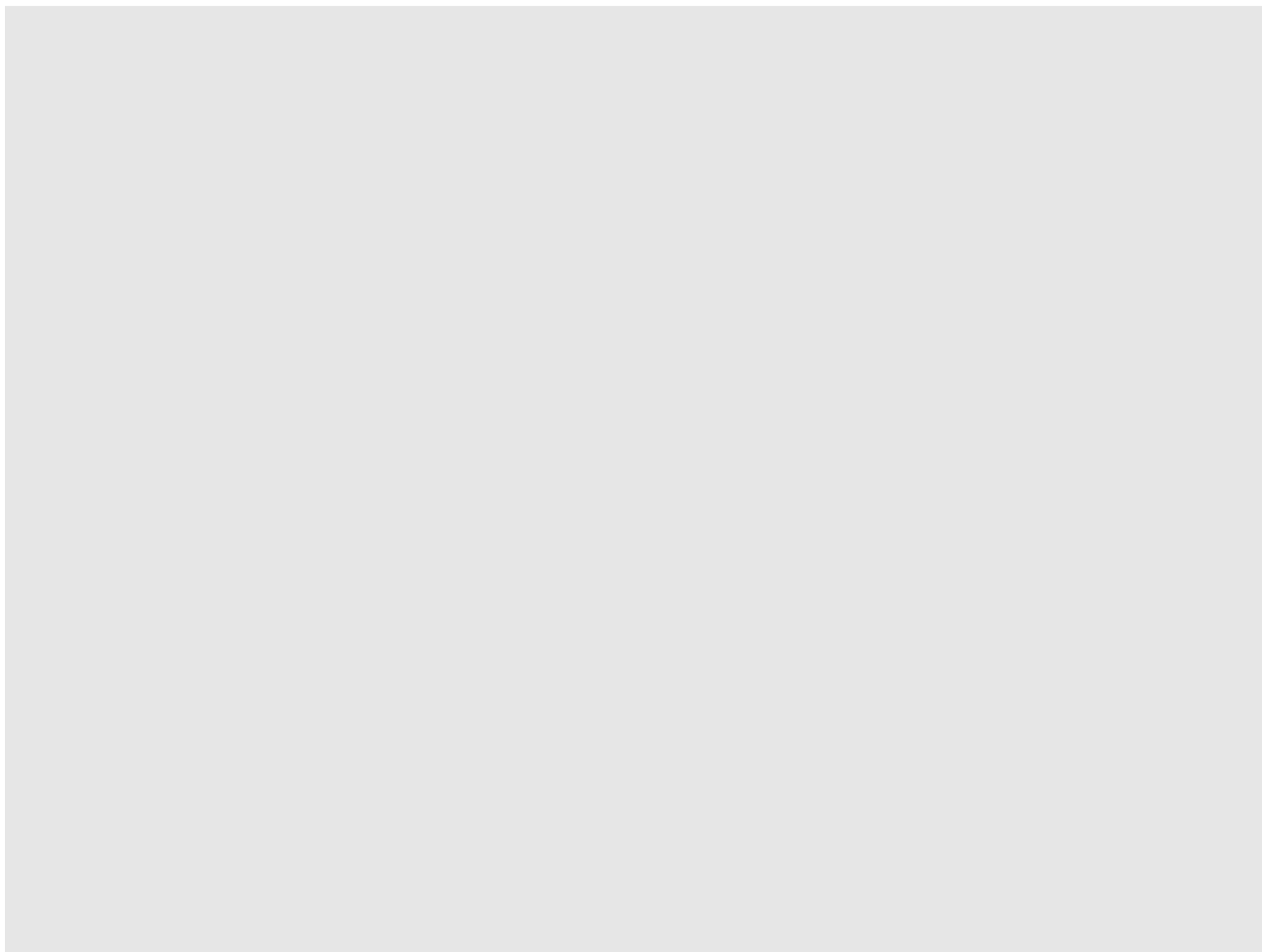
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A woman sings during an ecumenical prayer service put on by multiple congregations, Thursday Kenosha. About 1,000 people attended. The pastors, who meet together regularly for private prayer, decided to hold a public event to encourage residents to pray for the city. Violent unrest broke out after video of the shooting of Jacob Blake, 29, was widely disseminated on social media Sunday. Blake was shot in the back several times by a Kenosha police officer and left paralyzed.

Mark Hoffman/Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel via AP

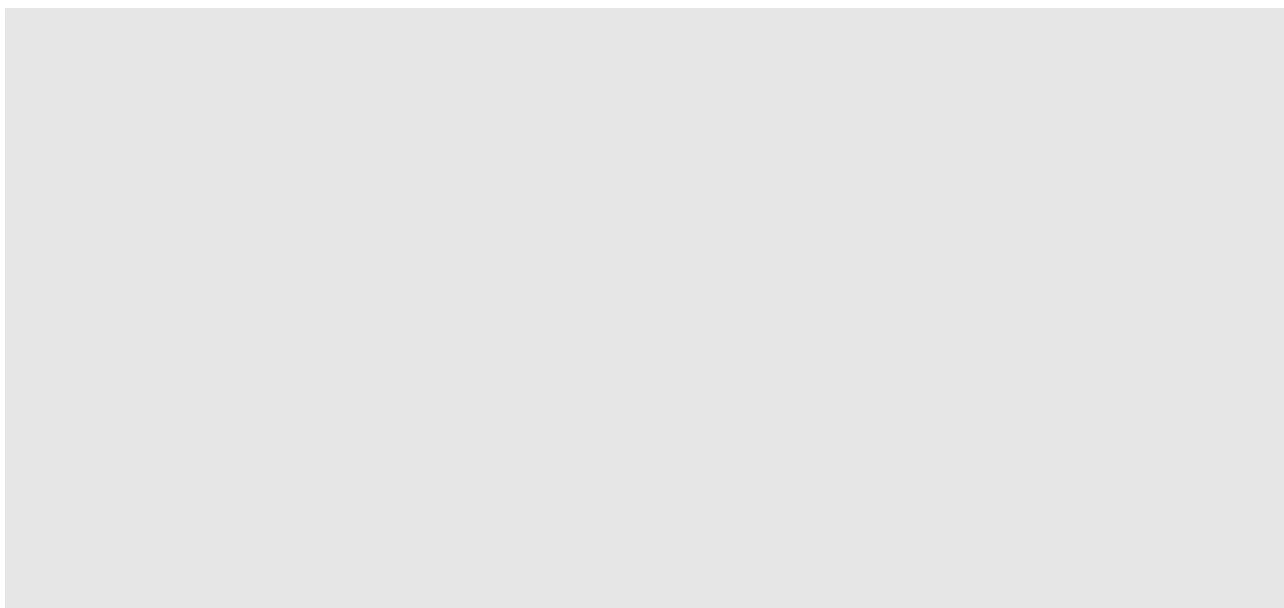
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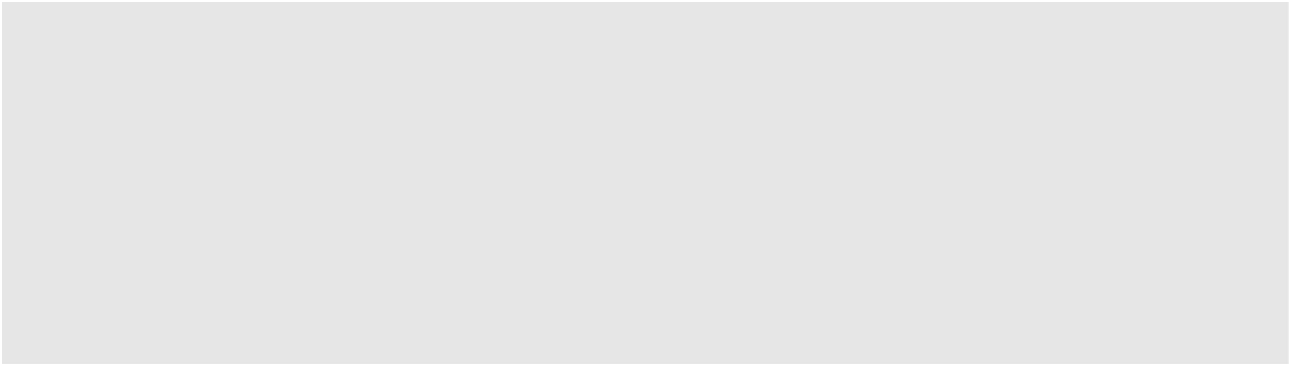


Maj. Gen. Paul Knapp of the Wisconsin National Guard speaks during a news conference Thursday in Kenosha. The city has suffered from unrest in the wake of the police shooting of Jacob Blake.

AP Photo/Morry Gash

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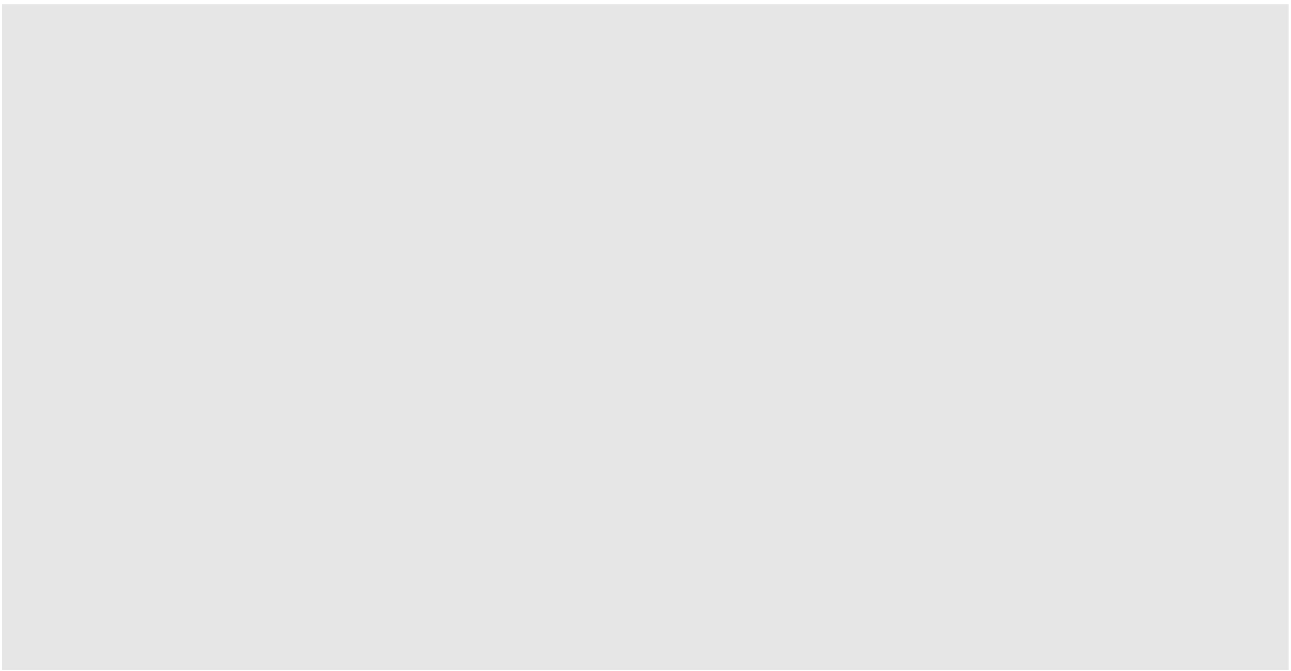




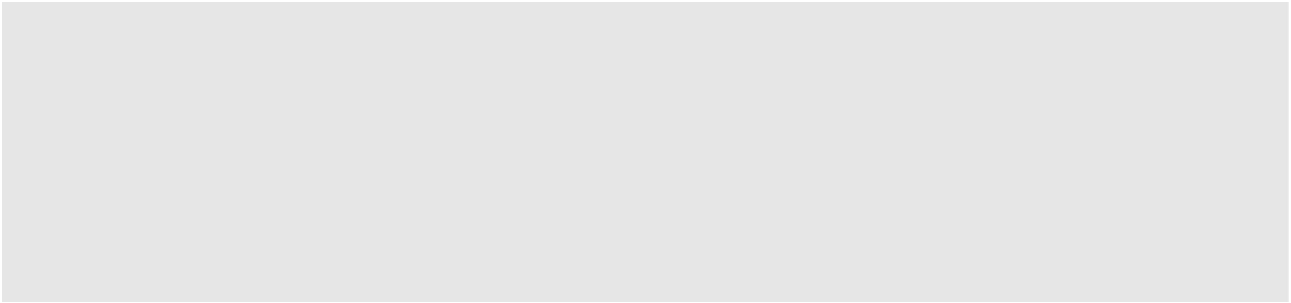
Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes speaks during a news conference Thursday in Kenosha, Wis. The city has suffered from unrest in the wake of the police shooting of Jacob Blake.

Morry Gash, AP

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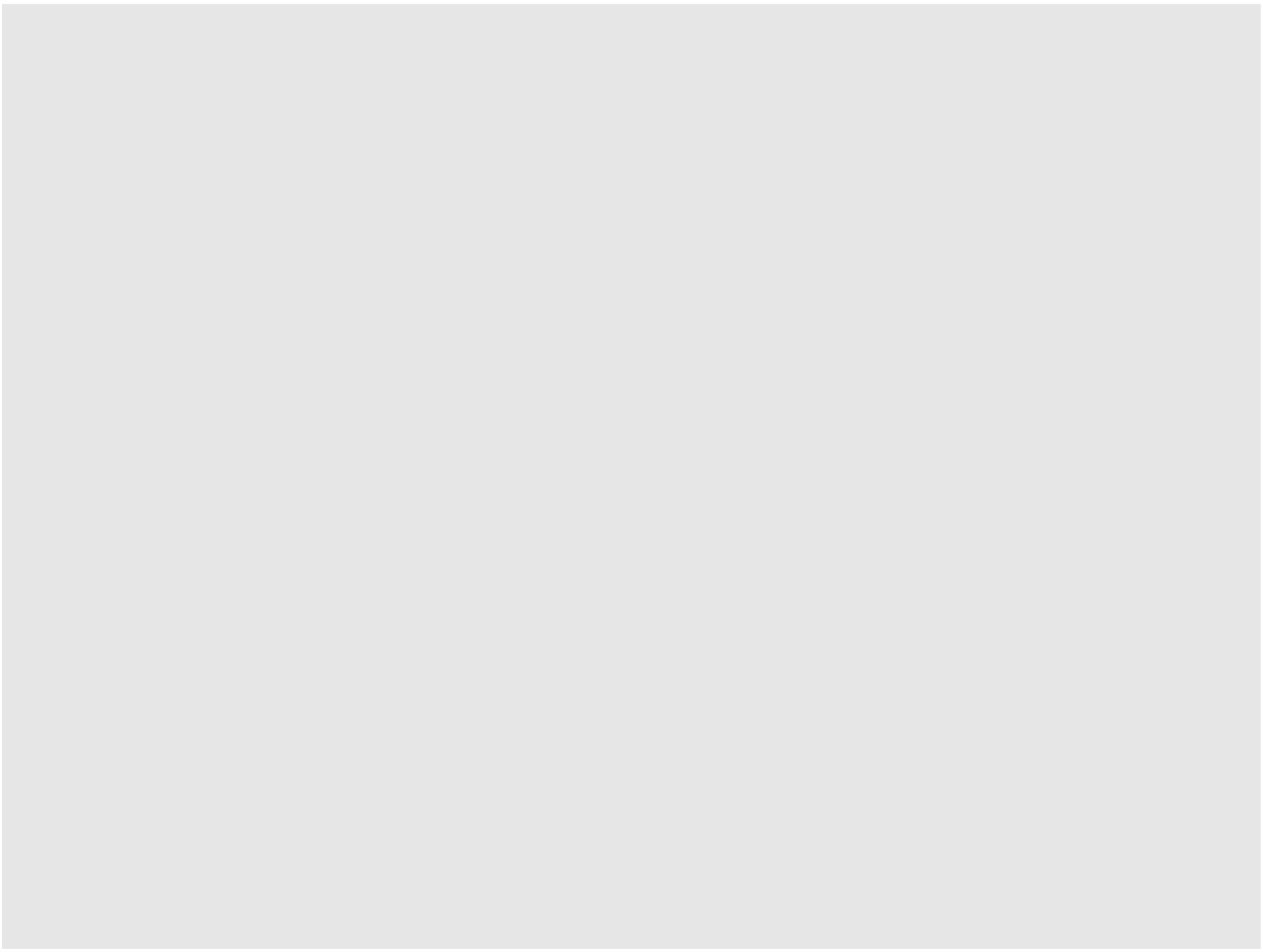






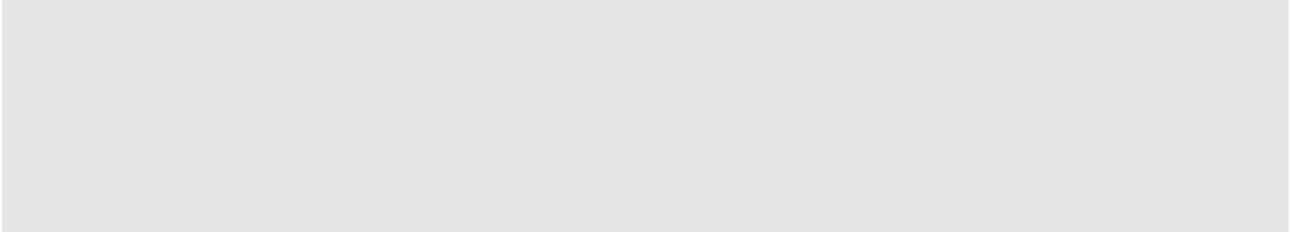
Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers speaks during a news conference Thursday in Kenosha. The city has suffered from unrest in the wake of the police shooting of Jacob Blake. Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes is at rear. Morry Gash, AP

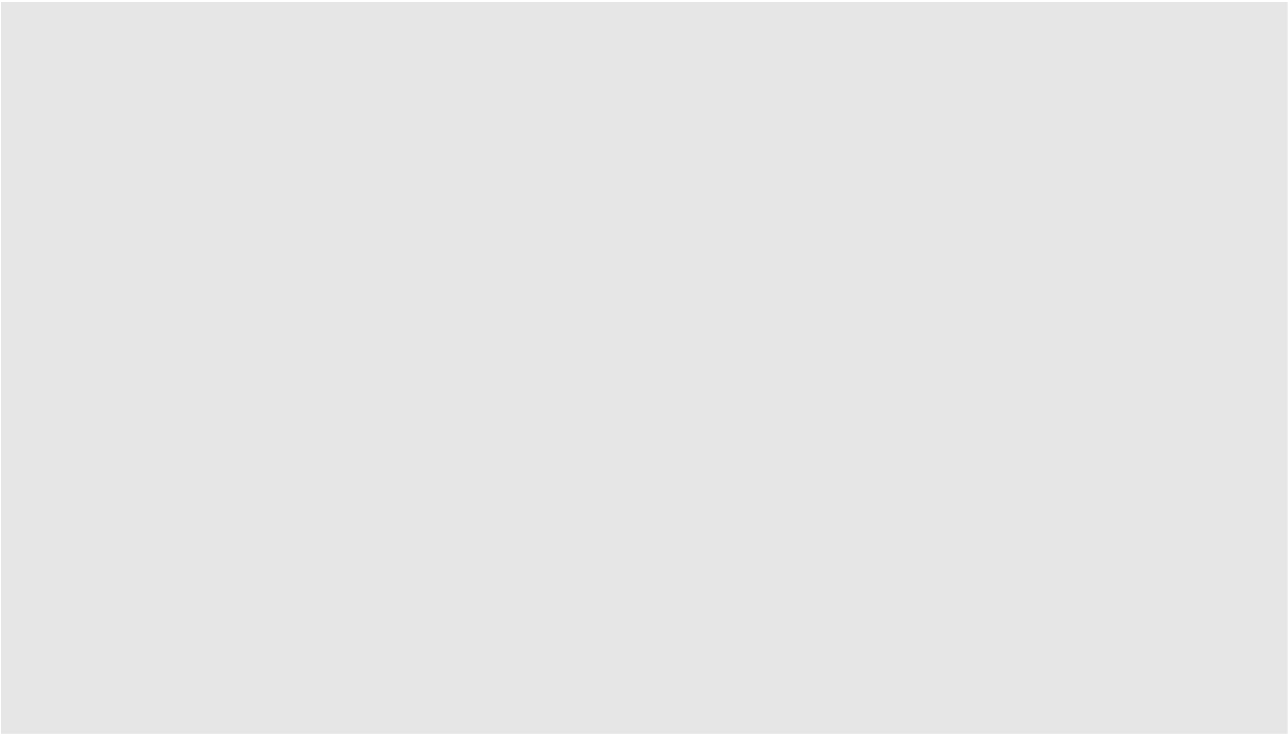
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Protesters march against the Sunday police shooting of Jacob Blake Thursday in Kenosha. Morry Gash, AP

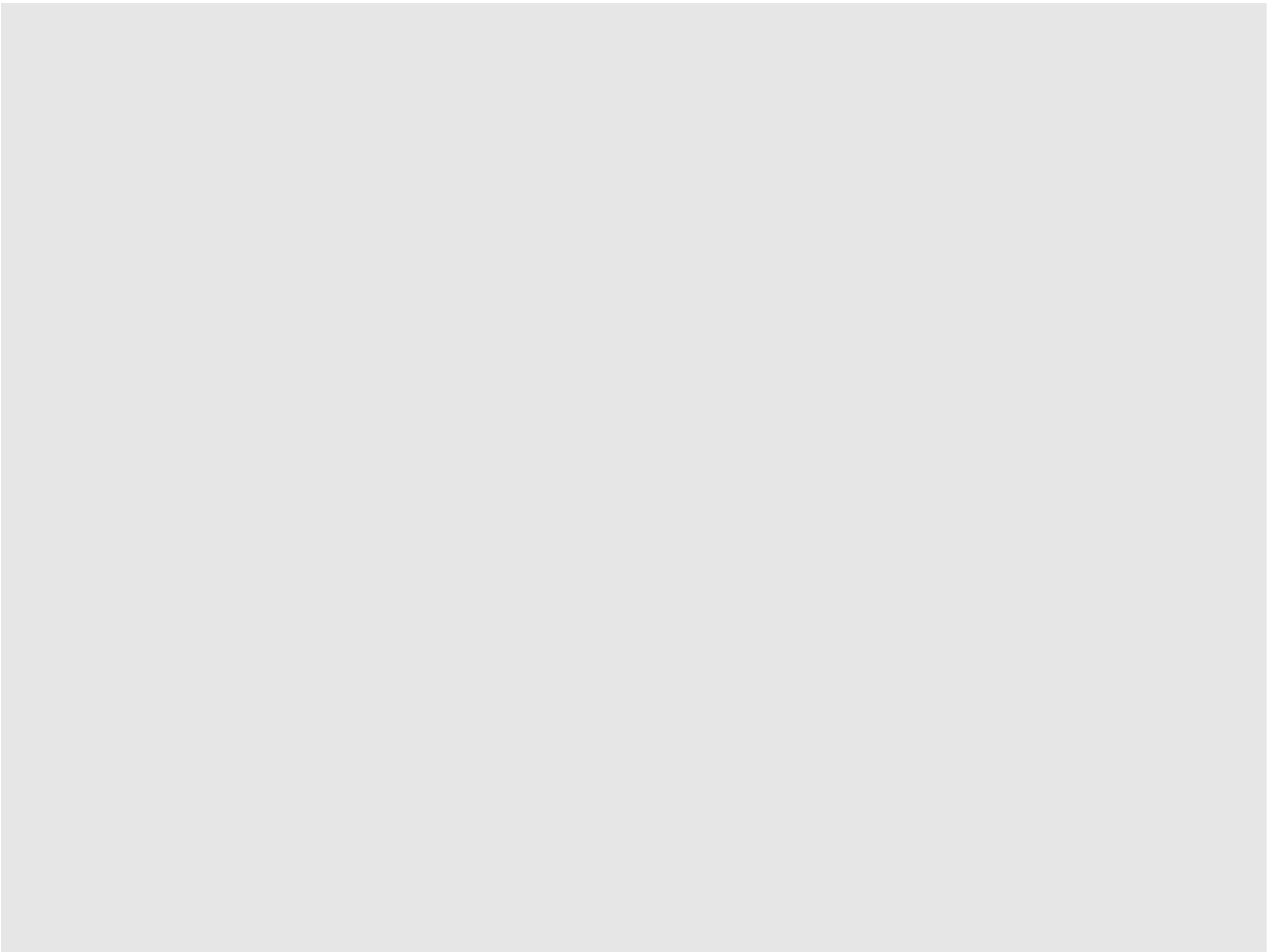
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People protesting the Sunday police shooting of Jacob Blake stop for snacks Thursday in Kenosha.

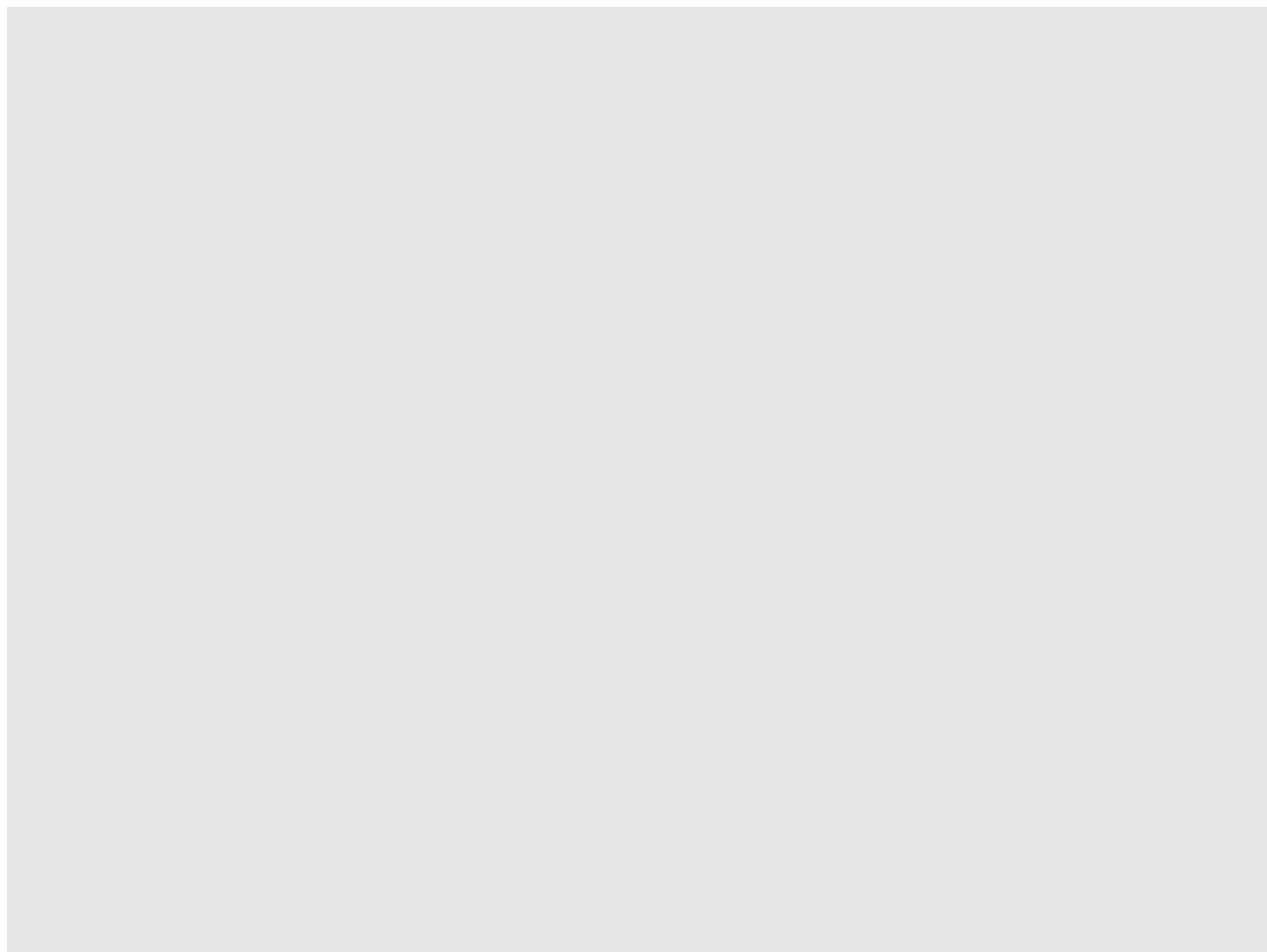
Morry Gash, AP



The National Guard protect the perimeter of government buildings in Kenosha on Thursday. People gathered for the fifth night to protest the Sunday police shooting of Jacob Blake.

Morry Gash

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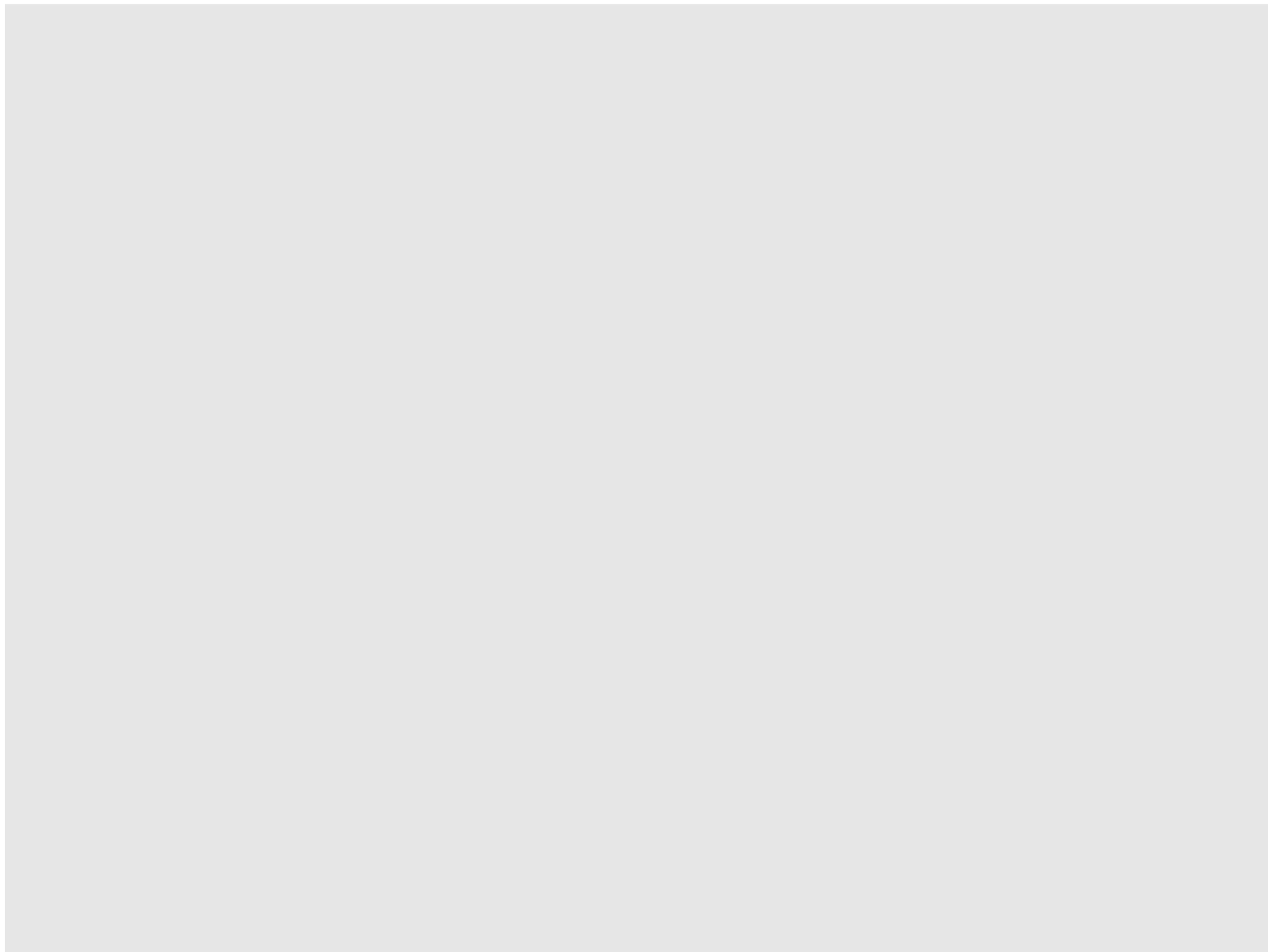


Residents stand in front of boarded-up businesses in Kenosha Thursday, days after protests of the police

shooting of Jacob Blake turned violent and demonstrators set fire to a number of buildings.

Russell Contreras, AP

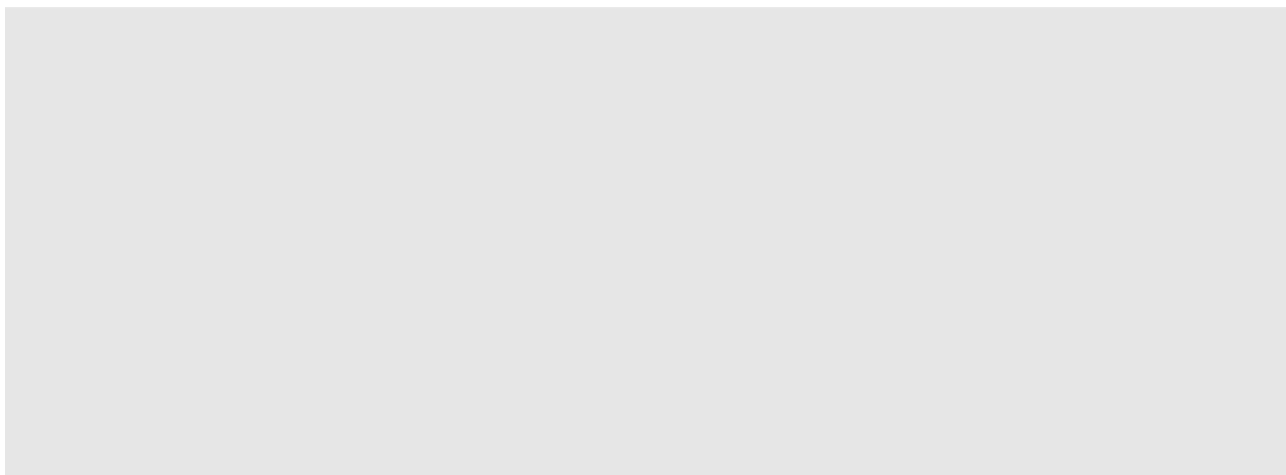
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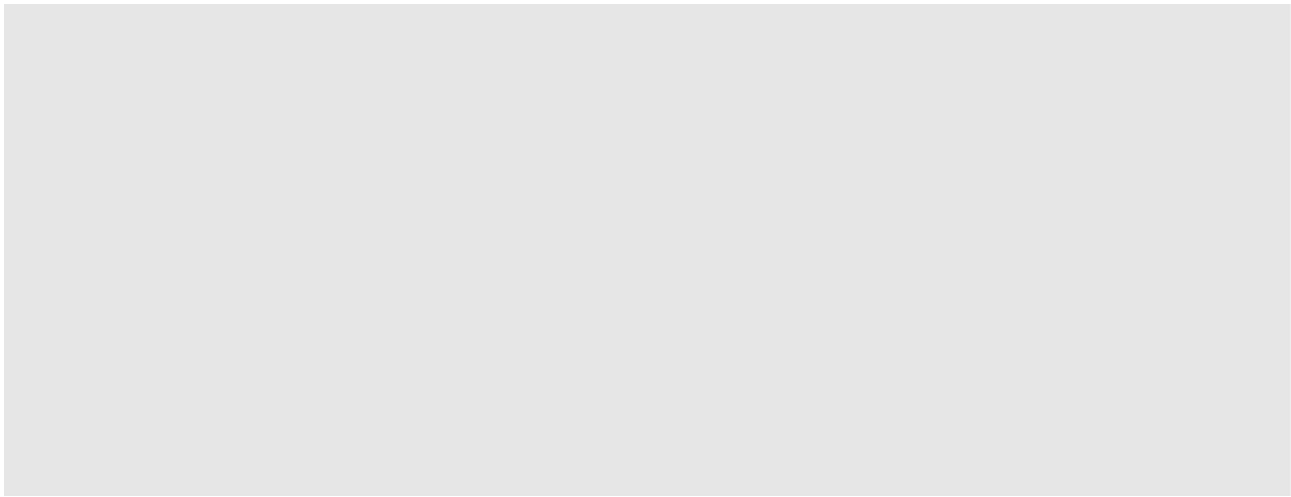


High school students, from left, Inayah Evans, 17; Qunesha Lackland, 15; Maleah Troll, 17, and Janayla Dixon, 15; sit in a Kenosha park after joining a Black Lives Matter demonstration to protest the police shooting of Jacob Blake. The students, who operate an online beauty site, Trap Beauty, say race relations between the city's Black residents and the police have gotten worse.

Russell Contreras, AP

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Cars torched during violent protests this week in Kenosha sit Thursday as demonstrators gather across the street to speak out against the Sunday police shooting of Jacob Blake.

Russell Contreras

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