

POLICE MEMORANDUM
#36-2022

DATE: Nov. 14, 2022

TO: Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

THROUGH: Heather Geyer, City Manager *hmg*

FROM: James S. May, Jr., Chief of Police *JSM/217*
Randall L. Darlin, Deputy Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Traffic Enforcement Strategy

PURPOSE

In September 2022, Council member Nicholas Walker raised concerns about speeding on Fox Run Parkway and asked City Council for consensus to bring forward a discussion about speeding and saturation enforcement. City Council provided the City Manager with consensus to bring the discussion forward. The purpose of this presentation is to provide Council with an overview of the current traffic enforcement strategy and receive Council feedback on changes moving forward.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, as part of the City's five-year Strategic Plan, the City adopted a traffic safety initiative to increase roadway safety and address traffic concerns in an effort to decrease the number of traffic accidents and speed violations, particularly in school zones and high-crash locations.

Traffic-related issues and speeding are consistently the community's top concerns. They affect a community's overall quality of life and public safety.

To accomplish this initiative, the city has invested in a comprehensive traffic safety strategy. The City and Police Department adopted a data driven approach to effectively address the overarching goal of traffic safety. This approach allows assignment of personnel and resources based on data analysis that integrates location-based traffic safety data to determine the most effective method of deploying resources. Additional analysis of traffic volume, traffic conditions, enforcement activity, and other available resources, including complaint review and response, are part of the comprehensive approach.

While enforcement has a role to play in traffic safety efforts, industry standards and national best practices have shown incorporating the three E's – Enforcement, Education, and Engineering into any traffic safety plan is a proven strategy designed to reduce the number and severity of collisions, promote compliance and increase public understanding. This strategy includes multi-department collaboration toward the shared goal of traffic collision reduction through roadway design and speed management strategies. Education plays a key role in making this a success, while also addressing misconceptions and perceptions about traffic related concerns. While this includes educating people about safe road behaviors, it also includes educating policy makers, decision makers, and other influencers about the importance of strategies that are proven to be most effective in order to make real change.

Traffic enforcement is the responsibility of NPD's Traffic Unit and Patrol Division and is a critical piece of the city' strategy. These strategies support a community policing approach where the police and community share ownership, responsibility, and accountability in order to effectively address traffic safety.

The NPD Traffic Unit is dedicated to a proactive approach surrounding traffic safety and collision reduction, through evolving enforcement strategies, which include:

1. Data-driven strategies and solutions to reduce the frequency of traffic collisions and reduce speed related violations
2. Increase community and resident understanding and awareness of roadway safety practices through education and community engagement
3. Partner with city and community stakeholders to identify and employ long-term traffic mitigation strategies
4. Support long-term traffic solutions that address the evolving needs and concerns of our community

Prioritization

The City's Traffic Team is primarily dedicated to traffic safety and enforcement, while Patrol Officers include traffic duties as part of their set of priorities:

- Emergency response
- Calls for service
- Proactive policing (High crime areas, Traffic Enforcement, Homelessness Outreach)

Traffic complaints are handled in order of priority and safety concerns. Data is collected from complaints to assist in NPD's data-driven model for strategy and deployments.

The Traffic Team prioritizes high-accident locations, high-complaint areas, and school zones. Accident causalities, such as speeding, lane usage, recklessness, and turning movements, are considered when conducting enforcement. Strategies to assist in accomplishing the department and unit goals and objectives include, but are not limited to:

- No Need for Speed – education and enforcement in partnership with the City initiative
- Traffic Calming – education and enforcement in partnership with the City initiative
- Commuter traffic enforcement: targeted enforcement during AM/PM commute to reduce probability of collisions and increase public education
- School Zone – implement educational and speed enforcement campaigns near schools, as well as complimentary campaigns related to school zone safety that affects pedestrians, bicyclists and other motorists within the zone. Utilize high visibility and public education strategies.
- Directed enforcement in traffic complaint areas: to include targeted enforcement in complaint areas, deployment of speed trailer and education campaigns
- Deployment of speed trailer in high speed traffic areas: Data analysis and public education
- STEP (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) including the following areas of concentration: alcohol Impaired, drug Impaired, and distracted driving.
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety programs and enforcement campaigns
- Special Event deployment
- Public Education
- Response identification for City and resident emails, phone calls and concerns directly related to traffic safety

Capacity

In 2021, Northglenn responded to 45,353 calls for service. This is an average of 124.25 each day and roughly 41 calls per shift. This does not include complaints initiated through some medium other than ADCOM. Officers spend most of their day responding to emergencies and calls for service. When available, patrol officers' first priority is high-visibility patrol to deter criminal activity, followed by traffic enforcement. When conducting traffic enforcement, patrol officers focus on

residential locations within their assigned districts. The time officers spend on emergency response, calls for service, and high-visibility patrol limits NPD's ability to enforce traffic.

To deliver the most effective enforcement strategies, NPD prioritizes enforcement efforts in areas which pose a significant safety risk to the community. Additionally, efforts are focused on the violations that pose the greatest danger such as excessive speeding, distracted driving, driving under the influence, violating pedestrian right of way, red light violations, and egregious stop sign violations, which are more dangerous than minor speed and equipment infractions.

Staff is seeking direction from City Council on what additional strategies Council would like to look at, while maintaining proven traditional community-oriented policing and traffic safety strategies for moving forward with the City's identified strategic goals.

Staff has developed the following three options to help guide the Council discussion:

Option #1 – Continue with current traffic enforcement strategy

Option #2 – Hybrid approach, shift current strategy to include other enforcement tools

Option #3 – To be developed with feedback from City Council

BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS

Depending on the discussion and additional strategies identified, there may be financial impacts to the NPD operating budget that would need to be evaluated.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This is for informational purposes only.

STAFF REFERENCE

If Council members have any questions, they may contact:

- James S. May, Jr., Chief of Police, at jmay@northglenn.org or 303.450.8967
- Randall L. Darlin, Deputy Chief of Police, at rdarlin@northglenn.org or 303.450.8964

ATTACHMENT

1. Presentation

TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

Nov. 14, 2022

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**CITY OF
Northglenn**

PURPOSE

Council directed staff to bring back a discussion on speeding and saturation enforcement.

- **What is “saturation enforcement”?**
- **How is it different than our current strategy?**



ONGOING CHALLENGES AROUND TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT

- **Perception is reality**
- **Resident and City Council concerns that NPD is “doing nothing”**
- **I never see a police officer on my street...**
- **“What’s it going to take someone getting killed...”**
- **Cars are traveling faster than actual speed**



CURRENT ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

- **Traffic Unit**
- **High accident areas**
- **School zones**
- **Complaint driven (CRM, call for service, via City Manager from residents or elected official)**
- **Patrol officer**
- **Traffic Accident Investigation**
- **Traffic enforcement is a shared responsibility (extra patrol and visibility)**
- **Complaints**



HISTORY & STAFFING OF TRAFFIC UNIT

Number of Officers in Traffic Unit by Year										
2013 Unit Reinstated	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 No Unit	2020 Unit Reinstated	2021	2022	2023 Projected
1	2	2*	2	1	1 * Officer transferred to North Metro Drug Taskforce	0 Council approved staffing and equipment for 2020	2*	2*	2*	Minimum 2 officers – goal is 3 officers

*Indicates unit was not fully staffed with the number of officers indicated for the entire year



TRAFFIC COMPLAINTS

Date – Traffic Calls for Service

- **2018 – 1,839**
- **2019 – 1,788**
- **2020 – 1,566**
- **2021 – 1,527**
- **2022 YTD (Jan-Sept) – 1,211**



TRAFFIC CITATIONS

- **2019 – 2,469**

- 345 speeding

- **2020 – 2,986**

- 992 speeding

- **2021 – 3,126**

- 1,377 speeding

- **2022 YTD – 2,777**

- 1,173 speeding



SPEEDING CITATIONS

2020		2021		2022 Jan – Sep	
Speed (MPH)	#	Speed (MPH)	#	Speed (MPH)	#
5-9	35	5-9	12	1-4	2
10-19	784	10-19	1,031	5-9	6
20-39	153	20-39	323	10-19	797
40 +	1	40+	11	20-39	362
				40+	6
Total	992	Total	1,377	Total	1,173



SPEEDING CITATIONS

CONT'D

Year Jan. – Sept.	Total Speeding Citations	% of Change
2019 vs 2022 (YTD)	345 vs 1173	212% Increase
2020 vs 2022 (YTD)	992 vs 1,173	18.25% increase
2021 vs 2022 (*YTD)	1,377 vs 1,173	14.81% decrease*



ACCIDENT DATA

Top Accident Locations in Northglenn

2020 - #s

- 104th / Huron - 22
- 104th / Washington – 17
- 120th / Washington – 17

2021 - #s

- 104th / Huron – 41
- 104th / Washington – 22
- 120th / Washington – 22

2020 Total Accidents – 1,014 2021 Total Accidents – 1,288



ALL TRAFFIC

Year Jan. – Sept.	Total Traffic Citations	% of Change
2020	2,440	
2021	2,456	<1% increase
2022	2,777	13% Increase



PATROL PRIORITIES

- **Emergency Response (life/death)**
- **Calls for Service**
- **Proactive policing:**
- **High crime areas**
- **Proactive Traffic Enforcement**
- **Homelessness outreach**



THREE E'S OF TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT

- **Enforcement**
- **Education**
- **Engineering**



WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

What measures do you want to see?

- **Reduction in accidents**
- **Increase in the number of tickets**
- **Increased visibility of officers in high complaint areas**
- **Reduction in resident complaints**
- **Others?**
- **Fully staffed Traffic Unit**
 - **Need Patrol to be sufficiently staffed at 36 officers**
 - **With hiring of lateral traffic officer who is an instructor, able to complete necessary training for future traffic officers**
 - **Most successful team was comprised of 1 Sergeant and 4 officers**



MOVING FORWARD

- **Deter speeding**
- **Increase visibility of police officers in high-complaint areas**
- **Decrease traffic accidents**
- **Address perception challenges**
- **Improve safety for pedestrians/bicyclists**
- **Continued focus education & awareness**



MOVING FORWARD

CONT'D

- Seeking direction to further Council's goals and NPD's priorities
 - Option #1 – Continue with current traffic enforcement strategy
 - Option #2 – Hybrid approach, shift current approach to include other enforcement tools
 - Option #3 – To be developed with feedback from City Council



QUESTIONS?

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