



CITY OF GLENDALE CALIFORNIA
REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

July 17, 2007

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: Report: Traffic Safety and Speed Enforcement in the City of Glendale
(1) Motion to Note and File.

COUNCIL ACTION

Public Hearing [] Ordinance [] Consent Calendar [] Action Item [X] Report Only []
Approved for July 17, 2007 calendar

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Submitted

Randy Adams, Chief of Police.....

Signature [Handwritten Signature]

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Prepared

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Reviewed

Christina Sansone, Senior Assistant City Attorney.....

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RECOMMENDATION

In response to a request by Mayor Najarian, the Police and Public Works Departments have compiled a report on the efforts being made to address speed enforcement and overall traffic safety in the City. Traffic safety remains an extremely high priority among the involved operations and we have incorporated multiple components in our effort to address and continue to enhance traffic safety. Even

with these efforts traffic safety remains a matter of concern. Efforts must be redoubled in four key areas to positively impact traffic safety, especially in the area of vehicle/pedestrian collisions:

- Continue aggressive public education campaigns in various media and languages
- Expansion of flashing crosswalk warning light systems to additional intersections and crosswalks; exploration of other pedestrian traffic collision mitigation measures (e.g. curb extensions and bollards at areas designated for pedestrian crossing).
- Greater utilization of Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) grant funds for education programs, enforcement programs, traffic collision mitigation measures and for funding additional traffic enforcement personnel.
- Increase targeted traffic enforcement and checkpoints through expansion of motor squad to authorized staffing levels or to the levels of comparative cities

BACKGROUND

In response to a request from Mayor Najarian the following is a report and analysis on the efforts being undertaken by the Police and Public Works Departments to address traffic safety issues and concerns.

The City of Glendale fares well in comparative traffic collision statistics except in one area: vehicle versus pedestrian traffic collisions. In fact, Glendale ranks at the bottom of 51 California cities of similar size in terms of elderly pedestrians being struck by vehicles. In response to these tragedies, a number of programs have been instituted involving public education efforts, stepped up enforcement, innovative pedestrian warning systems, pedestrian “sting” operations and targeted enforcement. All of these programs have involved interdepartmental collaboration between Public Works, Management Services, Traffic & Transportation Division, GTV6 and the Police Department as well as other governmental and non-profit organizations.

Public education efforts include the following:

- Multilingual Public Service Announcements on GTV6 and Charter Cable
- Pedestrian safety signs on refuse trucks and Beeline buses
- Teaming up with “Safe Moves” and holding bicycle and pedestrian rodeos in local elementary schools
- Creation of a “Walking Willie” coloring book for children
- Pedestrian safety programs at our local senior centers
- Traffic Safety presentations on “Behind the Badge.”
- SKIDS DUI education program
- “Every 15 Minutes” school-based DUI education program

Roadway improvement/collision mitigation efforts include the following:

- Lime green pedestrian signs throughout the City
- Placement of 30 in-roadway warning light systems throughout the City
- Installation of “hatched” crosswalk lines and reflective markers
- Installation of brighter LED traffic signals and improvement of pedestrian “Don’t Walk” indicators
- Placement of radar speed display at key points

- Installation of traffic calming measures (speed humps, curb extensions and roundabouts)

Traffic enforcement/safety efforts include the following:

- Police pedestrian sting operations
- DUI/Driver's License Checkpoints
- Roving DUI enforcement
- School pick-up/drop-off video enforcement
- Targeted enforcement/radar at problem locations
- Speed enforcement task force
- School crossing guard program
- Aircraft Enforcement Program

Despite these efforts, Glendale continues to experience a high number of vehicle versus pedestrian traffic collisions. Glendale also experiences profound traffic congestion in the central business district and high speed driving on suburban streets, long thoroughfares and canyon roadways.

ANALYSIS

According to OTS statistics, when compared to 50 other cities in the state of California with populations between 100,001 and 250,000, (2005 data) Glendale has the second worst accident rate involving pedestrians and the worst accident rate involving pedestrians over the age of 65. A review of our collision data involving pedestrians over the last two years (243 collisions) reveals that the driver has been at fault 62 percent of the time, the pedestrian has been at fault 19 percent of the time and fault could not be determined in 19 percent of the collisions.

The following tables provide a historical depiction of the total traffic collisions (TCs), pedestrian involved collisions and fatalities in Glendale, Pasadena and Burbank.

Glendale Police Department

	2003*	2004	2005	2006**
Total TCs	unavailable	2849	3049	2889
Pedestrian TCs	119	124	121	122
Total Fatal TCs	12	2	3	5
Pedestrian Fatal TCs	5	1	1	1

(*2003 pedestrian data is from the Traffic & Transportation Division and may be slightly lower than the actual number of collisions. Computerized traffic collision data for 2003 only available for part of the year and, therefore, is not included.)

(**2006 data is preliminary)

Pasadena Police Department

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total TCs	3062	2918	2987	2916
Pedestrian TCs	75	105	75	89
Total Fatal TCs	5	9	6	8
Pedestrian Fatal TCs	0	2	1	2

Burbank Police Department

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total TCs	1064	994	967	unavailable
Pedestrian TCs	39	46	48	
Total Fatal TCs	4	4	2	
Pedestrian Fatal TCs	0	1	1	

Glendale has 238 intersections that are controlled by traffic signals. Nearly all signal controlled intersections have marked pedestrian crosswalks and the signalization also controls pedestrian movements at these intersections. In addition to signalized crossings, Glendale has a multitude of marked and unmarked crosswalks and intersections that are not controlled by signal devices. Where there are no signal devices, pedestrians and drivers must rely on their own judgment and the right of way laws delineated in the California Vehicle Code to facilitate traffic/pedestrian movement and prevent accidents.

Glendale's intersections and crosswalks without signal devices have a higher probability of traffic collisions involving vehicles and pedestrians than at signalized crossings. In an effort to improve pedestrian safety, the City embarked on a process of installing in-roadway pedestrian warning light systems at key crosswalk locations. The first in-roadway pedestrian warning light system was installed in July, 2000; warning light systems have since been installed in some 30 crosswalks within the City. Since the installation of the in-roadway warning light systems, there have been 15 pedestrian involved collisions at these crosswalks, though none have been fatal. A 1993 study (by an outside agency, to test the efficacy of in-roadway pedestrian lights) showed that vehicles yielded to pedestrians on average 20 percent of the time when no in-roadway warning light system was present. After the installation of the warning light system, drivers yielded to pedestrians 78 percent of the time, and pedestrians activated the warning system 94 percent of the time.

Based upon a review of the data, additional signals that control both pedestrian and vehicular travel and in-roadway warning systems have the potential to reduce the number of pedestrian involved collisions if both drivers and pedestrians obey the traffic signals. Gaining willing obedience to traffic laws and signals is achieved through a combination of public education and enforcement.

Every city develops a unique culture and norms of behavior. Beverly Hills and Berkeley are contrasting examples of how culture manifests itself in the day-to-day persona of a city. A city's culture also extends to its citizens' degree of obedience to traffic laws and the corresponding impact on traffic safety.

Glendale has enjoyed a longstanding reputation for having low crime and orderly traffic conditions. Over time, however, density of housing has increased, the number of vehicles on our streets has increased, speed of vehicles has increased and the number of elderly pedestrians has increased. Compounding these factors is an increasing disobedience of traffic laws by Glendale's drivers and pedestrians – a perfect storm for vehicle versus pedestrian collisions.

As previously stated, gaining the public's willing obedience to traffic laws, is achieved through a combination of public education and enforcement (which is actually another form of public education). Glendale has already undertaken extraordinary public education efforts in the form of television programming, PSAs, news articles and campaigns – all in multiple languages. In late 2006, the City's PIO, Ritch Wells, initiated yet another public education campaign, aimed specifically at the elderly, which will include workshops, walking tours and a segment on GTV6's Senior Spectrum. The enforcement element of public education, however, has been hampered somewhat due to the police department's staffing shortage. It is anticipated that as our newer officers emerge from training and gain the knowledge, skills and abilities of tenured officers, we will be able to shift additional personnel to traffic enforcement duties.

While traffic enforcement is every police officer's responsibility, the Traffic Bureau takes the lead in resolving traffic enforcement related issues in Glendale. In January, 2006, the Traffic Bureau had nine full-time motor officers and two traffic investigators. As of May, 2007, despite significant attrition due to retirements and transfers, the Traffic Bureau has increased its staffing to 13 field-based motor officers and one traffic investigator. (One long-term IOD injury has reduced field strength to 12.) There are currently four vacant motor officer positions (authorized staffing of 17) and one vacant traffic investigator position. From a staffing standpoint, Glendale is authorized .08 motor officers per thousand residents and is currently staffed at a ratio of .06 motor officers per thousand residents. Our comparison cities average approximately .11 motor officers per thousand residents. This average ratio, if applied to Glendale, would equate to 22 motor officer positions.

In addition to responding to and investigating traffic collisions, the Traffic Bureau has adopted a "directed enforcement" approach to resolving traffic issues. Enforcement areas are selected based upon an analysis of traffic collision data and complaints received regarding specific problems. During 2006, the Traffic Bureau initiated 25 directed enforcement projects in addition to targeted traffic enforcement at local schools which occurs on a daily basis. As appropriate, the traffic Bureau coordinates activities with other units within the department to maximize effectiveness while minimizing the fiscal impact on the overtime budget.

The following is one example of a directed enforcement operation conducted by the Police Department:

In response to concerns expressed by the community and observations made by officers of the Glendale Police Department regarding traffic flow and traffic violations on West Glenoaks Boulevard, the Police Department implemented a directed enforcement project in the area. The directed enforcement activity occurred between March, 2006 and May, 2006, and concentrated on Glenoaks Boulevard between Brand Boulevard and the Burbank border.

The enforcement strategy was a combined effort between the Patrol Bureau and the Traffic Bureau. Through this cooperative effort, it was possible to relieve officers from having to answer calls for service and allow them to concentrate their efforts on traffic enforcement in the area. Enforcement activity was scheduled for different days of the week and various times of the day in order to maximize the impact of the limited, available resources and give the impression of a continual police presence in the area with the goal of reducing speeding and aggressive driving activity.

The cumulative results of the enforcement activity from the directed patrol efforts of both the Patrol and Traffic Bureaus are summarized below:

	<u>Total Citations Issued</u>	<u>Speed Citations</u>	<u>Other Citations</u>	<u>Arrests</u>
Patrol	467	143	324	27
Traffic	414	196	218	11
Total	881	339	542	38

During calendar year 2006, the Glendale Police Department issued a total of 2,330 citations for violations on West Glenoaks, of which 970 were for speed related violations. Citywide for the same time period, 21,960 citations were issued of which 3,380 were speed related.

Other activities conducted by the Traffic Bureau include pedestrian sting operations and DUI Checkpoints. In a recent pedestrian sting operation over 100 tickets were issued in a two-hour period. The Traffic Bureau has also participated in either fixed checkpoints or roving patrols for DUI enforcement on a monthly basis with the overtime costs being underwritten by an "Avoid the 40" regional grant funded through the OTS. The Traffic Bureau recently received another grant from OTS to conduct sobriety and driver's license checkpoints. These checkpoints are being conducted on a monthly basis throughout 2007.

Due to recent complaints regarding speeding vehicles on East Glenoaks, Traffic Bureau personnel conducted a quick survey to determine the scope of the problem. Although this survey is only the first step in formulating a comprehensive, multifaceted speed reduction effort the results are as follows:

The 2000 block of East Glenoaks was surveyed on April 27, 2007 between 6:30 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

Total Vehicles Surveyed – 1267

At or below speed limit (30)	51%	(642 vehicles)
Between 30 and 35	38%	(475 vehicles)
Between 36 and 40	10%	(132 vehicles)
Between 41 and 45	1%	(15 vehicles)
Above 45	0.2%	(3 vehicles – fastest = 50)

Conducting high-visibility traffic enforcement can have the result of lowering traffic speeds and causing greater obedience to all traffic laws. A collateral benefit of high-visibility traffic enforcement is a potential reduction in crime activity of all types. When street criminals and gang members see police officers engaged in traffic enforcement they are more likely to commit crimes in other cities where a police presence is not so evident. To date, OTS grants have been utilized to fund traffic safety/enforcement programs, but OTS grants can also be a source of funds for traffic enforcement positions. The Traffic Bureau recently submitted requests for grant funding for dedicated traffic enforcement personnel in an effort to reduce pedestrian traffic collisions and DUIs.

All high-visibility traffic enforcement, whether aimed specifically at pedestrian safety, DUI or speed enforcement, goes a long way toward public education and reinforcement of the perception that unsafe driving will not be tolerated in Glendale. Recently, the Traffic Bureau initiated efforts to conduct speed enforcement on West Glenoaks utilizing the police helicopter. The Traffic & Transportation Division conducted a comprehensive survey of the roadway and has already installed markings and signs which will permit aircraft enforcement. Local prosecutors and judges have been consulted and have approved of the implementation of this Aircraft Enforcement Program. A news release and public information campaign will commence in the near future, hopefully resulting in reduced speeds on our roadways.

The overarching goal for the Traffic Bureau is to reduce the number of speeding drivers, DUI drivers and the amount of aggressive driving that occurs on Glendale roadways. It is believed achieving this goal will contribute substantially to pedestrian safety as well. Understanding there are limited resources with which to address the problem yet a need to seek long term solutions, the following actions are recommended:

- Elevated, proactive, directed enforcement activity has proven effective in the past at reducing speed and other vehicle code violations, if only temporarily. It has also proven to be a valuable tool for investigative efforts and has been used as an effective method in suppressing other criminal activity.
- In the past, directed enforcement activity has been built upon observational information developed by field officers. This is certainly one method for developing an enforcement plan, however the information obtained through this method is limited, as it only records the observations when officers have the time to actually observe the area and are not involved in other activities.

With the cooperation of the Public Works Department - Traffic & Transportation Division, other methods to assess the magnitude of the problem are available. Day of week and time of day information along with traffic volume information can be obtained by placing traffic counters on the roadway or by utilizing the radar speed signs and downloading the data retained by the sign. Traffic speed counters were utilized on East Chevy Chase approximately one year ago and it was determined that enforcement times needed to be adjusted to achieve the desired results.

It is hoped traffic speed counters, mobile radar speed signs and other devices can be utilized on problem roadways so problems can be better assessed and enforcement efforts can be custom tailored to suit each location.

- The California Highway Patrol has used aircraft to enforce speed limits on both freeways and county roads. The Police Air Support Unit believes speed enforcement from our helicopter would be feasible on West Glenoaks and on some of our other major thoroughfares. The costs associated with day to day operations can be absorbed within the existing budget.
- Enforcement activity alone will not lead to medium or long range solutions to the traffic problems on Glendale's streets. Therefore, an additional element of our traffic safety strategy needs to be public information and education. There are several avenues that can be utilized to accomplish these goals which include working with the local news media in terms of explaining both the problem and the Department's response and enforcement philosophy. As mentioned above, aircraft enforcement would be a unique approach to a municipal problem that would garner local media attention which in turn would get the message out to the motoring public regarding the consequences of speeding and/or aggressive driving in Glendale. Public Service Announcements on GTV6 and/or inserts in utility bills could also be utilized. Finally, a targeted rotation of radar speed signs would not only provide information and education to drivers, but would also allow the Police Department to obtain speed data which could be used to refine our enforcement activity.

In addition to the possibility of obtaining grant funding to assist with these issues, revitalizing the staffing of the Traffic Bureau is essential to managing long term traffic safety issues within the City. Motor officers have the ability to safely maneuver through traffic and conduct enforcement under circumstances where police cars cannot. The effectiveness of traffic enforcement in the city could be further enhanced by the creation of a directed enforcement team within the Traffic Bureau. Much like the Special Enforcement Detail, this unit would work a flexible schedule, conduct directed enforcement activity, and look for long term solutions to some of our traffic problems. However, the full fledged implementation of this philosophy hinges upon recruiting enough motor officers to bring the Traffic Bureau to its authorized strength thereby providing proactive enforcement capability.

NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM

In November 1996, the City Council adopted the City of Glendale Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program ("Program") with the overall objective "to improve the livability of neighborhood streets by mitigating the impacts of vehicular traffic on predominantly residential neighborhoods." To reduce adverse traffic-related impacts, a variety of traffic control measures and roadway design features ("traffic calming tools") were identified to discourage non-local traffic, reduce travel speeds, and minimize accident potential.

In November 2004, the City Council adopted an updated Program. This updated Program--which currently is in effect--includes the same overall objective, but certain revisions were made to the original Program to enhance the Program's effectiveness and ease of implementation.

The Program is administered at the staff level by the Public Works Department - Traffic & Transportation Division. In considering residents' requests for traffic calming, the Traffic & Transportation Division interfaces with the affected residents as well as other city departments

(primarily Engineering, Fire, and Police). The City's Transportation & Parking Commission ("TPC") reviews all proposed traffic calming measures and devices.

Since its inception approximately 10 years ago, the Program has resulted in the installation of traffic calming measures and devices throughout the city. The traffic calming measures and devices most commonly utilized to date in Glendale include:

- Speed Humps-Lumps. Approximately 90 speed humps-lumps have been installed on over 20 street segments;
- Traffic Circles. Two traffic circles have been installed;
- Painted Edge Lines. Painted edge lines have been installed on numerous streets to reduce the perceived width of the travel lanes; and
- Speed Radar Message Signs. A total of 12 speed radar message signs have been permanently installed at six locations (each location equipped with one sign per direction of travel). In addition, a total of six portable message signs are available for temporary deployment.

These installations have consistently reduced travel speeds and, in so doing, reduced the potential for speed-related accidents.

M O T I O N

Moved by Council Member _____, seconded
by Council Member _____, that the report
relating to traffic safety and speed enforcement in the city of
Glendale dated June 26, 2007 be, and the same is hereby noted and
filed.

Vote as follows:


Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

APPROVED AS TO FORM



CITY ATTORNEY
DATE 6-21-07