

CITY OF URBANA
WORKSHEET FOR REVIEW AND PRIORITIZATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS
CONTAINED IN THE FINAL REPORT OF THE URBANA TRAFFIC STOP DATA TASK FORCE

		Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	
Line #	Rec #	Listing of Recommendations (Recs)	Essential? (Yes/No)	Relevance if Achieved? (rate 1 to 5)	Ranking Recs (High to Low)	Notes: (Record any notes)
1 Section 1: Recommendations for Continuation and Expansion of Recently Instituted Changes						
1	1.1	The collection of traffic stop “category” data as instituted is a good addition to the data collected by the Police Department. These categories should be reviewed and changed as necessary. The categories currently collected are (T) Traffic Stop -identified traffic issue, (P) Targeted Patrol, and (CC) Community Caretaking. {See page 33 of Final Report for additional detail.}				
2	1.2	Ongoing training and workshops on implicit bias are essential. Officers need to understand that they are subject to biases even if their intentions are pure. Being able to identify those biases and act to mitigate them will result in far less negative impact to the community. Officers should have required, ongoing training about how biases affect their policing practices on an annual basis. Such trainings should be provided with compensation and the support of the City of Urbana, and should be a required part of officer’s continuing education. They should be elements of an officer’s evaluations and promotion. Some of these training sessions should also be available for the community at large to attend, where members from both the Police Department and the community can participate together. {See page 33 of Final Report for additional detail.}				
3	1.3	Ongoing evaluation and reevaluation of the efficacy of traffic stops and the development of a strategic approach. The emphasis of future training should be on meaningful, professional stops and understanding the full effect of making stops (e.g. efficacy as a crime reduction tool, potential for disparate impact, effect on police-community relations). Traffic stop training should be combined with implicit bias training with a goal of mitigating the negative impacts of disparate traffic stops.				
2 Section 2: Statistics Recommendations						
4	2.1	A key recommendation is to hire or enlist the services of a statistician to provide the Police Department with an annual assessment of trends in traffic stops. Trends should be examined for racial disparities. If disparities are identified, they should be examined for a link to training, current policing tactics or biases.				
5	2.2	The data collected by the Police Department should be made available to the public to the greatest extent possible. Use of the Urbana Open Data web portal seems like a natural way to do this.				
6	2.3	The City Council or an appointed commission should review statistical data regarding traffic stops bi-annually or annually and publicly report on whether progress in reducing traffic stop racial disparities is occurring.				
7	2.4	Statistical evidence should be gathered on how often traffic stops lead to arrests. The arrests should be classified according to traffic crimes, warrant arrests, drug crimes, property crimes, and violent or weapons crimes. The arrests should be further classified as to the type of stop that was made: traffic, patrol or community caregiving. Gathering these particular statistics would permit an evaluation of the efficacy of investigatory stops as a crime-fighting tool, which could be used as a basis for future policy decisions.				
3 Section 3: Policy and Procedure Recommendations						
8	3.1	The City Council and the Police Department should undertake a review of municipal government policies regarding ticketing to be sure that all citizens—regardless of race or ethnicity—be ticketed at nearly the same rates. This must be done in order to avoid disparate citations and disparities in citations and rates of payment by race.				

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9	3.2	The City Council should examine its fine schedule for traffic violations and attempt to adjust it so that fines do not disproportionately impact low-income drivers. In particular, a reduction in fines for operating an uninsured vehicle and driving unlicensed should be considered.				
10	3.3	The City Council should investigate programs that will allow low-income drivers to obtain auto insurance at an affordable rate, thus lowering the likelihood of a disproportionate number of citations being issued to and fines being levied on low-income drivers.				
11	3.4	The City Council should consider a policy of directing a moratorium on the issuing of citations for cannabis possession when it is discovered in the course of traffic stops.				
	4	Section 4: Community Engagement Recommendations				
12	4.1	The City of Urbana, the Urbana Police Department, and community members should engage in pro-active, preventative educational programs to help the most ticketed communities (African-American drivers, Hispanic drivers, young drivers, drivers of older model cars) reduce traffic stops and citations. Specific education and assistance topics should include obtaining and retaining driving privileges, transportation options for unlicensed drivers, and the need for and access to insurance. This can be accomplished through workshops with local cultural organizations (African-American, Hispanic, Asian and youth organizations on campus and in the community) or making online resources available that focus on driver education in these targeted communities to avoid these offenses.				
13	4.2	The City of Urbana and the Urbana Police Department should host an annual "Walk As One" event with the Champaign County Coalition focused on "Community Education Regarding Traffic Stops" including reviewing traffic stops via squad car videos; exploring do's/don'ts regarding improper actions exhibited by both law enforcement and citizens; and explaining how both the public and law enforcement can be better informed about conducting and participating in traffic stops including reviewing the availability of written materials on an annual basis.				
14	4.3	Information explaining local traffic stop procedures and expectations should be provided online in multiple languages.				
15	4.4	Participation in ride-along and "Citizen Police Academy" programs should be encouraged, as it can give citizens some insight into police procedure.				
16	4.5	The Police Department should assist and participate in a series of meetings with community members to discuss ways to improve police-community relations, how to decrease racial disparities in policing practices and minimize the disparate economic impacts on minorities in Urbana.				
17	4.6	The community and Police Department should partner with the Urbana School District in sponsoring training on implicit bias within the schools. The training in the school should include community members and police.				
18	4.7	As the community develops further plans for engagement with or action by the Police Department, community impact assessments should be prepared to describe how such plans will impact the community.				
19	4.8	The Mayor's Citizen Voice program should be expanded to allow for informal reporting of problematic citizen-police contacts. Traffic citations should include a statement that citizens may communicate any problems with respect to their contact with the police by means of an email address or a specific website with the assurance that confidentiality would be assured.				

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

We have collected together the following recommendations based on our examination of current statistics, the community impact of the disparity in traffic stops, our review of current procedures, and a review of existing literature regarding policing and traffic stops.

SECTION 1: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUATION AND EXPANSION OF RECENTLY INSTITUTED CHANGES

1.1 RECOMMENDATION: The collection of traffic stop “category” data as instituted is a good addition to the data collected by the Police Department. These categories should be reviewed and changed as necessary.

The categories currently being collected are (T) Traffic Stop -identified traffic issue, (P) Targeted Patrol, and (CC) Community Caretaking. Officers have been instructed to use the following criteria to determine which category the stop falls into: (T) Traffic Stop is defined as stops that are made because the Officer observed unsafe driving; (P) Targeted Patrol is an investigatory stop made to address a problem, related to a person or location, that the Officer is aware of; (CC) Community Caretaking is a stop that is intended to be informational in nature (e.g. Are you aware that you have a headlight out?). A (CC) Community Care stop is not intended to be investigatory in nature. A second motivation for a CC stop is enforcement of administrative traffic laws (e.g. expired registration). In addition to category of stop, additional pieces of data (e.g. reason for length of stop) should also be collected.

1.2 RECOMMENDATION: Ongoing training and workshops on implicit bias are essential. Officers need to understand that they are subject to biases even if their intentions are pure. Being able to identify those biases and act to mitigate them will result in far less negative impact to the community. Officers should have required, ongoing training about how biases affect their policing practices on an annual basis. Such trainings should be provided with compensation and the support of the City of Urbana, and should be a required part of officer’s continuing education. They should be elements of an officer’s evaluations and promotion. Some of these training sessions should also be available for the community at large to attend, where members from both the Police Department and the community can participate together.

The Urbana Police department has conducted department wide training on traffic stops. The emphasis of the training includes: (a) an overall review of traffic stops including a background on why stops are made and the mechanics and philosophies of making stops; (b) the

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importance of making stops, considerations when making stops, formats for interaction on stops, and self-review of stops; and (c) a hands-on practical providing traffic stop tactics for single Officer, Multi Officer and Known risk stops.

The training is designed to develop Officer critical thinking on the use of traffic stops. Key points stressed are: (a) evaluating the outcome of stops (i.e. Did this stop serve the purpose that I made it for?); (b) linking stops to public safety as a core function (i.e. Believe in what you do. If you are making meaningful stops, you will prevent a death or life changing injury.); (c) linking stops to community policing, community relations, and professionalism (i.e. We help the community by solving patrol problems and professionally/positively interacting with the public.); and (d) reducing disparate impact/treatment in stops by conducting an Officer post-stop self-review (i.e. Was this stop consistent and fair, both are necessary?).

1.3 RECOMMENDATION: Ongoing evaluation and reevaluation of the efficacy of traffic stops and the development of a strategic approach. The emphasis of future training should be on meaningful, professional stops and understanding the full effect of making stops (e.g. efficacy as a crime reduction tool, potential for disparate impact, effect on police-community relations). Traffic stop training should be combined with implicit bias training with a goal of mitigating the negative impacts of disparate traffic stops.

SECTION 2: STATISTICS RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 RECOMMENDATION: A key recommendation is to hire or enlist the services of a statistician to provide the Police Department with an annual assessment of trends in traffic stops. Trends should be examined for racial disparities. If disparities are identified, they should be examined for a link to training, current policing tactics or biases.

2.2 RECOMMENDATION: The data collected by the Police Department should be made available to the public to the greatest extent possible. Use of the Urbana Open Data web portal seems like a natural way to do this.

2.3 RECOMMENDATION: The City Council or an appointed commission should review statistical data regarding traffic stops bi-annually or annually and publicly report on whether progress in reducing traffic stop racial disparities is occurring.

2.4 RECOMMENDATION: Statistical evidence should be gathered on how often traffic stops lead to arrests. The arrests should be classified according to traffic crimes, warrant arrests, drug crimes, property crimes, and violent or weapons crimes. The arrests should be further classified as to the type of stop that was made: traffic, patrol or community caregiving. Gathering these particular

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statistics would permit an evaluation of the efficacy of investigatory stops as a crime-fighting tool, which could be used as a basis for future policy decisions.

SECTION 3: POLICY AND PROCEDURE RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 RECOMMENDATION: The City Council and the Police Department should undertake a review of municipal government policies regarding ticketing to be sure that all citizens—regardless of race or ethnicity—be ticketed at nearly the same rates. This must be done in order to avoid disparate citations and disparities in citations and rates of payment by race.

3.2 RECOMMENDATION: The City Council should examine its fine schedule for traffic violations and attempt to adjust it so that fines do not disproportionately impact low-income drivers. In particular, a reduction in fines for operating an uninsured vehicle and driving unlicensed should be considered.

3.3 RECOMMENDATION: The City Council should investigate programs that will allow low-income drivers to obtain auto insurance at an affordable rate, thus lowering the likelihood of a disproportionate number of citations being issued to and fines being levied on low-income drivers.

3.4 RECOMMENDATION: The City Council should consider a policy of directing a moratorium on the issuing of citations for cannabis possession when it is discovered in the course of traffic stops.

SECTION 4: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 RECOMMENDATION: The City of Urbana, the Urbana Police Department, and community members should engage in pro-active, preventative educational programs to help the most ticketed communities (African-American drivers, Hispanic drivers, young drivers, drivers of older model cars) reduce traffic stops and citations. Specific education and assistance topics should include obtaining and retaining driving privileges, transportation options for unlicensed drivers, and the need for and access to insurance. This can be accomplished through workshops with local cultural organizations (African-American, Hispanic, Asian and youth organizations on campus and in the community) or making online resources available that focus on driver education in these targeted communities to avoid these offenses.

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and participating in traffic stops including reviewing the availability of written materials on an annual basis.

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4.6 RECOMMENDATION: The community and Police Department should partner with the Urbana School District in sponsoring training on implicit bias within the schools. The training in the school should include community members and police.

4.7 RECOMMENDATION: As the community develops further plans for engagement with or action by the Police Department, community impact assessments should be prepared to describe how such plans will impact the community.

4.8 RECOMMENDATION: The Mayor’s Citizen Voice program should be expanded to allow for informal reporting of problematic citizen-police contacts. Traffic citations should include a statement that citizens may communicate any problems with respect to their contact with the police by means of an email address or a specific website with the assurance that confidentiality would be assured.

Any of these activities that involve meetings between the community and members of the Police Department should avoid using the police station as a meeting venue. Advancing a message of transparency and improved community engagement will involve, by necessity, law enforcement leaving their comfort zones in order to engage with the community in community-based venues.