

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE: Traffic Emphasis
DEPARTMENT: Police
PRESENTED BY: Captain Clement Rusk

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

Each year the Shoreline Police Department conducts a "Back to School" emphasis in an effort to reduce and/or prevent traffic related injuries to school children. This year the program has been expanded in both enforcement and education as detailed below.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED:

Traditionally the emphasis included increased speed enforcement in and around school zones. Officers monitored school bus routes and enforced any "Stop Paddle" violations. Educational efforts were made via the School Resource Officer Program in the Shoreline Public Schools to teach children about traffic safety, which included pedestrian, bicycle and scooter safety.

The 2002 Back to School emphasis was expanded to include a Crosswalk Sting operation and Crosswalk Safety Bookmarks for all children in Shoreline. In addition to the traditional speed enforcement, the two Neighborhood Traffic Safety radar trailers will be strategically placed on arterials near schools to remind drivers of their speed. Traffic Safety curricula will be offered to all schools in Shoreline, not just the public schools.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Funding for the Crosswalk Safety Bookmark will be obtained from the Washington State Traffic Safety Commission and the Shoreline Rotary.

Increased traffic enforcement and crosswalk stings will be provided from existing traffic and patrol resources. Therefore, no additional funds will be required for this project.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is required by the Council this evening.

Approved By: City Manager  City Attorney 

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INTRODUCTION

Traffic safety is a key component to the Shoreline Police's Community Policing plan. The goals of traffic safety are to educate the motoring public on traffic laws and traffic safety and to educate youth who routinely encounter motorists. Education is taught in the classroom to children by both police and school staff. Educating motorists is accomplished through good signage, public information and enforcement.

BACKGROUND

Input for this expanded emphasis project was obtained from community member David Townsend and the TIA Group. The crosswalk sting and crosswalk safety bookmark programs were developed based on the models existing in the Kirkland and Redmond Police departments. Research was conducted with the Traffic Safety Commission to create the bookmark program which is a modification of their crosswalk safety brochure. It was determined that over 10,000 children attend schools in Shoreline and thus, this created an opportunity to place a bookmark in the hands of each child in Shoreline.

In the past years the Back to School emphasis was conducted without briefing the Council. In light of the increased public interest and concern over crosswalk safety and traffic complaints in general, the Police Department felt it necessary to advise Council of its focused efforts.

DISCUSSION

The 2002 Back to School traffic safety plan will include the following measures:

Education:

K Through 8 Safety Education - School Resource Officers (SRO's) will teach pedestrian safety in all Shoreline Schools, including the private schools. The SRO's will coordinate with school administrators to ensure this block of instruction is covered as youth return to school early this fall.

Crosswalk Safety Bookmark - School Resource Officers will hand out Crosswalk Safety Bookmarks to youth they encounter and will place the bookmarks where children may access them.

Radar Trailers - Radar trailers will be placed in areas of high traffic and speed the first weeks of school in order to remind motorists of the speed laws in school zones.

Enforcement:

Crosswalk Sting – Specific areas of Shoreline will be targeted for sting operations, generally at locations of high incidents of vehicle - pedestrian accidents. Officers will work undercover to observe and cite motorists violating crosswalk laws.

School Bus Stop Paddle Emphasis – During the first several weeks of school, police will follow school buses to watch for motorists that fail to stop while the stop paddle is out. Police will work with bus drivers and the school district to educate bus drivers to observe and record the license plates and vehicle descriptions of motorists that fail to stop for the school bus. Those license plates will be turned over to the police department and letters will be sent to the violators warning them of the law and consequences of failure to yield. In extreme cases, police will contact the registered owners at home for a discussion of the law.

School Speed Zone Enforcement – Officers will work radar in schools zones to reduce speeds and cite violators.

Engineering – Last year all cross walks within school zones were analyzed and properly signed to ensure visibility to motorists, within the requirements of RCW and defensibility in Court.

SUMMARY

In summary, the 2002 Back to School traffic safety plan is designed to reduce and/or prevent vehicle – pedestrian accidents, and specifically targets our youth population to ensure their continued safety in the community.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is required by the Council this evening.