



POLICE DEPARTMENT
Lorne C. Kramer
Chief of Police

CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS

July 14, 1995

95-16

Mr. John Lusardi
Police Executive Research Forum
1120 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 930
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Mr. Lusardi:

I wish to nominate the Neighborhood Traffic Unit (N.T.U.) of our Traffic Section for the Police Executive Research Forum's Third Annual Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem Solving Award.

The Neighborhood Traffic Unit is comprised of ten (10) motorcycle officers that work on traffic related problems throughout Colorado Springs. The unit was formed in 1992 to address traffic safety problems, and established a liaison with the community, the City Traffic Engineers, and the City Traffic Analyst. Information was gathered from the Traffic Analyst, and a Top 25 Accident Location list was identified by frequency and severity of accidents, and also analyzed for causation factors. The officers were deployed at the time of day and day of week to attempt to reduce accidents through effective enforcement. When officers discovered the need for better traffic signage or engineering changes, they contacted the Traffic Engineer to request those changes. The Traffic Engineering office in turn also has a citizen's outreach program, where citizens call in speeding complaints, and they put out traffic counters that monitor the volume and speed of traffic at the problem locations. Speed reports are sent to the Police Department for review and assignment to the Neighborhood Traffic Unit team for enforcement.

Beginning in 1995, the Neighborhood Traffic Unit changed its focus and became proactive in addressing traffic safety concerns. The Neighborhood Traffic Unit was deployed in specific geographic boundaries and contacted residents to solicit and respond to their traffic concerns. The deployments would last for a two-week period of time, and the number of community contacts, traffic citations, and other statistical information was gathered. At the time that they are contacting the citizens, they are passing a written information sheet, which has statistics about the number of accidents, DUI arrests, and tickets issued by the Colorado Springs Police Department together with some safe driving tips and a complaint form where they can send in their specific complaints. The program has been well received by the residents that have been contacted, and the enforcement's efforts have been successful as well.



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I believe that the Neighborhood Traffic Unit of the Colorado Springs Police Department exemplifies the concepts of community based/problem oriented policing, and is deserving of consideration for the Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem Solving Award.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lome C. Kramer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lome C. Kramer
Chief of Police

WANTED PROBLEM SOLVERS

The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) is accepting nominations for its third annual Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem-Solving Award. The award will be presented at the sixth International Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) Conference, which will be held in San Diego in November. PERF will accept nominations for individual and team problem-solving efforts. The award is based on the exemplary efforts of the nominees to identify, analyze, and respond to community problems.

The award process is open to employees of governmental policing agencies in the US and Canada who have a direct service delivery role. Private security personnel are not eligible. In most instances, this will include patrol officers, detectives and sergeants, though non-sworn employees and higher-ranking sworn officials who can show they have direct service delivery responsibilities may also be eligible for this award. A selection committee will evaluate each nomination based on a specific problem-solving effort. They will judge the problem-solving effort on its impact on the community affected, scope of analysis, creativity in finding solutions, and the partnerships developed among the police, community, business, and other government agencies.

A brief letter of support from the chief executive officer must accompany all nominations. Nominees should submit a resume and seven (7) copies of their project. Each project should be a 5-10 page double-spaced description of the problem and how they addressed it, including methods and resources used and up to three (3) supporting documents of the problem-solving effort, such as newspaper clippings. Videotapes will not be considered in the decision-making process. Nominees should address the following questions in the paper submitted including: What was the problem? For whom was it a problem? Who was affected by the problem and how were they affected? How did the department handle the problem in the past? What information was collected about the problem? Were there any difficulties in getting the information? What was the goal of the problem-solving effort? What strategies were developed to reach that goal? What agencies helped the police department in achieving the goal? Was the goal accomplished?

Send nominations to John Lusardi, PERF, 1120 Connecticut Ave, NW, Suite 930, Washington, D.C. 20037. For more information contact, John Lusardi at (619) 596-3032, FAX (619) 596-3053.

Nominations must be received by July 22, 1995.



CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS

Nomination for Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem-Solving Award.

The Colorado Springs Police Department Neighborhood Traffic Unit was formed in 1992 to address traffic safety concerns in Colorado Springs.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The Colorado Springs Police Department received information from various individuals in organizations concerning the traffic safety problems in Colorado Springs. The City Traffic Analyst reviewed all of the accident reports and prepared a Top 25 Accident Location list. The list was compiled by the number and severity of accidents at particular locations together with the traffic volume to determine a traffic accident rate. The analyst further examined the reports to determine causation factors. The predominant factors in accident causation were left turn violations and following at an unsafe distance. There were numerous speeding complaints, which were received from citizens, school officials, and neighborhood organizations. All complaints received were transcribed to a Neighborhood Traffic Unit complaint form and assigned to an Neighborhood Traffic Unit officer for enforcement and follow-up action. The complaints are kept in a data base and are used to determine problem areas and suggested locations for future Neighborhood Traffic Unit deployments. The Neighborhood Traffic Unit deployments to geographic locations combine an excellent mix of enforcement and education.



The Neighborhood Traffic Unit Traffic Safety Form, together with an information letter discussing traffic accident causation and traffic safety tips, are distributed door-to-door by uniformed motorcycle officers. The officers listen to the concerns of the neighbors in attempt to gather information and effectively address them through enforcement.

STRATEGIES DEVELOPED

Traffic safety concerns were identified by community shareholders as the number one concern among the citizens of Colorado Springs. In an effort to inform the public regarding the Department's effort to solve the traffic problem in Colorado Springs, the Department published the Top 25 Accident Locations in the Gazette Telegraph. In the past, the Department would assign individual officers to the complaints, and the officer would contact the complainant and conduct enforcement action. While we responded reactively to the complaints of the citizens, we had failed to proactively address the problems at hand. The Neighborhood Traffic Unit deployments developed a proactive stance, and not only responded to the individual citizens, but also contacted residents within the geographic area identified as a target zone. A lot of the residential neighborhoods border commuter streets, where there is a high volume of traffic, and the flow of traffic frequently exceeds the speed limit. With a team of four to five officers concentrating on enforcement in a dedicated area, the perception of traffic enforcement greatly increased among the citizens in that area. A majority of the residents contacted were amazed at the number of traffic accidents in Colorado Springs, together with the number of traffic citations issued by the Police Department.

The goal of the Neighborhood Traffic Unit program was to distribute useful information to the motoring public regarding the causation factors involved in accidents in Colorado Springs, and to change the perception that it was unsafe to drive on the streets of Colorado Springs. By using motorcycle officers working as a team, the public observed that the traffic laws were being enforced. The Police Department works in dose concert with the Traffic Engineering Division of the City of Colorado Springs. The Traffic Engineers would conduct traffic volume and speed reports on problem areas identified through the Neighborhood Traffic Unit program. Sometimes the reports would show that there was only the perception of a speeding problem, and that information was relayed to the reporting party. When the report showed a genuine speeding problem, it also identified the volume of traffic and the times in which the problem was occurring, so enforcement efforts could be deployed during peak problem times.

The Police Department also worked closely with the Traffic Analyst to solicit and obtain information on the Top 25 Accident Locations in Colorado Springs. The analyst's reports indicate the locations of the accidents together with the day of the week, time of day, and type of collision involved in those accidents. The list is compiled by using the number of accidents together with the injury severity and the volume of traffic to come up with an accident rate. The report also indicates the most common violation contributing to the accidents so that either engineering changes can be recommended, or appropriate enforcement taken. Several of the accidents occur on Academy Boulevard, which is a major arterial road through Colorado Springs. At several of the locations a left turn on green only arrow signal has been placed to reduce the number of accidents.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Between January 17, 1995 and January 28, 1995, five Neighborhood Traffic Unit officers deployed in the Broadmoor Bluffs area. Due to the hilly terrain and curves in this area, the speed limit had been recently reduced from 30 mph to 25 mph for the entire area. The officers contacted residents and handed out traffic safety information, making 1,581 citizen contacts. After the initial public education phase of the program, the officers wrote 204 traffic violations and 2 parking tickets, in working with the residents of that area, the officers developed community ties and conduct periodic follow-up enforcement.

Between January 30, 1995 and February 10, 1995, five officers of the Neighborhood Traffic Unit contacted residents in the Tamarron subdivision of Colorado Springs. The officers used the same tactics deployed in the Broadmoor Bluffs area and made 1,281 community contacts. The officers issued 286 traffic tickets, made 7 misdemeanor arrests and investigated a traffic accident. The program was well received in the Tamarron area, and several engineering changes were recommended to the Traffic Engineering Department. The Tamarron area is also a hilly area, which involves several curved roadways. Some of the recommended engineering changes involved placing right-turn-only signs on some of the side streets that enter the main streets on a curve. Residents were complaining that with the speed of the traffic on that roadway, it was difficult to safely make a left turn.

Between February 10, 1995 and February 24, 1995, the Neighborhood Traffic Unit worked I-25 for drug interdiction. During this period of time, the officers made 6 felony arrests, 4 narcotics arrests, and 25 misdemeanor arrests. Officers issued 285 traffic tickets and searched 38

vehicles for narcotics and weapons. Officers investigated 1 traffic accident and made 5 DUI arrests.

Between February 27, 1995 and March 10, 1995, the Neighborhood Traffic Unit deployed on Academy Boulevard between Galley Road and Airport Road. Academy Boulevard is a major thoroughfare through Colorado Springs, and the 500 and 600 blocks of N. Academy have the highest incident of traffic accidents in Colorado Springs. The officers made 205 business contacts and issued 244 traffic tickets. The officers investigated 26 accidents, made 2 DUI arrests and 7 misdemeanor arrests. 4 vehicles were search for narcotics and weapons.

Between March 13, 1995 and March 24, 1995, the Neighborhood Traffic Unit deployed in the Hillside area. Officers made 186 community contacts and wrote 183 traffic tickets. The officers investigated 1 accident and made 2 misdemeanor arrests. The Hillside area is a lower economic area of Colorado Springs that has a lot of criminal and gang activity. The visibility of the officers in this area assisted in the reduction of visible criminal activity.

Between March 27, 1995 and April 7, 1995, the Neighborhood Traffic Unit deployed in the Maizeland Road area. Five Neighborhood Traffic Unit officers went door-to-door contacting residents and distributing traffic safety information. The officers made 821 community contacts and wrote 299 traffic tickets. The officers investigated 1 traffic accident. The Maizeiland Road area is predominantly a residential area with a few businesses along Academy Boulevard. The enforcement efforts were well received with the residents. The Traffic Section received 16 written responses from citizens in the area. The responses were generally appreciative of the

efforts of the Neighborhood Traffic Unit, and also suggested locations and times when additional enforcement would be beneficial to their traffic problems. The written responses were assigned to the Neighborhood Traffic Unit officers for follow up and enforcement action.

Between April 10, 1995 and April 24, 1995, the Neighborhood Traffic Unit deployed in the Village Seven area. Five motorcycle officers contacted residents in the area and handed out written traffic safety material. The Village Seven area contains one of the City's four hospitals and other business and retail outlets. The area also has some apartments and is predominantly single-family homes. The officers made 413 community contacts and wrote 372 traffic summonses. The officers investigated 17 traffic accidents and made 1 felony and 5 misdemeanor arrests. The area contains a junior high school, and an elementary school, and enforcement efforts were concentrated in close proximity to the school during the times that the students were arriving and departing the school area.

Between June 12, 1995 and June 23, 1995, four Neighborhood Traffic Unit officers deployed in the Sierra High School area. The officers made 319 community contacts, issued 520 tickets, made 1 felony arrests, 18 misdemeanor arrests, a DUI arrest, and investigated a traffic accident. The Sierra High School area is a high crime area, which has significant gang activity. The addition of the Neighborhood Traffic Unit to the area made a visible police presence, which curtailed some of the criminal and gang activity. The residents in the area were extremely appreciative of the enforcement efforts and the education efforts of the Neighborhood Traffic Unit officers.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Through the first six months of 1995, the Neighborhood Traffic Unit has deployed in eight separate areas. The officers have made 4,806 community contacts and issued 2,373 traffic citations, along with 2 parking tickets. The officers have made 8 felony arrests, 4 narcotics arrests, 7 DUI arrests, and 64 misdemeanor arrests. The officers have investigated 48 traffic accidents and searched 42 vehicles for narcotics and firearms. This proactive approach by the Neighborhood Traffic Unit has been well received by the communities affected by their deployments.

GOAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

In assessing the Department's success in achieving the goal of addressing traffic safety concerns, I believe that we have made significant inroads into achieving this goal. The deployments into various neighborhoods have been very successful in not only educating the drivers of that area, but also in reducing the speeds on the commuter roadways. Representatives of the Neighborhood Traffic Unit have made themselves available to the Citizen's Advisory Committees for each of the three Department Area Commands and the numerous homeowner's associations to explain the program and develop new deployment areas. We will continue to work in close unison with the City Traffic Engineers and Traffic Analyst to make Colorado Springs a safer motoring community through education, enforcement and engineering.

The Colorado Springs Police Department has adopted problem-oriented policing as its comprehensive strategy. Integrating this strategy into Traffic has been a time consuming

process that has surprisingly benefited our neighborhoods and motoring public. To the best of our knowledge, there are no other comprehensive neighborhood safety programs that actively encompass the concepts of community-based/problem-oriented policing. The Colorado Springs Police Department's Neighborhood Traffic Unit has proven beyond a doubt that placing an emphasis on problem-solving through community involvement is a successful and effective system that gets positive results.

Attached to this nomination are the information forms and Neighborhood Traffic Unit complaint form, together with the Crime Analysis Unit's recap of the Top 10 Serious Accident Locations, and the Top 25 Serious Accident Locations. Further information or questions can be directed to:

Lieutenant Steve Liebowitz, Traffic Commander
Colorado Springs Police Department
Traffic Section
705 S. Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
719-444-7702

Attachments: 3