



# City of San Antonio

## Legislation Details (With Text)

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**In control:** Public Safety Committee

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**Title:** Briefing and Possible Action on the SAPD Traffic Safety Programs [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; William P. McManus, Chief of Police]

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**DEPARTMENT:** Police Department

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** William P. McManus, Chief of Police

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

### SUBJECT:

Traffic Safety Briefing

### SUMMARY:

Briefing on the San Antonio Police Department Traffic Safety Programs.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) Traffic Section is responsible for maintaining public safety through the enforcement of traffic laws and provides traffic control at major police incidents, major crashes, critical incidents and large public events. Each year, the Department administers a number of grant funded education and enforcement initiatives designed to promote traffic safety. In addition, the SAPD promotes public awareness campaigns and participates in special events in coordination with local community organizations and schools to share information on safe driving practices.

### Traffic Section

The SAPD Traffic Section is comprised of the following:

- Traffic Enforcement Officers
- Traffic Motorcycle Detail
- Highway Interdiction Detail
- Helicopter Detail
- DWI Unit
- School Crossing Guard Program

There are a total of 155 sworn personnel and 256 civilian crossing guards assigned to the Traffic Section. The Section works in coordination with the Patrol Division actively enforce school zones throughout the year. Highway Officers are assigned to the freeway system and routinely conduct traffic enforcement to target speeding violations, distracted driving, move over laws, seatbelt violations, and other hazardous moving violations.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) Grant funds additional traffic enforcement and DWI education outreach at local schools and at various community events in an effort to educate the public on the dangers of drinking and driving.

### **SAPD Enforcement**

The following table provides an overview of citations issued and arrests made citywide for various traffic violations in 2018 (January to December):

| <b>Citations (January - December 2018)</b> |        |
|--|--------|
| Speeding                                   | 75,148 |
| Texting                                    | 10,892 |
| Seatbelt                                   | 5,837  |
| Intersection Violations                    | 4,694  |
| Child Restraint                            | 1,719  |
| <b>Arrests (January - December 2018)</b>   |        |
| DWI  | 4,650  |

### **School Zones**

Traffic officers patrol each school zone to ensure motorist and pedestrian safety throughout the school year. In 2018, there were a total of 7,985 citations issued to motorists for school zone violations.

The School Crossing Guard Office also plays a critical role in ensuring traffic safety at school campuses citywide by reporting unsafe driving conditions and violations. Every elementary school is eligible for crossing guard assignment and the Department maintains regular communication with each school to address any issues

or concerns that may arise.

## **SAPD Education Outreach**

The SAPD Public Information Office creates traffic safety-related videos and campaigns each year to raise public awareness on responsible driving habits and to educate motorists on traffic-related ordinances and laws. Utilizing its social media platforms, the Department highlights various special operations and initiatives designed to address traffic violations throughout the year and posts messages that promote traffic safety.

The SAPD also works in partnership with TxDOT to offer the Public Resource Educational Package (PREP) Program which promotes traffic safety by providing information and activities at various community events including high schools, college campuses and military bases. Participating officers engage the public and educate them on the dangers of DWI and hazardous driving behaviors.

## **Collaboration with TCI**

### ***Vision Zero***

In 2018, Vision Zero strengthened its relationship with SAPD by focusing on the principles of Education, Encouragement and Enforcement. TCI worked with SAPD on high-visibility enforcement and four high-crash intersections throughout the City as part of a TxDOT Traffic Safety Grant. Officers provided Vision Zero educational information to all residents they contacted during the enforcement. Vision Zero staff also created a roll call video to educate SAPD officers on Vision Zero on the importance of accurate data in crash reports. Approximately 1,300 officers viewed this video.

The Vision Zero key to success is a combined approach using the five essential elements for a safe transportation system: Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement and Evaluation:

- **Education**  
Communicate the importance of safety for all on our roadways, whether a person is driving, bicycling or walking.
- **Encouragement**  
Encourage all to practice safety and follow traffic laws.
- **Engineering**  
Construct improvements to enhance safety and accessibility along crosswalks, walkways and bikeways.
- **Enforcement**  
Enforce traffic safety and continue to support safety initiatives such as Click It or Ticket It, Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving, and Distracted Driving.
- **Evaluation**  
Evaluate traffic safety efforts and implement improvements as needed.

## ***Neighborhood Traffic Concerns***

In addition to collaboration on Vision Zero, the SAPD and TCI work closely to identify and address traffic safety concerns throughout the city. Residents routinely provide SAPD officers with information on intersections and roadways within their respective neighborhoods. The SAPD forwards all traffic-related concerns to TCI to assess the traffic infrastructure in the area to determine factors that may be contributing to community concerns. TCI works with TxDOT to address traffic-related concerns reported on state roads and highways.

The SAPD establishes directed patrols to address chronic speeding and other traffic violations and also deploys a mobile radar unit to measure vehicle speed at along major roadways. In addition, the Department has purchased additional radar guns for each substation for use in neighborhoods to address speeding.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

This briefing is for information purposes only.