

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: 4-28-2016

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Chief Kevin Treadway, Deputy Chief Dan Musselman, Police Dept.

CC: Josh Copley, Shane Dille, Barbara Goodrich, Leadership Team

SUBJECT: Pedestrian Crosswalk Concerns at Hwy 180 and Forest

DISCUSSION

On April 21<sup>st</sup> a cyclist was struck while riding northbound on highway 180, by a vehicle turning left onto Forest Ave (P16-05461). An e-mail was generated by Thomas Sabol, a concerned citizen about the crosswalk which crosses Highway 180 in this area. This crosswalk was not brought to our attention previously as a problem area, nor is it one of our top collision locations (most dangerous intersections). The following data may help frame the issue:

Description	2013	2014	2015	2016 (through April 25th)
Total Number of Collisions city wide	2555	2544	2872	948
Total Number of Pedestrian vs. Vehicle Collisions	34	54	52	12
Total Number of Pedestrian in Crosswalk Collisions	15	18	24	5
Total Number of Fatalities from Collisions	3	3	7	0
Total Number of Pedestrian Fatalities	2	3	5	0
Total Number of Traffic Citations issued	9912	8646	10748	3130
Total Number of Arrests/Citations issued to Pedestrians for Obstructing a roadway	19	19	19	4
Total Number of Citations issued to Pedestrians for Jaywalking	11	10	8	7
Drivers cited for failure to yield related to Pedestrians in Crosswalks	15	25	28	3
Number of collisions at Hwy 180 and Forest	8	9	12	5
Number of pedestrians or cyclists struck at Hwy 180 and Forest	0	0	0	1

The Flagstaff Police Department responds to many types of collisions. We are always concerned about bicycle and pedestrian safety throughout the city. However, the percentage of collisions (less than 1% of the city total) at this intersection is relatively small when viewed with the City as a whole. The majority of our previous fatal collisions with pedestrians involved intoxicated pedestrians in the roadway, not within crosswalks. We conduct outreach regularly with regards to traffic and pedestrian safety. Our officers are always encouraged to address all traffic violations as they are observed. The table above shows that officers have cited both drivers and pedestrians for offenses that contribute to vehicle/pedestrian collisions.

The Department puts out an internal crime and traffic information newsletter to all employees every week, followed by formal monthly Comp-Stat (computer/comparative statistics) meetings with all supervisors. During these monthly meetings, we focus on crime and traffic trends to be proactive in our mission of preserving life and property. As part of our on-going review of these incidents in Compstat, in November, we changed our procedures to, “hot toning” all calls involving pedestrians in the roadways. This allows the officers to run lights and sirens to calls from the public indicating a pedestrian is in the roadway. The Department also kicked off a pedestrian safety campaign, which ran the months of December, January, and February, with the goal being the reduction of the number of pedestrian crashes. We directed officers to address pedestrians in roadways upon sight, when not responding to other life-threatening calls. They were also directed to enforce traffic regulations in general as they pertain to pedestrian issues.

The press release for the pedestrian safety campaign was as follows:

*Everyone is a Pedestrian.*

*Everyone has different preferences when it comes to transportation, but there’s one that all road users share—everyone is a pedestrian. Unfortunately, pedestrians were one of the few groups of road users to experience an increase in fatalities in the United States in 2013, totaling 4,735 deaths.*

*“On average, a pedestrian was killed every two hours and injured every seven minutes in traffic crashes. Fourteen percent of all traffic fatalities and an estimated three (3) percent of those injured in traffic crashes were pedestrians.” (Traffic Safety Facts: Pedestrians, April 2014) – (PDF 1.20 MB)*  
*Safety is the top priority of the Department of Transportation. In particular, U.S. Transportation Secretary, Anthony Foxx declared pedestrian and bicyclist safety among his focuses and launched his U.S. DOT Safer People, Safer Streets Initiative.*

*U.S. DOT Safer People, Safer Streets Initiative - Under the Secretary's leadership and the Safer People, Safer Streets initiative, road safety assessments were conducted in every state, and more than 230 cities have joined the Mayors' Challenge to improve walking and biking.*

*The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) continue to work to raise awareness about the dangers to pedestrians and bicyclists, and to provide leadership, expertise, and resources to communities across America to combat these crashes.*

*Please join us to reduce traffic safety risks to pedestrians and bicyclists, and to promote programs and countermeasures to save the lives of all road users on our Nation's roadways.*

*Visit NHTSA's and FHWA's pedestrian Web pages for additional information.*

Based on the Departments Pedestrian Safety Campaign and in response to a concern about pedestrian safety in crosswalks, we conducted the following outreach:

- We assigned an officer to sit on the Pedestrian Advisory Committee as a Block watch assignment, and had the Traffic Sergeant explain to them our Pedestrian Safety campaign and the reasons behind it.
- We began enhancing our Traffic Talk Tuesdays on social media.
- We began publishing our most dangerous intersections.
- Began partnering on the distracted driving campaign, "It Can Wait", with great Circle Media, Flagstaff Subaru, Competition Carstar and other local partners, who are now doing public service announcements on some of our local radio stations.
- We continue to partner with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway on Operation Lifesaver (pedestrian safety at railroad crossings).
- We completed a City Council Report to the City Council and Leadership team, which outlined collision data,

In response to the concern at Ft. Valley and Forest Avenue, we can assist with the following:

- Having the traffic unit work it as a target area for enhanced enforcement, during high times of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- Calling out the dangerousness of this specific intersection during our Traffic Talk Tuesdays on social media.
- Placing the location on a close patrol for all officers to work traffic enforcement with their discretionary time.
- Public Service Announcements in print media and on the radio when we get the opportunity, on our future traffic safety campaigns.
- Continue to work closely with the City's Pedestrian Advisory Committee on traffic safety campaigns.
- Putting out media releases on all fatal collisions to remind the motoring public to travel safely.

Some suggestions by Thomas Sabol were for a flashing light in the crosswalk, or more enforcement during peak use times. He understood that this is an Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) controlled area. The most recent collision involving the cyclist would likely still have occurred even if there was a flashing crosswalk or traffic signal present at this intersection. The cyclist was travelling north on 180, and the vehicle was turning left from a stopped position from southbound 180 onto Forest Avenue. The driver stated he was partially blinded by the sun when he struck the cyclist.

In review of our collisions at this intersection, we found that we have had one collision each year (2013-2015), that involved a car slowing or stopping for the crosswalk across Highway 180 and being rear ended by a trailing vehicle.

It should also be noted that a traffic signal will likely negatively impact the winter congestion traffic from snow play areas north of the City. Any design change would need to be supported and completed by ADOT, with input and coordination with the City Engineering Team.

We could see some immediate impact from increased enforcement at this area, but because many that travel along this route are tourists, especially in the summer and winter months, our local outreach may have little impact with them.

Anyone passionate about pedestrian safety is always welcome at the City's Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC). The committee meets on the second Thursday of each month at 4:30 pm in the Council chambers on the first floor of Flagstaff City Hall.

Pedestrian issues currently under consideration by the PAC include:

- Pedestrian Master Plan
- Sidewalk inventory and prioritization
- Evaluation of pedestrian environment on major streets and intersections
- Safe Routes to School
- Flagstaff Walks!
- Targeted enforcement of pedestrian laws in school zones
- Community walking maps
- FUTS trail planning and prioritization
- Sidewalk maintenance and snow removal
- Crosswalk safety

## RECOMMENDATION / CONCLUSION

This report is for information only.