



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: February 13, 2023

ITEM TITLE: Receive an Updated Report on Traffic Collisions.

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is submitted for informational purposes only.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is no financial impact associated with receiving this report.

BACKGROUND:

This report is being provided in response to the City Council's request on November 14, 2022, to receive an update on traffic collisions in San Carlos during 2022. This report also includes the Police Bureau's current traffic enforcement strategies and education efforts to maintain safer roads.

ANALYSIS:

Traffic Collisions

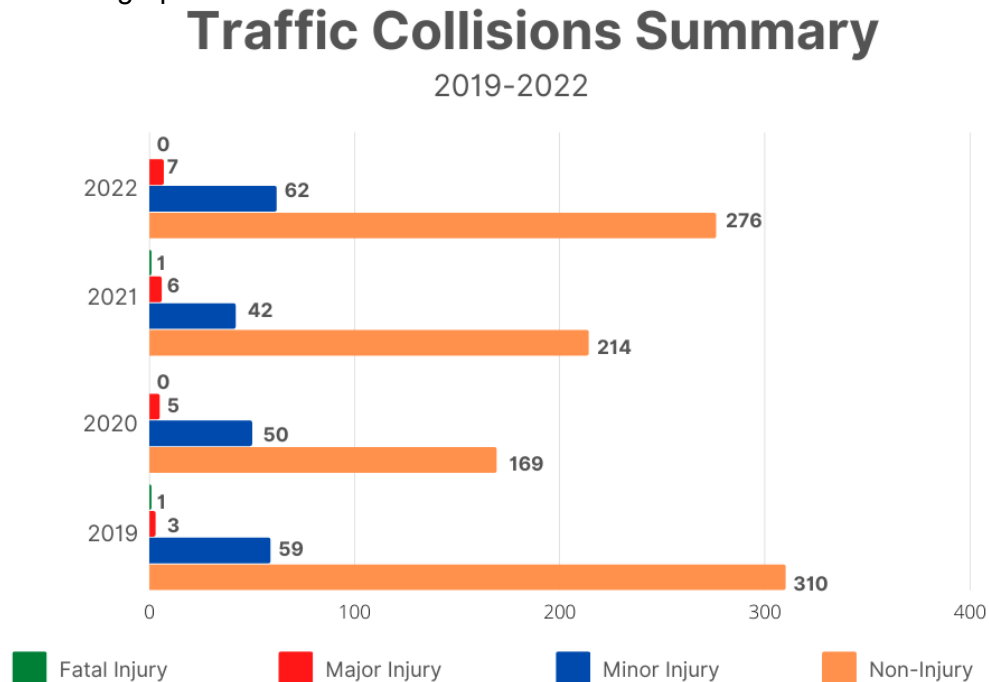
This report includes traffic collision data from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, and is compared with data from 2019, 2020, and 2021. The following data categories for motor vehicle traffic collisions were used: fatal injury, major injury, minor injury, and non-injury collisions. Definitions of each are listed below.

- Fatal injury: results in the death of one or more persons within 30 days of the collision.
- Major injury: includes severe wounds, other visible injuries, or complaints of pain.
- Minor injury: any injury that is evident at the scene of the collision other than fatal or major injuries.
- Non-injury: no complaint made or treatment required by the persons involved.

The graph below contains traffic collision data related to documented collisions in the last four years.

For years 2021 to 2022, the data shows an increase (n=20 collisions) in minor injury-related collisions, an increase (n=1) in major injury-related collisions, an increase (n=62) in non-injury-related collisions, and a decrease (n= -1) in fatal injury collisions. Common causes of traffic collisions, such as distracted driving, speeding, and alcohol and drug use, may be causative factors; however, in this case, the increase in overall traffic collisions is believed to be primarily related to the rise in vehicular traffic as we exited the pandemic.

The 2020 shelter-in-place orders and an increase in teleworking contributed to significantly reduced vehicular traffic in 2020 and 2021, resulting in fewer traffic collisions. However, since COVID-19 restrictions were lifted in 2022, fewer people are teleworking, and the number of vehicles on our roads has increased, explaining the return of traffic collision numbers to pre-pandemic (2019) rates. This is demonstrated in the graph below.



Traffic Enforcement Strategies

Maintaining safe roadways for all who use them is an ongoing area of attention for the San Carlos Police Bureau. The Sheriff's Office, in partnership with other City staff, takes a three-pronged approach to traffic safety: education, enforcement, and engineering.

Currently, two full-time motorcycle traffic deputies are assigned to traffic enforcement in San Carlos Monday through Friday. Traffic deputies work in conjunction with the Internal Collaborative Saturation Traffic Enforcement Program (S.T.E.P.) on a monthly rotation, allowing four to five motorcycle deputies to collectively conduct traffic enforcement in San Carlos. The remaining three deputies per shift who work patrol assignments are also responsible for assisting with traffic enforcement when time permits.

Traffic complaints are collected from the community in various formats. To report a traffic complaint, a person can utilize the online platform Accela, call or visit the Police Bureau, or engage with a deputy in the field. The complaints are logged, reviewed, and posted on the patrol board for complaint-driven traffic enforcement.

The Sheriff's Office collaborates with the Department of Public Works and the City Engineer. This combined effort is designed to coordinate the response to community concerns about traffic safety. A

strategic plan based on specific findings determined by an engineering and traffic survey is utilized to direct traffic enforcement.

Education is the third component of our traffic enforcement and safety efforts. Our office promotes public safety education through the National Highway Traffic Safety Awareness (NHTSA) campaigns. We have partnered with the California Office of Traffic Safety to participate in the following events:

- National Teen Driver Safety Week (Press Release date: October 14, 2022)
- National School Bus Safety Week (Press Release date: October 14, 2022)
- National Winter DUI Mobilization (December 14, 2022 – January 1, 2023)
- National Distracted Driving Awareness Month (April 2022)
- National Motorcycle Awareness Month (May 2022)
- National Click It or Ticket Enforcement Mobilization (May 16, 2022 – June 5, 2022)

We conducted the following operations in 2022:

- Two Sobriety and Driver's License Checkpoints
- Two Distracted Driving Operations
- Two Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Operations

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office participates in the Countywide Saturation Traffic Enforcement Program (S.T.E.P), a collaborative effort with other local agencies to increase traffic safety and awareness in known trouble spots in San Mateo County. These events are a coordinated saturation effort where a high volume of traffic stops and citations occur in the City of San Carlos twice a year.

In addition, the Sheriff's Office maintains and deploys electronic message boards that display speed data. The message boards provide driver awareness by indicating speed. Lastly, speed surveys are a significant part of collecting speed data. It allows us to verify resident complaint issues and optimize deputy presence in areas requiring increased enforcement.

Conclusion

On behalf of Sheriff Christina Corpus and the men and women of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, it is an honor to provide law enforcement services to the City of San Carlos. We are proud of our performance, remain committed to doing our best, and look forward to continuing to build and improve our efforts.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kristina Bell, Police Captain

Approved for submission by:



Jeff Maltbie, City Manager