

PROSPERITY, LIVABILITY, & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Chaired by Council Member Monica Peters

Committee Members: Council Member Monica Peters, Council Member Patrick Harman, Council Member Tyrone Johnson, and Council Member Vickie McKiver

November 7, 2024 – 9:00 A.M.

Council Chambers – Municipal Building

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peters called the Prosperity, Livability, & Safety Committee to order at 9:00 a.m. and stated that all members were present.

Present: Chair Monica Peters, Committee Member Patrick Harman, Committee Member Tyrone Johnson (arrived at 4:02), and Committee Member Vickie McKiver

Prosperity and Livability Committee - Council Member Monica Peters, Chair

PRESENTATION OF ITEMS

2024-404 Sidewalk Presentation

Staff will provide an update on sidewalk requirements, planning, and funding.

Greg Venable, Transportation Director, presented the item and said the focus would be on the Sidewalk Ordinance, as well as sidewalk planning, funding, and current sidewalk projects.

He spoke on the Sidewalk Ordinance and mentioned that it was adopted in June of 2003 and was the same ordinance being used now with a few minor updates. He spoke on the current purpose of the ordinance to ensure greater pedestrian safety and ease of access. He indicated that the intent of the ordinance is to establish locations, promote walking, meet daily needs, allow access, clarify timing and provide fee in-lieu for sidewalk construction.

He talked about the requirements for sidewalks when new development occurs, including subdivisions, new buildings or uses, and most expansions. He indicated the ordinance outlined specific criteria for exemptions for residential areas, subdivisions and group developments, and industrial areas.

He explained the payment-in-lieu of the required improvements process and the specific criteria needed for the Transportation Director to approve the arrangement. He spoke on a development on Johnson Street where fee-in-lieu was paid due to the upcoming Johnson Street Sandy Ridge Road widening project.

He gave an overview of the recent history of sidewalk planning and explained that staff began compiling a sidewalk priority list in the late 90's and that 130 projects were identified. He said there were certain criteria put in place to rank the projects, including pedestrian generators, worn path, constructability, posted speed limit and pedestrian crash history. He talked about the first City of High Point Pedestrian Plan created in 2017 that included updated criteria and shared the priority list and cost estimates. He

explained that it would cost \$25,227,840 to complete all the projects on the current list. He noted that an updated plan was expected in 2026.

He provided an overview of sidewalk funding including funding by private developers, NCDOT projects, Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) or Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) Funds, and City-funded projects. He spoke on some of the current sidewalk projects and the different funding sources. He spoke on the cost of sidewalks and indicated the City of High Point's costs for sidewalks through NCDOT projects were about \$2.6 million and about \$3.3 million for High Point projects, including Roadway and 2/3 Bonds. He said the approximate amount spent on sidewalk projects by the City over the past 20 years was \$5,930,000. He shared sidewalk maps comparing the number of sidewalks in 2008 to 2024.

In response to Council Member Harman, Mr. Venable said he would provide information later regarding the percentage of private development funded sidewalks versus City-implemented.

In response to Council Member Harman's question about the implementation of bonds for sidewalks and other related infrastructure, Damon Dequenne, Assistant City Manager, said it would be at the discretion of the City Council if they wanted to move forward with something like that.

In response to Chair Peters, Mr. Dequenne said there could be further discussions within the P, L&S Committee regarding sidewalks, but any funding decisions would need to be presented to the Finance Committee.

In response to Chair Peters, Mr. Venable explained the exemption approval process and said that most of the exemptions have come from the industrial areas.

Chair Peters noted that Committee Member Johnson had arrived earlier in the meeting.

2024-430

High Point Police Department Alternative Response Model and Civilian Traffic Investigators Update

Staff will provide an update on the implementation plan for the Alternative Response Model and Civilian Traffic Investigators.

Curtis Cheeks, Chief of Police, presented the item. He spoke on the great job done by the recruiters over the past 4 or 5 years but indicated that staffing has still been a challenge. He emphasized one of his main goals was to ensure that HPPD remained a full-service agency without compromising the services provided and noted that this update would outline reimagined plans to meet the needs of the community.

He pointed out that HPPD had answered 940 Mental Health calls for service, coming out to about to about 150 per month. He explained that HPPD began exploring options for mental health responses, including the Co-responder model and the Alternate Response Model. He noted the Co-responder model involves sending a police officer and a mental

health professional to calls that may involve a mental health crisis. He said that due to understaffing and other issues, this method was not the best. He explained that the officer could be removed from the situation to respond to other calls, unless there was a safety issue requiring police response.

He explained the Alternate Response Model and said staff would be able to triage the mental health calls to determine whether an officer is needed and dispatch appropriate behavioral health specialists or social workers to deal with the situation. He pointed out that this model would not only address mental health and substance abuse issues but would also help connect people with services outside of the crisis.

He spoke on the advantages to the Alternate Response Model, including improved outcomes, building trust, freeing up sworn police officers, connecting people to services, and addressing needs that officers aren't trained for.

Chief Cheeks introduced Major Rachel Juren, the Commander of the Community Division. She gave an overview of the communication process that would be involved in mental health calls and spoke on efforts to increase awareness of the 988 service to help divert calls away from law enforcement.

She provided an overview of the Alt-Response Logic Model and mentioned she had completed a course through the Council of State Government's Justice Center on how to implement this type of Alternate Response Model.

Chief Cheeks said they have met with the Fire and Library Departments to ensure they have a comprehensive City approach to implement a more holistic approach in dealing with mental health issues.

He spoke about some staffing changes that have been put in place and went over some of the recently added and future positions to help maximize efficiency.

Chief Cheeks spoke on the implementations of the Civilian Traffic Investigators Program and talked about the statutes regarding training of the investigators and spoke on the additional training specific to High Point. He explained the requirement that the vehicles and uniforms must be different to distinguish the traffic investigators from sworn police officers. He said the Civilian Traffic Investigators would only handle property damage incidents and that sworn officers would be dispatched for personal injury or intoxicated driver incidents.

He spoke on some surrounding jurisdictions that have implemented similar programs and the great outcomes they have seen with the program.

In response to Council Member McKiver, Chief Cheeks said the Alternative Response Model would provide consistency of service in mental health situations and help to connect those people with mental health services in the area.

In response to Council Member Harman, Chief Cheeks said they had created the job descriptions and are working with the Human Resources Department to get the Lead Clinician position and other newly created positions posted. Council Member Harman said he was pleased that the Alternative Response Model was being implemented and suggested promoting the program through social media.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Chief Cheeks said the funding aspect had been figured out and that they were in the implementation stage now.

In response to Chair Peters, Chief Cheeks said they had not begun outreach and promotion for the Alternative Response Model but said when they are ready to roll out the program, that the Police Marketing team would work with the City team to get the word out about the program.

In response to Chair Peters, Chief Cheeks said the Civilian Traffic Investigators would not handle traffic enforcement but free up more officers to deal with speeding issues and other traffic enforcement issues.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Prosperity, Livability, and Safety Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:42 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Monica Peters, Chair

Attest:

Alison Glynn, Deputy City Clerk