

**SWEET HOME POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
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|                                      | <b>This Month</b> | <b>Last Month</b> | <b>Last Year</b> | <b>Year to Date</b> | <b>5 Year</b> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|
|                                      | 01/31/22          | 12/31/21          | 01/31/21         | 01/31/22            |               |
| <b>Call Volume</b>                   | 666               | 691               | 663              | 666                 | 681           |
| <b>CAD Calls</b>                     | 1226              | 1201              | 1350             | 1226                | 1401          |
| <b>ONIBR Person Crimes</b>           | 16                | 21                | 20               | 16                  | 14            |
| <b>ONIBR Person Crimes Cleared</b>   | 11                | 17                | 14               | 11                  | 10            |
| <b>ONIBR Property Crimes</b>         | 44                | 43                | 26               | 44                  | 34            |
| <b>ONIBR Property Crimes Cleared</b> | 10                | 16                | 5                | 10                  | 9             |

**Trends:**

Our department continues to work on traffic concerns throughout town. Below is a breakdown of the efforts, resources, and data that we have worked on and acquired.

***Main Street Radar Signs***

- We currently have three functional radar signs on Highway 20. The two downtown were struck and damaged by RVs. They recently have been replaced. A third sign has been malfunctioning, and we have not been able to repair it. We will need to discuss it with the vendor.
- What we've discovered: Data appear to show that these signs (westbound City Hall and eastbound Subway) have little impact on highway speeds long term – 85<sup>th</sup> percentile and median speeds fluctuate around the same numbers regardless of whether they display the speeds or are in stealth mode.
- We've left the displays on since early data collection to provide awareness to drivers. We have heard, anecdotally, and seen on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue that signs do cause drivers to slow down once they see their speed displayed.
- Downtown: While traffic moves quickly past Subway, with 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds around 30. Based on placement of the radar trailer, eastbound traffic appears to slow down starting around 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Based on direct observation, higher speeds at the Subway sign occur regardless of whether Highway 228 or Highway 20 traffic is stopped at the red light or able to move through on green.

***Portable Radar Signs***

- We have two portable signs functional now. They malfunctioned and were offline for a while. Public Works has gotten both of them working now, and one is out on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Installing them can be difficult and finding a suitable pole for placement is required before they can go out at a particular location.
- During volunteer data collection sessions, we have found evidence corroborating reports of higher speeds on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of Kalmia Street as well as Clark Mill Road north of Highway 20. Public Works was able to install one on 12<sup>th</sup> but unable to locate a suitable pole on Clark Mill.
- Based on volunteer data collection on Monday, we believe that this sign is impacting driving behavior. **The total number of observed speeders has declined from 83 percent in October and 79 percent in November to 63 percent this week.** Nearly everyone speeding Monday reduced speed to about 25 mph after triggering the sign.

### ***Radar Trailer***

- The radar trailer has stopped charging well enough to last a week, and it is now in the shop at Public Works for assessment and repair. Generally speaking, last year, the radar trailer moved around weekly to areas where we have received complaints.
- Residents report that when it is in their area, it slows traffic down.

### ***Volunteer Data Collection***

- Leo Singler, a volunteer, and CSO Morgan regularly monitor various locations. Other volunteers also have participated. They collect the data with a handheld radar unit in an unmarked vehicle. They normally collect samples during the 4 p.m. hour based on reports that speeding is most common between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Typically, they have found most locations have 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds at 6 mph or less above the posted speed and median speeds around the speed limit.
- They have located two places where 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds, median speeds and the total number of speeders are much higher, Clark Mill Road (35.5 mph 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 31 mph median and 94 percent of drivers were speeding) and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of Kalmia (34 mph 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 30 mph median speed and 83 percent speeding).
- More typically, they find the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile around 30 and the median speed around 25 mph in 25-mph zones. On Nandina Street, the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile was 27 mph. The median speed was 23 mph, and 25 percent of drivers were speeding. This is among the lowest results they have seen. East Long, in the 4000 block and 4500 block had similar results. First Avenue has shown 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds at 30 mph and 31 mph, median speeds of 25 and 26 mph and total number of speeders at the 50 percent mark.
- All locations have a small number of outliers that we believe are the focuses of complaints. They exist across the city. Just Monday, they recorded 43 mph on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 42 mph on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. They've seen a maximum of 41 mph on Clark Mill and 44 mph on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of Elm.
- Based on the data collected so far, Public Works installed a radar sign on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue but was unable to locate a suitable pole on Clark Mill. Most of the significant speeding was southbound, up the hill, so the sign faces southbound traffic. Two weeks after the installation on 12<sup>th</sup> (Monday), they collected data on 12<sup>th</sup>, showing a decline in total speeders and in 85<sup>th</sup> percentile and median speeds, 30 mph 85<sup>th</sup> percentile and 27 mph median. Nearly every southbound speeder cut speed once the sign started flashing. Rather than slowing down, one driver accelerated to 38 mph.

### ***Speed and design***

- It is our belief that street design is a major component of speed. In places where the road appears wide and comfortable, speeds seem to be higher. Substantial research indicates this to be the case. Heavy traffic enforcement can impact this until heavy enforcement ends. Otherwise, drivers tend to drive at the "design speed" of a road. The standard for setting speed limits is based on the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile – 85 percent of drivers travel at this speed or less – for this reason.
- Research suggests that design changes are required to lower driving speeds. This was the concept behind parking lanes and proposed chicanes on First Avenue in the past.
- In our experience, this seems borne out by the data. For example, Nandina appears narrow, with homes closer to the street and significant parking on one side of the street, while 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue has a more open feel and less on-street parking. Clark Mill feels like a wide, open county road with a natural speed limit of perhaps 35 mph, like the east end of Long Street, which does have a 35-mph limit.