

**August Planning Forum Meeting with the Office of the Mayor
August 9, 2022**

In attendance from the Mayor's office - Jack Wheatley, Chief of Staff to Mayor Ed Gainey and Rebekkah Ranallo, Neighborhood Services Manager

Mr. Wheatley provided background.

- At the June meeting, residents and business owners met with Mayor Gainey and his staff to discuss the challenges of East Carson Street (ECS) over the last two years. After listening to the speakers, and visiting ECS themselves, the Mayor then charged his team to come up with a plan. Although there is a plan for peace across the city, there was a need to provide an additional focus on East Carson. Mr. Wheatley stated that the strategy that was currently in place, showed a decrease in problematic activity in 2022 compared to 2021. He stated that there were positive signs that indicate that what the city (and partners) were doing was working but they needed to continue the work.
- The nighttime economy manager is working with bar owners to try to improve some of their tools to minimize things that are happening inside their buildings.

The strategy is as follows: The Gainey administration is committed to implementing our Plan for Peace in South Side through a three-pronged approach of law enforcement, building code enforcement and fire code enforcement. By regularly measuring outcomes based on data and evidence, we are working each month to align our resources to strategies that data proves are effective.

Slide - South Side Flats Gun Violence Incidents by Month - 2021-2022 YTD

	2021	2022
January	0	1
February	1	0
March	0	1
April	0	1
May	1	3
June	1	3
July	5	1
August	3	0
September	0	
October	1	
November	1	
December	0	

Responses to Planning Forum Questions Based on Previous PF meetings

Law Enforcement

How many officers are generally on a shift in Zone 3 during evenings and weekends when there tends to experience challenges?

- There are 15 officers and 1 supervisor. On evenings when there is high activity, officers are pulled from other zones to assist zone 3 on the ground. There are also Zone 3 detectives who focus on doing proactive work on the side streets, in the parking lots and in the alleys.
 - All of the officers are rotating between being on foot and being in cars throughout the evening until about 1:30 AM. At that point, everyone goes to being on foot.

What is the scope of the saturation patrol?

- The scope of the saturation patrol from a geographic perspective includes 10th Street - all the way through 18th Street and the surrounding street. Although our discussions have focused on S. 12th to 18th, it is important to note that the work does not stop there.
- There is a Police Specialty Division Group (SDD) that handles a lot of traffic related issues. They provide 2-3 motorcycles and those officers focus on the tag and tow detail.

What is the status of the No Loitering Signage?

- The Public Safety Department is coordinating that effort with the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure to post signs on telephone poles throughout the business district. These signs will let folks know that they are subject to surveillance depending on where they are in the district and that no loitering will be tolerated.

Has there been a decrease in disruptive behavior and decreases in crowd sizes since the closing of Foxtail and Sky Bar?

- There has. In addition, the owner/management at Embr, at 18th and Mary, has been very cooperative and wants to help with some solutions.
 - They have volunteered to start locking their door at midnight each night they are open. They let patrons who are already in the establishment stay till 2 AM but no one else is admitted in. At 1:30 AM, a police car is deployed specifically to that location as a proactive measure.

Has the police presence at Ormsby pool been helpful?

- There has been positive feedback from both the pool staff and neighbors who feel that the presence has been effective.

Code Enforcement and Fire Code Enforcement

In June and July, Director Kinter ordered a Fire & Life Safety code sweep for all commercial businesses of the 1500 through 1900 blocks of E. Carson Street.

- 65 inspections were performed
- 46 Case files were opened for approximately 84 violations
- 16 Case files have been resolved
- 30 require additional inspections

Actual addresses with violations are available to the public through Agency Counter. Rebekkah's office will be scheduling several virtual training sessions for those community members who are interested in learning how to navigate the software tool. Those interested should email neighbor@pittsburghpa.gov.

Office of Nighttime Economy Updates

- **Network ID Scanners** - Allison Harnden is working to explore a potential funding source to help get participating bars and restaurants all aligned using one network ID scanning system. This is where all the bars actually have access to one data system that flags things like fake IDs or individuals who have been in trouble for violent behavior in the past. This can get all the bars on the same page about who they are allowing into their establishments and who they are not.
- **De-escalation Training** for those employees who work the doors so that they have the tools needed to try to decrease the amount of disruptions that might not happen inside the bar but perhaps are related to a conflict that started in the bar. The intent is to arm the bouncers and their colleagues with the tools they need to de-escalate those situations when they see them brewing in front of them on the sidewalk instead of escalating them.
- **Active shooter training and stop the bleed training**
- **Education on code compliance for food trucks and vendors**

Questions

- **Are food trucks permitted on East Carson Street?**
 - Rebekkah indicated that she was unsure but would find out what the code states for the September meeting.
 - Allison Harnden answered - Yes, food trucks can operate on ECS but they are only allowed to operate until midnight in LNC zoned areas. They must pay for parking and are limited to how long they can stay in one place.
- **What is the plan for when Foxtail/Sky Bar reopens?**
 - Law enforcement will continue to be present. The mayor's office wants to work with the owners of Foxtail because, with their closure, there has been a decrease in activity. They would like to discuss how they might reopen in such a way that East Carson Street will continue to move in a positive direction.
- **What is the status of Allegheny Health Network's increased presence in the South Side to address the homelessness issues?**
 - Dan Paulka and the organization Roots has been working in several other zones over the last year. This partnership is managed through the Office of Community Health and Safety which is managed by Laura Drogowski. Roots currently has resources to be doing outreach and case management for the unhoused in several of the other police zones. This community is actually a pretty tight community and it is also a fairly transient community so even though resources are technically focused in two zones, the unhoused move around to all of the zones quite frequently. The Roots team actually prides themselves on knowing just about every single unhoused community member in the city.
 - The issue here is that we have an affordable housing crisis that's national and Pittsburgh is no stranger to that. The Pandemic has only exacerbated those challenges along with unemployment, loss of income and mental health. Those factors culminate into increasing the amount of people who don't have a roof over their heads, and there being a shortage of beds across the city. The city's policy under Mayor Gainey is to not intervene with the unhoused community members, to not do any sort of relocating of their possessions or of their homes, essentially, unless they are truly being hostile or violent.
 - There will be 150 new beds coming this fall in a new facility that is being built on Second Avenue.

Pittsburgh Parking Authority - Gwendolyn Bolden

- Parking statistics for June and July
 - RPP - June - 203 citations and July - 252 citations
 - Street Meters - June - 107 and July - 90
 - Parking Violations - June - 56 and July - 33
 - Street Cleaning - June - 371 and July - 519

Questions

Has enforcement increased?

- Yes but that may have to do with street cleaning.

Are tickets being given in the 1400 block of Bingham?

- If there is no parking signage, tickets can be issued.

Have there been changes in the public parking lots to discourage partying in them.

- This would involve the police. The enforcement officers are focused on issuing tickets.
- It was shared that residents should call 911 when they see partying in the lots.

Is there evening enforcement in the residential areas that have permit parking.

- Currently, no, because of staffing shortages and concerns for the safety of the enforcement officers. PPA is currently hiring and training staff.

Questions/Concerns from the Zoom Chat

- **A store at 2332 E. Carson Street is storing gas operated scooters. Is that not a safety hazard?** City inspectors have visited the store but have been unable to gain access.
- **Do the no loitering signs apply to daytime sidewalk sitters?**
- **Are the liquor license transfers/applications available to the public and where can that be found?**
 - The license transfer applications come from the State Liquor Control Board. Pending licenses can be found on the PLCB's webpage.
- **Did the police stop issuing speeding tickets on and around E. Carson?** Cars and motorcycles speed at 80-90 mph down Bingham and E. Carson between 1 - 4 AM.
- **How can we learn if bar/restaurant has applied for and received an extension of premises and if there are any requirements for tenting of that space?**
 - Extension of premise is a term used by the PA Liquor Control Board. The state has no authority over tents but the city does. It has a process to authorize use of sidewalk or parking lane for outdoor dining. There are requirements by the city for tents in outdoor dining areas where extension of premises from the state PLCB would authorize alcohol service.