



Administrative Report

N.1., File # 21-3055

Meeting Date: 10/5/2021

To: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
From: KEITH KAUFFMAN, CHIEF OF POLICE

TITLE

RECEIVE AND FILE A PRESENTATION ON VEHICLE NOISE COMPLAINTS, MONITORING, AND ENFORCEMENT FOR THE AREA IMMEDIATELY SURROUNDING THE 100 BLOCK OF WEST TORRANCE BOULEVARD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Police Department received direction from City Council to prepare a report on vehicle noise complaints occurring in the roadway area immediately surrounding the 100 block of West Torrance Bl. Monitoring of the area and enforcement of observed violations through deployed personnel and technology use has resulted in documented data directly pertaining to activity in the identified area.

BACKGROUND

The section of Torrance Bl. in the 100 block and the area referred to as the Torrance Circle is a highly travelled roadway in South Redondo Beach. The roadway is adjacent to numerous residential structures, a park, and leads directly to the primary parking area for the Redondo Beach pier. During the summer months of a given year, the number of vehicles and visitors using Torrance Bl. to access the Redondo Beach Pier and other recreational opportunities in the City of Redondo Beach can be extremely high. The Police Department has periodically received complaints from area residents about vehicle noise resulting from patrons entering and/or exiting the Redondo Beach Pier area. Often, the complaints are received via email well after the occurrence of the alleged violation and typically include a request for additional law enforcement presence and increased enforcement of violations.

Several areas have been identified for further explanation in this report, which is focused on the time frame of June, July, and August 2021. These three summer months typically draw the largest volume of vehicle traffic in the identified area allowing for a sample size that will provide a realistic analysis of data directly related to the vehicle noise issue. The areas reviewed for this report include: complaint data, enforcement data, educational efforts, third party monitoring and analysis, and on-going considerations.

The Police Department received complaints from residents in The Village area who reside in close proximity to the pier (Torrance Circle). Complaints were received via the City of Redondo Beach Comcate system and email. The complaints indicated that the vehicle noise issue occurs at various times throughout all days of the week. A review of calls for service received by the Communications

Center revealed fourteen calls for service during an expanded search that extended beyond the 100 block of W. Torrance Bl. and covered a wider radius than just Torrance Bl. The fourteen calls consisted of six driving related and eight loud music related calls for service, none of which were on Torrance Bl.

Police Department Motor Officers and Community Service Unit Officers worked numerous special details across varying days and hours monitoring traffic for enforcement of noise violations in the complaint area. Patrol officers were also tasked with extra patrol enforcement regarding the noise complaints in the area of Torrance circle, resulting in one speed related citation being issued. Between May 29th, 2021 and September 5, 2021, there was a total of fifty-four Police Department staff hours that were specifically logged for monitoring and enforcement of vehicle noise violations in the Torrance Circle. The longest detail lasted approximately five hours, using six officers to monitor the area. No violations were noted during this detail. The average amount of time spent dedicated to monitoring the area for noise violations was one hour, per detail. The City of Redondo Beach Engineering Department was consulted for consideration of installing certain traffic calming resources. Due to the incline (grade) of Torrance Bl. a speed bump was not an available solution at the time.

The Police Department Speed Monitoring trailer was placed in the area of Torrance Circle to capture data of vehicles leaving the area of the pier (traffic going east bound). The speed enforcement trailer collected data for fourteen days during the period of June 25 to July 8, 2021. During this speed survey period, the average speed was approximately 17 MPH. The 85th percentile speed during the survey period was approximately 22 MPH. The highest speed recorded was 50 MPH. During this period a total of approximately 27,900 vehicles were included for the data for this speed survey. The speed limit for the area is posted at 25 MPH. Approximately 0.2% of those 27,900 were in violation of the speed limit, which is about 42 violators out of 27,900. In addition to the Speed Monitoring trailer, for a total of approximately thirty days during the months of June, July, and August, a Sign Board Trailer was placed on Torrance Circle for traffic traveling eastbound, with specific messaging to help raise awareness about loud exhaust and speeding in the area.

In order to capture consistent noise data to identify patterns and trends, STS Audio Consulting was retained to conduct sound monitoring in the 100 W. Torrance Blvd. The measurement equipment was placed approximately ten feet in the air, mounted to a light pole. The area's sound levels were monitored for decibel readings (dB) for thirty days. During normal daytime period (7am to 10pm), noise levels ranged from 55dB to 75dB. Nighttime period of 10pm to 7am: the decibel levels were below 65dB from 9pm to 10:30pm, below 58dB from 10:30pm to 12:45am, and less than 50dB from 12:45am to 6:15am. These sound levels are consistent with 55dB community noise standards for the R3 and high-density zoning areas in the City of Redondo Beach. On the evening of August 25th, 2021; an incident occurred on the Redondo Beach Pier requiring a large public safety response. During the time of that incident, the maximum average decibel reading in any 15-minute period was 77.1 dB. The thirty-day noise study report stated that the study shows Community Noise Levels in the area surveyed fall within normal standards.

Enforcement of decibel related noise violations present challenges for the Police Department. No current RBPd employees are certified in decibel reading and enforcement. A check with surrounding South Bay law enforcement agencies found no qualified personnel trained in decibel reading and enforcement. An attempt to locate upcoming training classes in the greater Southern California region regarding the subject matter and certification required for decibel reading and enforcement was met with negative results. We did contact the California Highway Patrol and they host a class on street

rating, but the in the training segment on noise, they do not teach or recommend use of decibel meters based on the many challenges this poses to enforcement in the field and the filing of cases in our local courts. Consideration for identification of certified vendors or law enforcement that can provide assistance with monitoring, reporting, and enforcement could result in a focused response to future areas identified as problematic noise locations.

COORDINATION

The Engineering Department provided input for this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

The 30-day cost for decibel monitoring from STS Audio consulting was \$3550. We estimate the costs for annual monitoring at selected locations in the City to be approximately \$40,000. If the City is interested in further monitoring, we would need to go out to bid and identify funding.

Funding

\$3550 PD operating budget

Expenditure

\$3550 STS Audio Consulting

APPROVED BY:

Joe Hoefgen, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

STS Audio Consulting Report

All Traffic Solutions Speed Summary Report

Vehicle Noise Discussion Presentation

RBMC 4-24.301 Maximum permissible sound levels by land use categories