

Office of the City Solicitor

FY'20 Q1 Public Safety and Legal Administration Committee



Raines F. Carter, City Solicitor

December 10, 2019





OFFICE RESPONSIBILITY AND GOAL

The Mayor's goals for the City are to deliver exemplary municipal services to meet the needs of our citizens, while upholding our responsibility of fiscal stewardship.

The City Solicitor's Office seeks to further that mission by responsibly performing our core functions:

- ❖ Prosecution of General Traffic, Criminal and Code Enforcement Cases
- ❖ Diversion and Alternative Prosecution Programs
- ❖ Community Prosecution



COMMUNITY PROSECUTION – SUSPENDED DRIVING PRIVILEGES

- ❖ The AJC has reported that Georgia insurance rates are some of the highest in the nation. In 2011, Georgia insurance rates spiked 54%.
- ❖ In 2015, the Insurance Research Council (IRC) reported that 1 in 8 drivers were uninsured, leading to unlicensed drivers on the road.
- ❖ In May 2019, Georgia insurance rates were up 9% from the previous year- which was down from the double digit increases of previous years (*11 Alive News Report*).
- ❖ Income growth has not kept pace with these increases. Consequently, insurance is less affordable for many, which can result in suspension of driving privileges.
- ❖ According to the Department of Corrections Atlanta City Detention Center (ACDC) Charges Report, driving with suspended or revoked license was the number one offense for arrests. Between January 2018 to August 2019, 4,591 people were arrested for this offense.



COMMUNITY PROSECUTION – SUSPENDED DRIVING PRIVILEGES

The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administration (AAMVA) 2018 report states:

- 75% of suspended drivers continue to drive.
- More than 1/3 of driving privilege suspensions are for reasons unrelated to actually driving.
- Most of these suspensions were due to lapses in insurance coverage, failure to pay a fine or appear in court, non-driving related drug violations, truancy, parking tickets, failure to meet child support obligations, etc.

Some negative consequences/sustainable harm related to suspended driving privileges are:

- Unemployment
- Lower wages
- Fewer employment opportunities and choices
- Increased insurance costs



COMMUNITY PROSECUTION – SUSPENDED DRIVING PRIVILEGES

In conclusion, it is important to address the public safety concerns of individuals with poor driving records and/or behavior. However, alternative prosecution measures to educate and assist drivers in retaining or maintaining their driving privileges increases the likelihood that they will have stable employment, improve their driving behavior, and maintain insurance which impacts all Georgians.

In 2020, the Solicitor's Office will formerly institute a driver's education program that expands its community prosecution efforts. This initiative is aimed at addressing the sustainable harm related to suspended drivers license which is the number one offense in the ACDC.



SOLICITOR'S OFFICE CODE ENFORCEMENT DETAIL SUMMARY

September 2019

- ❖ 33 Properties were inspected on Herring Road, Wortham Avenue, and Philadelphia Avenue in District 11.
- ❖ There were 16 businesses inspections, along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and two on Fairburn Road. Re-inspections will be scheduled on six of those locations to confirm compliance.
- ❖ Inspection completed on 4087 Conway Valley in Northwest Atlanta and in conjunction with Site Development resulted in appropriate action by the department. 534 Constellation Overlook was inspected with a warning. Re-inspected to ensure violations were corrected at 1407 Beecher Street – Vacant was property inspection

October 2019

- ❖ Re-inspected Herring Road, Wortham Avenue, and Philadelphia Avenue (District 11).
- ❖ 46 properties inspected as a part of the Renfrew Court, S.W. & Candlelight Lane, S.W. Blitz. (District 10).
- ❖ 500-plus property inspections were completed on the Vacant Property Registry Audit Report in addition to their regular and emergency inspections.
- ❖ Donald L. Hollowell Commercial Corridor Detail – comprehensive inspections with Code Enforcement, SWEET, and our team between Bolton Road and Northside Drive (Districts 3, 9 and 10).
- ❖ Half-day cleanup held at Women's Shelter at 655 Ethel Street (District 3).



PUBLIC SAFETY EVENTS – COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY OUTREACH

GA Tech Annual Campus Safety Day

The Solicitor's Office and Georgia Tech Police Department (GTPD) joined forces on August 29 with other area law enforcement agencies to host its annual Campus Safety Day. The event will feature demonstrations by GTPD's K-9 unit, and officers will be on hand with many of the resources and equipment they use daily in their work. The Solicitor's Office disseminated public safety information regarding safe driving, DUI, Pretrial Diversion programs and more.

Georgia State University Panther Welcome

The Solicitor's Office partners with Georgia State University disseminate information to promote public safety on August 30 as part of Panther Welcome, Georgia State's official welcome celebration for new students.

Georgia State University Public Safety Fair

The Solicitor's Office partnered with Georgia State University to disseminate information to promote public safety on September 17 as well regarding safe driving, DUI, Pretrial Diversion programs and more.

Emory University Public Safety Fair

The Solicitor's Office partnered with Emory University to disseminate information to promote public safety on October 10. The Solicitor's Office disseminated public safety information regarding safe driving, DUI, Pretrial Diversion programs and more.



COURT WATCH PROGRAM

The Office of the City Solicitor implemented its inaugural Citizens Court Watch Program on Monday, October 7, 2019.

Often dubbed the 'eyes and ears' of the community in court, Court Watch serves as a vehicle to engage average citizens in the criminal justice system.

As Community Prosecutors track cases involving repeat offenders and those of general interest to the community, Court Watchers are encouraged to attend court proceedings and, when deemed appropriate by the Court, offer perspective regarding the impact a defendant's criminal activity has on a community.



COMMUNITY PROSECUTION OUTREACH PARTNERS WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER CITY



City of Atlanta
Office of Housing and
Community Development



ATLANTA
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Department of Public Works



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QUESTIONS?