

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****June 2, 2020**

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SUBJECT: STREET RACING ISSUES IN FORT WORTH

The purpose of this Informal Report is to explain the scope of street racing issues in Fort Worth and what the Fort Worth Police Department is doing to address the issue.

Specific Offenses Used to Address Street Racing/Hot-rodding Complaints

There are three main offenses under which racing or hot-rodding may be addressed: TRC Reckless Driving, TRC Racing on Highway, and the Unreasonable Noise Ordinance.

Sec. 545.401. RECKLESS DRIVING (Transportation Code)

- (a) A person commits an offense if the person drives a vehicle in a willful or wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property.
- (b) An offense under this section is a misdemeanor punishable by:
 - (1) A fine not to exceed \$200;
 - (2) Confinement in county jail for not more than 30 days; or
 - (3) Both the fine and the confinement.

Sec. 545.420. RACING ON HIGHWAY (Transportation Code)

- (a) A person may not participate in any manner in:
 - (1) A race;
 - (2) A vehicle speed competition or contest;
 - (3) A drag race or acceleration contest;
 - (4) A test of physical endurance of the operator of a vehicle; or
 - (5) In connection with a drag race, an exhibition of vehicle speed or acceleration or to make a vehicle speed record.
- (d) Except as provided by (e) – (h), an offense under Subsection (a) is a Class B misdemeanor.

“Racing on Highway” calls may be aggravated to a Class A misdemeanor if the person was previously convicted once, operating the vehicle while intoxicated, or had an open container in the vehicle. It can further be aggravated to a state jail felony if the person had previously been convicted twice. As well, it can be aggravated to a felony of the third degree if a person suffered bodily injury and a felony of the second degree if a person suffered serious bodily injury or death.

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SUBJECT: STREET RACING ISSUES IN FORT WORTH**Ordinance No. 20191-2012 –Section 1****(d) Noise Prohibited**

- (1) In addition to the other noise restrictions in this Section, no person shall make, cause, suffer, allow or permit unreasonable noise in such a manner, or with such volume, intensity or duration, so as to disturb a reasonable person of ordinary sensibilities. A decibel level shall not be required for the enforcement of this subsection.
- (2) This subsection is intended to apply to, but is not limited to, unreasonable noises in the form of:
 - g. Operation of motor vehicles. The revving of any engine, the playing of any music with such volume or bass, or the operation of any vehicle so out of repair, so loaded or in such manner as to create loud or unnecessary grating, grinding, jarring, rattling, or squealing noise or vibrations.

Scope of the Issue

Most calls made by the citizens as “racing” are better described as “hot rodding” (loud engines, squealing of tires, heavy acceleration, etc.) rather than “racing” (contests of speed). Since November 2019, the Fort Worth Police Department has received over 1,300 hot rodding calls all over the city; hence; the issue is city-wide. For policing purposes, the City of Fort Worth is divided into six patrol divisions. These are the approximate number of hot-rodding/racing calls per division.

1. South Division – 303 calls.
2. Northwest Division – 272 calls.
3. East Division – 253 calls.
4. North Division – 197 calls.
5. Central Division – 168 calls.
6. West Division – 126 calls.

Although hot rodding calls are received every day of the week, the heaviest days are on weekends and the most active times are during the evening hours as seen from the below graph.

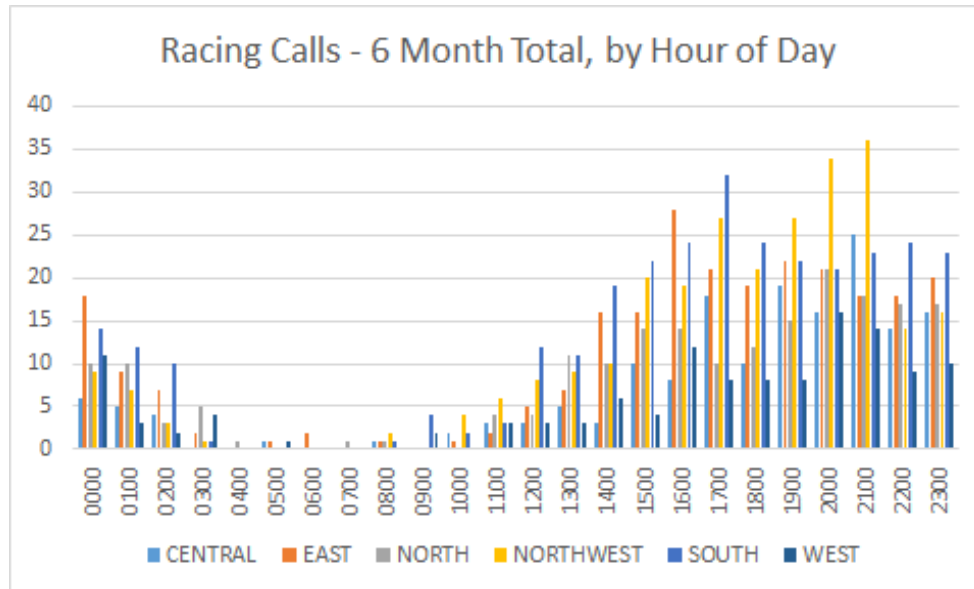


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Enforcement Action by the Fort Worth Police Department

Hot rodding calls are often difficult to enforce, since many offenses include burning rubber, revving engines, or excessive speed and perpetrators are usually gone when officers arrive. There were only twenty reports made since November 1, 2019 in association with these 1,300 plus “hot rodding” calls for service. In these 20 reports, only two arrests were made for “Racing on Highway” and one arrest was made for “Reckless Driving.” However, the stops made for these offenses yielded productive results.

- Most of these offenses involved men with an age range of 14-25.
- 3 guns were confiscated.
- 39 misdemeanor warrants were confirmed.
- There were 11 misdemeanor charges to include 6 general complaint citations issued.
- There were 2 felony warrants confirmed and several traffic citations issued.
- There were no repeat violators based on these reports.

Since January 1, 2020, there have been twelve persons arrested and charged with TRC 545.420(D), “Racing on Highway.”

INFORMAL REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS**No. 20-10418****To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****June 2, 2020**

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Case	Booking	Location	Beat	Division	Charge	Race	Se	DOB
200000856	01/04/2020	13550 Park Vista Blvd Nb	F11	East	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	H	M	10/11/2002
200010297	02/05/2020	1800 NORTH SOUTH FWY	A15	Central	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	W	M	09/15/1998
200010297	02/05/2020	1800 NORTH SOUTH FWY	A15	Central	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	W	M	11/30/1996
200010297	02/05/2020	1800 NORTH SOUTH FWY	A15	Central	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	W	M	12/12/2002
200017250	02/29/2020	Randol Mill Rd / E 1st St	A17	Central	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	H	M	12/24/1998
200019108	03/05/2020	1000 North East Loop 820	C15	Northwest	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	W	M	05/02/2001
200019108	03/06/2020	1000 North East Loop 820	C15	Northwest	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	I	M	04/12/2002
200019108	03/06/2020	1000 North East Loop 820	C15	Northwest	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	W	F	07/19/1999
200019805	03/08/2020	1900 JACKSBORO HWY	C16	Northwest	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	H	M	08/29/1998
200019805	03/08/2020	1900 JACKSBORO HWY	C16	Northwest	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	H	M	10/02/1997
200023622	03/21/2020	1900 Handley Ederville Rd	H16	East	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	H	M	01/06/1998
200028633	04/11/2020	Campus Dr / E Seminary Dr	I12	South	TRC 545.420(D) Racing on Highway	B	F	11/14/2001

As well, there have been 31 other reports since January 1, 2020 that have something to do with “street racing” listed in the narrative.

NATURE OF CALL	CENTRA	EAST	NORTH	NW	SOUTH	WEST	TOTAL
ACCIDENT				1			1
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT		1					1
ALL OTHER OFFENSES	1	1	1	2	1		6
DECEASED PERSON	1						1
HIT AND RUN ACCIDENT	3	1		3			7
INFORMATION ONLY- CCIU	2						2
INFORMATION ONLY- SCIU					1		1
NARCOTIC VIOLATIONS		1	1				2
PD PULL	1				1		2
ROBBERY				1			1
TRAFFIC CODE	2		2				4
VANDALISM					1	1	2
WEAPONS VIOLATION		1					1
TOTAL	10	5	4	7	4	1	31

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Although many street racing incidents go unnoticed and unreported, there have been two recent incidents that received substantial media attention in Fort Worth. The first was on February 7, 2020, the Fort Worth Police Department received multiple calls to 911 reporting that several vehicles on I35 north of downtown Fort Worth were hot rodding and doing donuts on the freeway causing a dangerous situation. Officers responded to the scene and were able to arrest three males (ages 17, 21, and 23) in connection to this call. The second occurred on May 21, 2020 at Interstate 35 and Rosedale with the same call details as the first incident. Officers responded to the scene and were able to arrest one individual (19 year old female) in connection with this call and this incident is still under investigation.

The Fort Worth Police Department Intelligence Exchange Section (Intex) monitors and receives information about different groups of racers who often post on Facebook about their plans and locations of events. Because of information given by Intex, on-duty patrol and traffic officers often preempt the racers' arrival and prevent them from racing in Fort Worth. However, one of our many challenges is that many of these group events occur with very short notice. Although we can monitor some social media sites, many of the hot-rodders/racers and organizers have thought of creative ways to garner support to get large crowds to gather quickly. Yet, personnel in each division can and have adapted quickly to address any emerging concerns related to hot-rodding/racing issues.

In late April, East Division planned to do a Special Operations Fund (SOF) detail on Brush Creek Road between Village Creek Road and Carey Street to address hot-rodders/racers, but the detail was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, we receive complaints about hot rodding near Miller Street and Berry Street. However, the Miller Street Detail (a regular police detail that usually works during evenings and on weekends) addresses that complaint through deterrence and/or enforcement, if needed.

Northwest has several areas where individuals congregate to hotrod/race which include Rockwood Park, the Stockyards area, and the service road of Loop 820 between the railroad tracks and S. Blue Mound Road. Starting on May 23, 2020 and running for two consecutive weekends, Northwest Division is conducting an SOF detail at Rockwood Park as well as the Stockyards area to address the growing number of hot-rodders/racers.

In North Division, their problem areas are Alliance Gateway, North Beach and Alta Vista, and Golden Triangle. They are monitoring social media as a way to keep up with the groups of individuals involved with hot-rodding/racing. On rare occurrences there have been issues with motorcycles on TMS property, but TMS has their own security and usually handle any issues at that location.

West also monitors social media and has issues with hot-rodders/racers coming from 820/Quebec towards the Lake Worth Bridge. Loop 820 along with West freeway can be a major hotspot for West Division. Beyond using social media, West Division has conducted several details with NPOs, SRT, and patrol officers to address the hot-rodding/racing issue.

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Central Division identified several areas of concern which include I35 from Northside Drive to Berry Street, Harmon Field Park, and the Coyote Drive In area. Central Division is in the process of getting a Skywatch placed near the parking lot of the Coyote Drive In to act as a deterrent. Central Division utilizes their NPOs, SRT, and patrol officers on special details to address the racing issues.

South Division identified one area that generates most of their complaints in reference to hot-rodding/racing, which is W. Risinger Road between Hulen Street and Chisolm Trail Parkway. Although South Division has conducted several details in this area along with the NPO adjusting their hours to address the issue, the incidents are so sporadic it is difficult to catch individuals in the act.

The above listed locations for each division are historical trouble spots and there have been no new locations identified due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Even though we have and will continue to try innovative ways to address these type of calls, patrol officers do a good job responding to the area to address any violations they observe. However, for known or habitual problem areas identified by the community, we rely on our Neighborhood Patrol Officers to keep their commanders aware so resources can be diverted to the area to focus on the problem when the violations are occurring.

In order to provide a visual representation for the calls received, the below hot spot map shows the concertation of hot-rodding/racing calls between January 1, 2020 to May 4, 2020.



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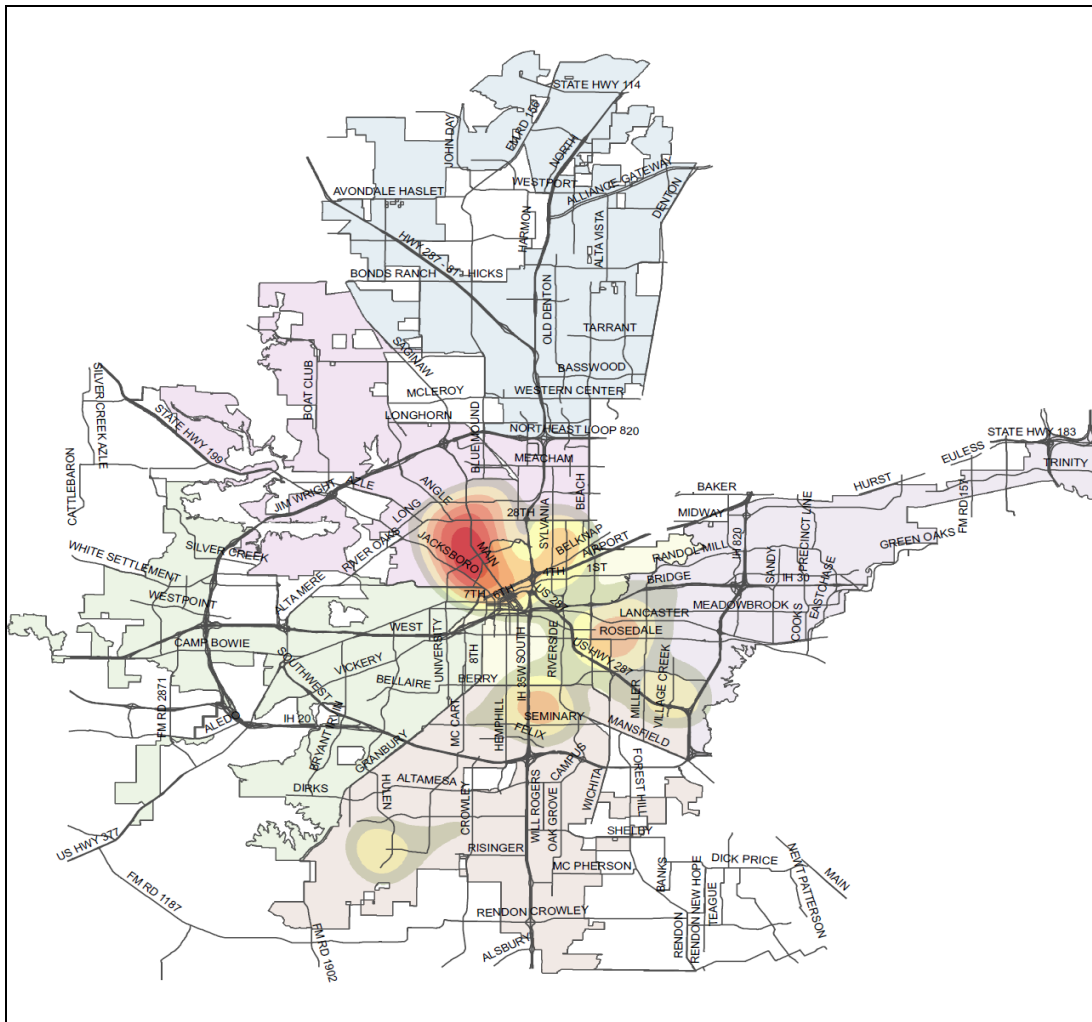
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Street Racing Calls

January 1, 2020-May 4, 2020



For additional information, please contact Ed Kraus, Chief of Police at 817-392-4213.

David Cooke
City Manager