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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Cavalier Johnson
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Incoming Mayor Cavalier Johnson releases plan to combat reckless driving

During a press conference today in which incoming Mayor Cavalier Johnson was joined by the Milwaukee Police Department, Office of Violence Prevention, WI Department of Transportation, the Milwaukee Department of Public Works, and community groups including Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee, Sherman Park Community Association, Next Door Foundation, Running Rebels, VIA CDC, and others, Johnson unveiled a detailed plan to abate reckless driving in Milwaukee.

The plan entitled **S.T.A.N.D.** for Safer Streets will focus on the core pillars of:

- Safe street design
- Traffic enforcement
- Accountability
- Neighborhood Engagement
- Demand progress

This plan commits to engaging a broad coalition of residents, businesses, advocates, and stakeholders to address reckless driving. **The full plan with additional details is attached.**

“As a parent of three children in Milwaukee, and someone who drives these streets daily, I find the statistics around automobile accidents and vehicle thefts unacceptable,” said Johnson. In 2021, 65 people in Milwaukee have lost their lives due to reckless driving accidents, and more than 9,000 cars have been stolen, double the amount in 2020.

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S.T.A.N.D. for Safer Streets /ADD ONE

“The plan we are launching here today, S.T.A.N.D. for Safer Streets, is a multifaceted approach that will immediately address the reckless driving crisis we face in our city. As Mayor, I plan to put the full weight of my administration behind meaningful action to combat reckless driving every day,” Johnson said.

The plan calls for, among other things: Increasing the deployment of physical road improvements; stepped-up enforcement by the Milwaukee Police Department; a new policy for towing unregistered or unlicensed vehicle operators who are caught driving at dangerous speeds; and a dedicated staff member in the Mayor’s office to coordinate the Vision Zero plan across city departments and work with residents and businesses.

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**City of Milwaukee
Incoming Mayor Cavalier Johnson
December 21, 2021**

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S.T.A.N.D for Safer Streets Plan

Reckless driving in Milwaukee is a **public safety crisis**. This year alone, 65 people in our city have lost their lives due to senseless reckless driving acts. Many more have been seriously injured. We are on pace to double the number of cars stolen in our city from just last year. These aren't just stolen vehicles; for victims this is a stolen means of transportation to a job, a stolen means of getting their kids to school, and a stolen sense of security in our city.

As a parent with three children who resides in this city, and as someone who drives on these city streets every day, I find these figures alarming. Something must be done, and as such, I am taking a **S.T.A.N.D** against reckless driving.

As the incoming Mayor for the City of Milwaukee, I have continued to fight for the safety of residents on our streets. Residents have the right to feel safe traversing the city, whether walking, biking, utilizing public transit, or a personal vehicle. Residents of all ages, racial and ethnic backgrounds, abilities, and preferred means of transportation deserve to feel safe.

The City has undertaken some points of meaningful action on this problem, but not enough to truly move the needle. The City needs a leader who will bring departments, stakeholders, residents, and businesses together around a shared vision and goals. It is my commitment to lead a cohesive effort towards eliminating reckless driving that is centered on action and accountability.

As such, I am taking a **S.T.A.N.D** against reckless driving through:

Safe Street Design - We need to design streets which prioritize safety for all users, encourage slow traffic speeds, and reduce the likelihood of dangerous driving.

Traffic Enforcement - We need to support ongoing traffic enforcement to keep our streets safe.

Accountability - We need to ensure that existing penalties are being enforced and new strategies are employed to hold repeat offenders accountable.

Neighborhood Engagement - We need to engage the community, and give residents effective tools and resources to make safe decisions.

Demand Progress - We need to devote all resources necessary to continued action on reckless driving and increased coordination between stakeholders.



My record on curbing reckless driving as Council President:

- ❖ Dedicated \$6 million of increased funding to engineering solutions including:
 - Permanent improvements to major streets
 - Permanent improvements to residential streets near schools and parks
 - Temporary rapid implementation projects
 - A speed limit reduction plan including reducing the statutory speed limit on residential streets, and launching a citywide marketing and awareness campaign around safe driving speeds.
 - Reduced assessments for residential speed humps
- ❖ Supported the Milwaukee Police Department in hiring additional civilian investigators to solve car theft cases.
- ❖ Dedicated \$1.15 million of increased funding to expand the work of the Milwaukee Police Department's Traffic Safety Unit (TSU) including:
 - Funding for increased staffing time and equipment
 - Funding to purchase 50 automated license plate reader cameras which aid in locating habitual traffic offenders, vehicles involved in AMBER alerts, and stolen vehicles
- ❖ Called on the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) to partner with the City on structural changes to make state highways within the city safe.
- ❖ Passed legislation directing the Department of City Development and the Department of Public Works to identify locations for public plazas and gathering spaces.
 - This will make underutilized public spaces more pedestrian friendly, spurring economic development and bringing neighbors together



As incoming Mayor, I will take these immediate action steps:

Safe Street Design

- ❖ Partner with the State of Wisconsin to curb reckless driving:
 - Pass legislation calling on the State of Wisconsin DOT to adopt the City of Milwaukee's Complete Streets policy for state and federal transportation projects within city limits. Many of the most dangerous streets in the city are controlled by the State of Wisconsin: Capitol Drive, Fond Du Lac Avenue, National Ave, etc. We need the state as a partner to make these streets safe.
- ❖ Pass legislation to require paving projects that incorporate the City's Complete Street policy at the closing of a tax incremental district.
- ❖ Direct applicable City departments to create a long-term sustainability plan for traffic calming improvements on residential streets and near schools and parks.
- ❖ Actively seek out and apply for competitive grants, including \$6 billion for "Safe Streets" in the federal Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act.
 - Through the additional Grants Manager position I sponsored in the 2022 budget, the City will take a strategic and proactive approach to grant applications.
- ❖ Institute complete streets improvements for all tax incremental districts (TIDs) closing out in 2022 and directing this policy be instituted for all future TID districts
 - There will be over \$15 million in funding available in 2022 alone where added complete streets improvements can be executed on street projects within a ½ mile boundary of certain TIDs.
 - Among the streets that will be targeted for safety improvements are: Capitol Drive, Fond du Lac Avenue and 60th Street which pose major reckless driving challenges.
- ❖ Ensure the completion of existing DPW projects and the prioritization of complete streets improvements for all DPW projects scheduled in 2022.
- ❖ Increase capital funding and staffing in the 2023 budget to expand complete streets improvements.



Traffic Enforcement

- ❖ Provide additional resources to MPD's Traffic Safety Unit
- ❖ Collaborate with departments and stakeholders to analyze the most effective traffic enforcement tactics in reducing speed and improving safety on streets.
- ❖ Devote resources in partnership with business districts to expand license plate reader video cameras to hold repeat offenders accountable.
 - These cameras track license plates and will be used to find stolen vehicles, AMBER alert vehicles, repeat traffic offenders, and can be deployed with gun detection technology to coordinate evidence around shooting incidents involving vehicles.

Accountability

- ❖ Work with the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission (FPC) to update the towing Standard Operating Procedure to permit towing of unregistered vehicles when operators are driving at excessive speeds or are being cited for reckless driving.
- ❖ Work with the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) and Municipal Court to hold repeat offenders accountable.
 - Explore taking legal action against repeat traffic offenders in order to escalate penalties
- ❖ Partner with the State of Wisconsin to:
 - Permit towing of a vehicle when the operator is driving at excessive speeds or being cited for reckless driving
 - Install red light cameras at the city's most dangerous intersections
 - Increase the penalty for reckless driving citations
 - Make the criminal penalties for fleeing an officer more severe with graduated penalties for repeat offenders



Neighborhood Engagement

- ❖ Implement a public education initiative in collaboration with residents, community groups, churches, businesses, and stakeholders to raise awareness of the rules of the road, enforcement consequences which hold reckless drivers accountable, and promote resources available for driving-related needs.
- ❖ Partner with the Office of Violence Prevention and youth serving organizations to ensure that current and future grant funds address the increase in car theft by youths and prevent future reckless driving.
 - A portion of the \$8 million in state grant funding received by the Office of Violence Prevention will be prioritized for this use.
- ❖ Partner with MPD, OVP, Milwaukee Public Schools, and community based organizations to seek additional resources, including state and federal grants to:
 - Expand drivers education opportunities for youth and adults.
 - Expand restorative justice options for youth involved in car theft or reckless driving.
- ❖ Expand participation in driver safety courses as an alternative to Municipal Court fees for traffic violations.
- ❖ Work with stakeholders to support efforts to establish a restorative justice mentorship program for youth involved as passengers in stolen vehicles with the goal to prevent future contacts with law enforcement.



Demand Progress

- ❖ Declare reckless driving a **Public Safety Crisis** and direct the administration to devote all necessary resources to protect residents, including:
 - Directing all applicable City department heads to prioritize user safety in all streets projects
 - Directing resources towards the most dangerous intersections and corridors
- ❖ Appoint a Reckless Driving Coordinator in the Office of the Mayor to execute efforts and implementation across City Departments, other levels of government, stakeholders, residents, and businesses.
 - A dedicated point person in the Mayor's Office ensures continued accountability and action from the City. The City must take the lead on coordinating reckless driving efforts.
 - The Reckless Driving Coordinator will oversee implementation of Vision Zero and recommendations from the City-County Task Force on Carjacking and Reckless Driving in conjunction with convening an action group of stakeholders and residents to implement recommendations and monitor progress.
- ❖ Pass a resolution committing the City to Vision Zero
 - The commitment to Vision Zero includes a goal of zero traffic-related deaths in 10 years and increased coordination between City departments and stakeholders towards data-driven goals
 - Resident engagement, input, and buy-in will be major components of the implementation process

This plan is just the beginning. I need a broad coalition of residents, businesses, advocates, and stakeholders working alongside me.

Please join us in the effort by contacting k.kenney@milwaukee.gov to get involved.

