



STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MPD Responds to OIG Report

Today, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) released a report on parking and automated traffic enforcement (ATE) in the District, as run by the Department of Public Works, District Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Police Department. As noted in my August 20th response to the OIG, we have considered all of the recommendations and will implement some changes to strengthen the policy of the program. The Metropolitan Police Department is always open to suggestions to improve its service to the city. However, overall the report seems to equate the tone of sensationalist coverage of automated enforcement with the opinion of the public. That is a mistake.

The report demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of the purpose of the ATE program and traffic safety enforcement in general: The goal is not to reduce traffic violations at a single location or time of day; the goal is to modify driver behavior throughout the District so that pedestrians, bicyclists, and other motorists are safer while using the roadways. This is essential to public safety because although speed accounts for only three percent of all traffic crashes, it accounts for 21 percent of all fatalities and nine percent of all injuries. Having drivers moderate their speeds by just a few miles an hour increases pedestrian survival rates significantly. For example, a pedestrian hit by a car going 30 miles per hour has an 80 percent chance of living. If the car is going just 10 miles faster, the pedestrian has more than an 80 percent change of being fatally injured.

Contrary to the Report's flawed assumption, there is widespread support for the District's ATE program among residents because they know it is the most efficient method of traffic safety enforcement, with no concerns that the ATE cameras are biased against a vehicle driver based on race, ethnicity, or type of car. The ATE cameras focus solely on whether a traffic violation has occurred.

Cathy L. Lanier

Chief of Police

