

peacemakers

enhancing understanding, transparency, and accountability

The Police Employment, Accountability, & Community Engagement (PEACE) Commission makes recommendations to the City Council on matters relating to policing in Golden Valley. It helps the Golden Valley Police Department innovate and transform its provision of public safety services based on community input and needs to assure the department provides inclusive, community-centered service.

Peacemakers is produced by an editorial board of Commissioners and police staff that meets at least quarterly to develop content, seek community input, and review the impact the stories told here. Readers are invited to contribute ideas and questions.

Issue 1
March 2023

Upcoming Events

PEACE Commission Meetings (2023)

- April 13
- May 11
- June 8

6:30 pm | Second Thursday of the month (unless other notice is given)



The PEACE Commission works in a variety of ways to build relationships that support police-community engagement. Commissioner Henry Crosby (left) brought together Golden Valley Police Chief Virgil Green (center) with former

City Hall
7800 Golden Valley Rd

Public Listening Session (Spring 2023)

Date and time to be determined. More information to come.

Peacemakers expresses the Golden Valley PEACE Commission's mission to help the Police Department innovate and transform its provision of public safety services and to build trust between law enforcement and the community.

Editorial Objectives

- Enhance understanding and trust between the Golden Valley Police Department and the people it serves through community dialogue and engagement
- Frame public safety as a co-creation of police, community members, and anchoring institutions
- Demonstrate transparency and accountability to the public
- Celebrate exemplary police work and positive contributions to public safety by community members

Contact Us

Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo (right) for a recent networking lunch.

In This Issue

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Peacemakers: A Voice For Building Trust Between Police And Community

A PEACE Commission discussion about the editorial objectives for *Peacemakers* newsletter raised a key question: What will be its editorial voice?

The short answer: A chorus of voices, we hope, that expresses the diverse nature of our city.

Golden Valley has sung together before on a much bigger scale through Envision Golden Valley.

In 2002, when challenged to think about Golden Valley's future, more than 600 people spoke in-depth about their hopes for the community. Through surveys and public gatherings large and small, the many expressions harmonized into broad themes of agreement, outlined in "[A Shared Vision For Golden Valley's Future.](#)"

Twenty years later, we've become a more diverse city in a more polarized social and political climate. Now Golden Valley is challenged to Reimagine Public Safety through a collaborative approach. The PEACE Commission is charged with bringing community perspectives into that process across three areas: police employment, accountability, and community engagement.

We've done this before. And this newsletter already has more than 800 subscribers. Let's do it again.

Peacemakers Editorial Board

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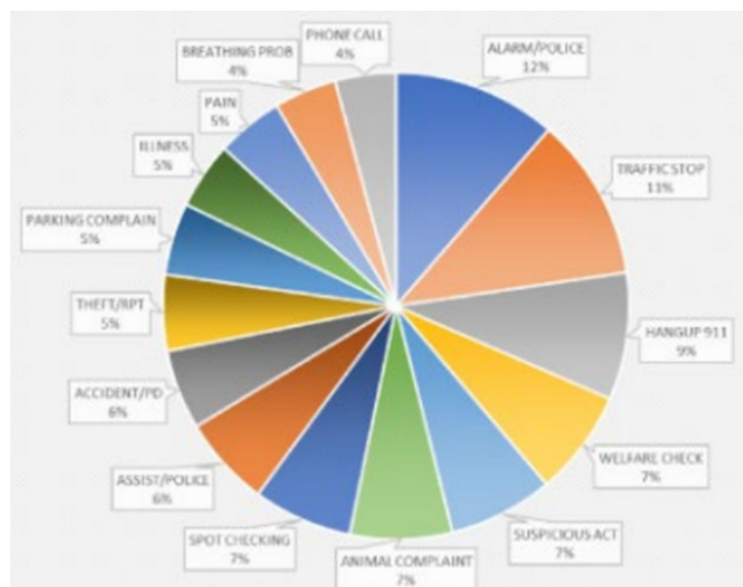
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Matching 911 Calls With The Need For Police Response

Of the nearly 13,000 calls for service that came to the Golden Valley Police Department (GVPD) in 2022, many of the police responses did not involve what we typically think of as “crime.” Every week via the City website, the GVPD Window [reports crime data](#) and other statistics that provide a comprehensive picture of police activities.

2022 Public Service Calls Data

Percentage Breakdown Of Codes



The majority of 911 calls have nothing to do with crime or violence. According to analysis of police department call data by Vera Institute of Justice, in most of the nine cities studied, [fewer than 3 percent of calls](#) related to situations involving violent crime.

How does calls for service data inform police leadership, and what can the public take away from these reports?

The department's total calls for service have been declining since 2017. But breakouts of the types of calls show considerable shifts in police activities over that time. One of the PEACE Commission's roles is to advise the City on how data reporting can help the public better understand crime and policing, as well as help the Police Department detect patterns of enforcement that concern community members.

Chat With The Chief

Peacemakers asked Police Chief Virgil Green to give us a high-level overview of how the department uses these reports to evaluate its services and help ensure accountability to the public.

Peacemakers: What would you like the community to know about the overall changes in crime data for 2022?

Chief Green: You know, instant reporting and social media bring us bad news very quickly and graphically from everywhere, so that heightens our perceptions of danger--of things being real bad out there. But if you look at our crime statistics, you'll see that's not the case.

Golden Valley is a safe community. That has not changed despite the fact that we've had fewer patrol officers available. More serious crimes have historically been low here. You never want to see crime rates spike like they did in 2021. In most cases, though, the numbers for 2022 fell back in line with past levels.

Auto-related crime, which is part of a general trend everywhere, was one of the few categories to increase--a lot of it related to a few vehicle models. Property crimes can be prevented, and we will continue to educate the public about what they can do to reduce their exposure, through programs like *9PM Routine*, *CommunityCAM*, and a reboot of what was called *Neighborhood Watch*.

Peacemakers: What accounts for the overall drop in calls for service over the past five years? What does the change in mix tell you?

Chief Green: The numbers tell me this department was already using data to successfully improve its services. Right now, if you look at the top 15 most frequent call-for-service types received in 2023 [see table below], many of them are calls asking for help about health issues, vehicular issues, or to take a theft report.

Top 15 Calls for service by Nature Code			
From:3/6/2023 12:00:00 AM To:3/12/2023 11:59:59 PM		2023 YTD	
Initial Nature of Call	# of Calls	Initial Nature of Call	# of Calls
SPOT CHECKING	23	PARKING COMPLAIN	173
ALARM/POLICE	12	SPOT CHECKING	165
ILLNESS	9	ALARM/POLICE	107
ASSIST/POLICE	8	HANGUP 911	97
CAR/STALLED	8	CAR/STALLED	81
THEFT/RPT	7	WELFARE CHECK	80
WELFARE CHECK	7	ACCIDENT/PO	62
HANGUP 911	6	PAIN	61
ACCIDENT/PO	4	ASSIST/POLICE	58
FALL	4	ILLNESS	58
FORGERY/RPT	4	FALL	57
LIFT ASSIST	4	HEART	55
PARKING COMPLAIN	4	TRAFFIC STOP	53
SUSPICIOUS ACT	4	SUSPICIOUS ACT	50
UNCONSCIOUS	4	THEFT/RPT	50

Those calls are important, but they aren't all urgent and don't necessarily require a sworn officer to respond. We are using this fine-tuned data to cover these calls while ensuring officers are available for the most serious calls.

In 2021 Golden Valley instituted a new traffic stop policy to focus on violations that affect the health and safety of residents and motorists. As a result, there's been a nearly 40 percent reduction in traffic stops in the past year. [Read more about the "Lights On!" program in the story below.]

Peacemakers: What can the community do to help the department during this time when officers are stretched thin?

Chief Green: First, take proactive steps to reduce your vulnerability to crime--things like situational awareness, securing vehicles and other outdoor property, better lighting, etc. Another is to get to know your neighbors and talk about what you can do together. Lastly, we want you to call 911 if you spot a crime, have an emergency, or feel unsafe. It's our job to respond. But if you do those other things, Golden Valley will be in a better situation to use our patrol resources more effectively.

The PEACE Commission participates on a Data Team that is developing a new, interactive dashboard on the City website that will make Golden Valley's crime statistics more transparent to the community.

Funding for the effort comes from the Pohlad Family Foundation's Reimagining Public Safety Program. As this work progresses, the Data Team will solicit community input to the selection of data and public interface design.

GVPD Participates In Lights On!

The Golden Valley Police Department (GVPD) is partnering with Lights On!, a free community-driven program with the mission to build relationships between communities and law enforcement agencies.

Under the program, GVPD officers on traffic stops may provide a voucher for a free repair on mechanical problems with the vehicle rather than citing the driver. Some common

mechanical violations include burned-out light bulbs, broken turn signals, and more.

Lights On! is supported by community in-kind and financial donations. To learn more and find participating repair centers, visit lightsonus.org.