

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**TRAVIS COUNTY APPROVES NEW DEDICATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PILOT**

*Four person team will focus on improving safety on SH71 West and US290 West*

**Sep 5, 2019 AUSTIN, TX** - Travis County Commissioners have unanimously approved to fund a dedicated traffic enforcement pilot as part of their FY2020 budget. Under the terms of the funding, three additional deputies will be added to the operations of Constable Precinct 3 and be combined with the current dedicated traffic deputy to make a new team of four. Stacy Suits, Constable Precinct 3, Travis County, has stated the team will operate in mobile pairs, in clearly marked vehicles along SH71 West and US290 West. This should also allow for Travis County Sheriff's to focus more of their traffic resources on RM620.

Over the past 6 months, Safer71 has been advocating with Constable Suits and Commissioner Gerald Daugherty, Precinct 3, Travis County, for permanent additional enforcement in the area after demonstrating significant safety improvements from a single assigned deputy on SH71 West.

The combined efforts of DPS, Travis County Sheriff's Office, Constable Precinct 3, and Bee Cave Police have seen an **86% reduction in deaths**, a **34% reduction in total injuries**, and a **15% reduction in total crashes** year-over-year on SH71 West. The addition of the three deputies under the pilot will allow for this enforcement presence to be consistently sustained for the next two years.

"While we continue to work with TxDOT for safety improvements on SH71 West, the reality is that bad drivers on good roads are still a safety risk. Solving that requires changing their habits" said Greg Short, President, Safer 71. "Enforcement is a key part of this process. By maintaining a sustained, visible presence in the area, drivers along these roads will learn that distracted driving, speeding, tailgating, or other dangerous driving is not something you can get away with. Hopefully that mindset will then be maintained beyond these areas of increased enforcement."

The County noted that the Auditors office had reviewed the request and based on data from current enforcement on SH71 West, the new positions should be at, or near, revenue neutral for the County with the fines generated from citations.

Safer71 believes the decision by the County to support this road safety program on state highways shows their strong commitment to life and safety for residents in the area. We are proud as a community organization of the close partnerships we have developed with our precinct representatives Constable Suits and Commissioner Daugherty and the role we have played in helping this pilot to be implemented. We look forward to continuing our work together in the future.

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