



Date: November 13, 2020

To: Wanda S. Page, Interim City Manager
Through: W. Bowman Ferguson, Deputy City Manager
From: Cerelyn J. Davis, Chief of Police
Subject: DPD Response - William Powell's Request to Appear Before City Council

This correspondence is in response to Mr. William Powell's expressed concerns regarding street racing, drifting, and other vehicle related issues in his community, causing excessive noise and an unsafe environment. The Durham Police Department shares Mr. Powell's concerns surrounding these activities, and has recently responded to similar complaints in other Durham neighborhoods.

After receiving numerous reports regarding cars, ATVs and motorcycles driving recklessly in many areas of the City, the Department has begun collecting intelligence data regarding the locations and individuals hosting these events. From our initial investigation, numerous social media pages have been devoted to scheduling "meet-ups" which involve individuals not only from Durham, but from surrounding areas and even out-of-state. As we become aware of these events through social media, 911 calls for service, or other notifications, officers respond to the area in an effort to identify any criminal activity for the purpose of enforcement. Our experience has been that upon arrival of uniformed law enforcement personnel, the participants will rapidly leave the area, frequently evading our efforts to conduct traffic stops. The group will then reconvene at a separate location where they continue their activity until law enforcement officers respond to that location. This activity has created a sort of cat and mouse environment, difficult to manage safely.

At this time, department personnel have been unable to charge any of these participants due to them fleeing from officers when traffic stops are attempted. Many vehicles are ATVs, and are not required by law to have registered tags, thus shielding the identities of the owner/operator. This problem is not unique to Durham, but an emerging nuisance in many urban areas.

Unfortunately, the actions of these individuals endanger the lives of others not only on private lots while at these "meet-ups," but also during their attempts to evade/flee the police upon our arrival. As our staffing has permitted, we have increased our efforts to pro-actively ensure a visible presence at these meet-up locations before they begin. We feel our presence will serve as a deterrent to effectively abate these dangerous activities. We continue to encourage our community to partner with us by calling 911 when they see or hear these activities. Our community and business leaders have been instrumental in sharing information such as, videos, tag numbers, and photographs, in an attempt to locate, identify and charge persons involved. The Durham Police Department is committed to restoring a sense of peace and quiet in our neighborhoods, and hold accountable those that continue to put others at risk with reckless and irresponsible activity.

CJD