Police department renews commitment to enforce city-designated truck route

An 18 wheeler turned on to Newton street from 26th in the Barrio Logan neighborhood of San Diego on Wednesday, August 27 , 2019 despite the fact that it is posted for no truck traffic over 5 tons allowed.
(John Gibbins/The San Diego Union-Tribune)

SDPD plans to provide ongoing training to officers, engage with residents and seek grants, officials say

The San Diego Police Department plans to increase its enforcement of a council resolution that prohibits heavy-duty trucks from residential streets in Barrio Logan, officials said.

Residents and environmental health advocates have repeatedly raised concerns about enforcement being too lax because they continue to see heavy-duty trucks driving in the community despite the resolution.

Officials presented their plan Wednesday at the council's Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Committee at the request of Councilwoman Vivian Moreno who represents the neighborhood. SDPD also gave a [presentation last week](#) at the Barrio Logan Planning Group meeting.

Police officials said they plan to improve collaboration with residents and advocates to identify high traffic locations. The department plans to apply for grants, which would allow them to hire officers specifically tasked with enforcing the resolution.

"We obviously want to reduce the number of commercial trucks on residential streets. I would actually like to eliminate them, but let's start working on reducing," SDPD Capt. Mike Holden said.

He said the department is dealing with limited resources, but will use what it has to the highest impact.

The department has provided ongoing training to officers in the area on enforcing the resolution and collaborated with other agencies to increase driver awareness, he said.

The San Diego City Council passed the resolution in December 2018, which identified specific prohibited streets in the community, essentially rerouting traffic to a city-designated truck route away from homes and schools.

Exceptions were made for trucks making local deliveries. The city also installed signs on prohibited streets to inform drivers.

Holden said the department has issued 49 citations to trucks found driving on prohibited streets as of Oct. 14. Not included in the presentation were 18 additional citations officers issued since Oct. 14, he said.

Back in September, The San Diego Union-Tribune requested citations related to the resolution, issued from Dec. 3, 2018, to Aug. 15. Records showed police [issued 41 citations to commercial vehicles](#) found driving on prohibited streets in the neighborhood.

Resident Philomena Marino said the additional 18 citations issued by SDPD since Oct. 14 show the department is trying, but the "true commitment" will be reflected in the number of citations issued.

Diane Takvorian, executive director of the Environmental Health Coalition, said the issue of heavy-duty trucks constantly driving through the community has been ongoing.

Staff with the organization said they collected more than 130 signatures from residents in support of more enforcement.

"These 49 citations just in this last year is clearly not enough," Takvorian said. "We really need that to be stepped up."

Residents present at the Barrio Logan Planning Group meeting last week echoed her comments. They shared anecdotes of how the issue affects them daily and played footage of commercial vehicles driving in front of their homes.

Residents argued that 49 citations were insufficient.

Community members suggested exploring the possibility of working with the city to install bigger signs, meeting more frequently with neighbors and creating physical barriers such as angled parking or islands to make streets smaller.

After the community spoke, Holden said he agreed 49 citations were not enough and the police department "could do better than that."

Officers also reminded residents that the resolution includes exemptions for trucks delivering goods or trucks that have a point of origin in those prohibited streets.