City of Birmingham
A Walkable Community

MEMORANDUM

Police Department

DATE: **July 9, 2015**

TO: **Joseph A. Valentine, City Manager**

FROM: **Donald A. Studt, Police Chief**

SUBJECT: **Stop Signs on Northlawn Street at Pleasant Street**

On June 24, 2013, the City Commission voted to approve the installation of two stop signs on Northlawn Street at Pleasant Street. As part of that motion, there was a one year test period for the two signs. In December of 2013, five months after the Police Department installed the stop signs, a speed/volume count was conducted. The 85th percentile speed for Northlawn Street was 30 mph. This means that 85 percent of vehicles traveling on Northlawn are traveling 30 mph or less. In June of 2015, the Police Department again conducted a speed/volume count on Northlawn Street at the same location. The 85th percentile speed for Northlawn Street had increased to 33 mph.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration Guidelines for Uniform Traffic Control Devices specifically states, "Yield or Stop Signs shall not be used for speed control." The guidelines also state the following for when a stop sign should be considered:

1. When the combined vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian volume averages more than 2,000 units per day.

2. When sight lines do not allow for seeing conflicting traffic on an approach.

3. When crash records indicate five or more crashes involving a failure to yield in a three year period or three in a two year period.

In response to the above three guidelines, Northlawn Street has the following conditions/history:

1. In the 2013 speed/volume count the average vehicular traffic on Northlawn Street was 1736 vehicles per day. In the 2015 speed/volume count the number fell to 1515 vehicles per day. There have been no counts for bicycle or pedestrian volume. However, it would be safe to assume that when taken as a whole, the sum total of all vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic is less than 2,000 units per day.

2. There are no sight line obstructions that prevent vision of the intersection.

3. According to department accident report records, there has been only one accident at the intersection of Northlawn Street and Pleasant Street since January of 2012. The accident did not involve a failure to yield (PDA only).

   In 2013, the Police Department consulted with Traffic Engineer Mike Labadie and asked him if stop signs were warranted on Northlawn Street at Pleasant Street. Mr. Labadie indicated at that time that the stop signs were not warranted and he further asserted that by adding stop signs, the speeds on Northlawn Street may increase.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION:
To remove the two stop signs on Northlawn at Pleasant Street.