



## KENSINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

10940 San Pablo Avenue ▪ El Cerrito ▪ CA ▪ 94530

(510) 526-4141

[www.kppcsd.org](http://www.kppcsd.org)

**DATE:** May 31st, 2024

**TO:** David Aranda: General Manager

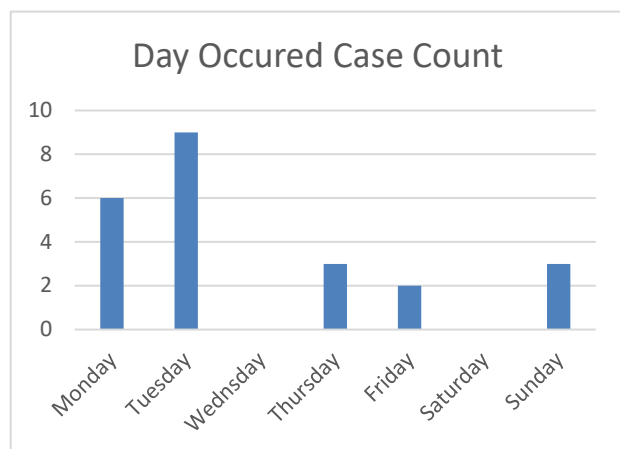
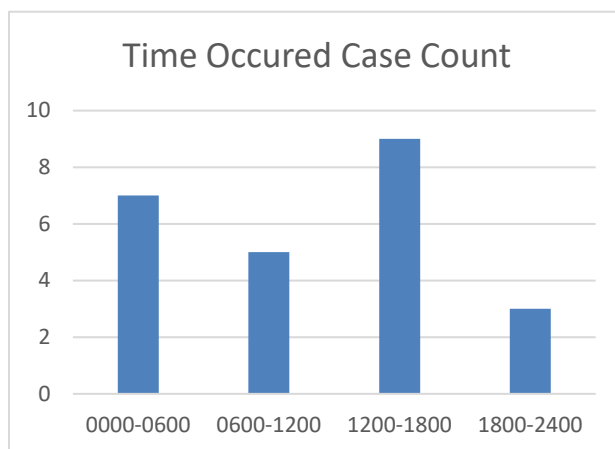
**FROM:** M. Gancasz, Chief of Police

**RE:** Police Chief's Monthly Report, May 2024

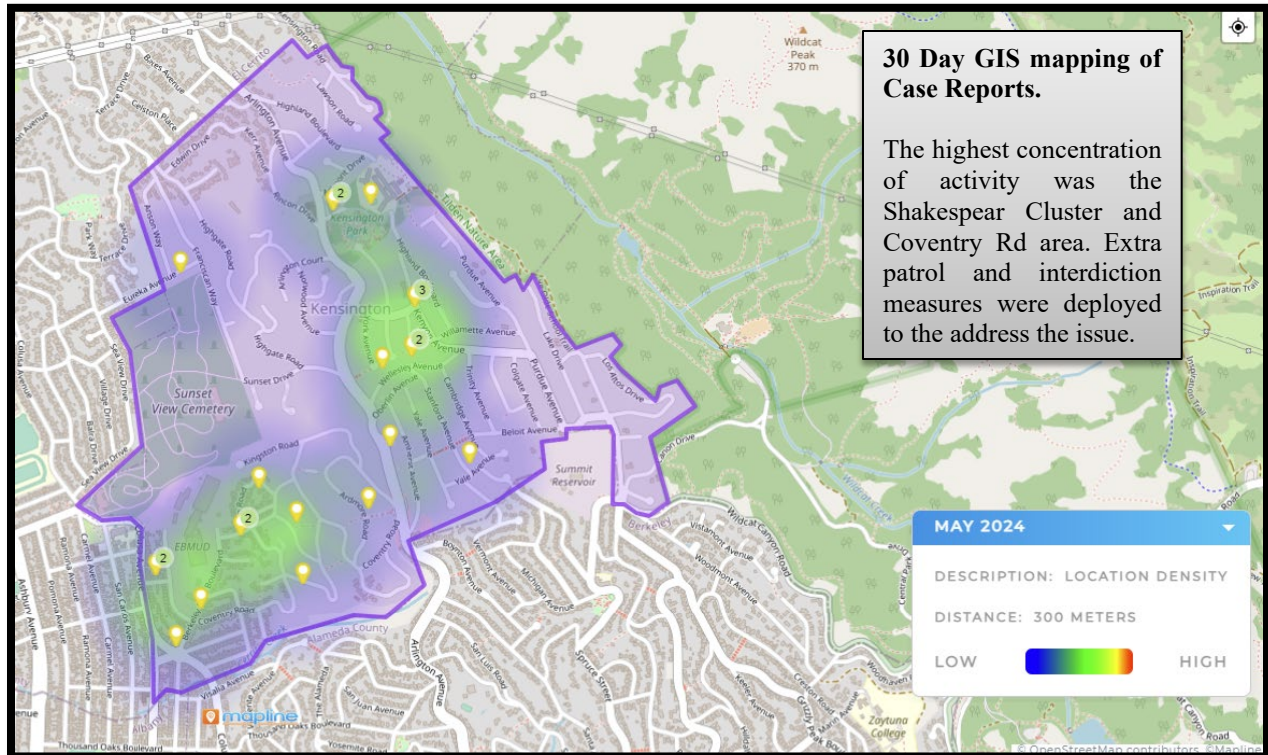
### Patrol Operations

In May, the Kensington Police Department handled a total of 1,226 incidents, which is an increase from 1217 incidents in the prior month. Out of the total number of incidents, 906 were initiated by officers, including 97 traffic enforcement stops, resulting in 42 citations. This is an increase from 94 traffic enforcement stops and a decrease from 47 citations in the prior month. Additionally, the officers responded to 320 dispatched calls for service, which is an increase from 230 in the prior month. They also took 25 reports, which is an increase from 19 reports in April. No arrests were made. The officers investigated one case each of stalking, criminal threats, a burglary from a motor vehicle, a grand theft, a death investigation, and a psychiatric hold. Additionally, there were two incidents of someone tampering with vehicles and two identity theft investigations.

The average response time of the officers decreased from 4.1 minutes to 3.8 minutes.



## Crime Trend Mapping May 1-31, 2024



## Activity Log

- On Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, officers responded to Wellesley Avenue for a report of vehicle vandalism and tampering. There are no witnesses or leads but the investigation remains ongoing.
- On Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to Avon Road for a report of an unreported auto burglary that occurred in April. The matter is being investigated.
- On Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, officers took a phone report of stalking. A report was taken, and the matter is being investigated.
- On Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to a report of petty theft on Wellesley Ave.
- On Thursday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to a report of a vehicle vandalism on Colusa Avenue.
- On Thursday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to a report of a grand theft from a vehicle on Arlington Avenue.
- On Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, officers were dispatched to Highland Boulevard for a report of someone brandishing a firearm. The alleged suspect and alleged victim fled from the scene

prior to police arrival. During the investigation officers were unable to establish (identify) a victim or a suspect. A detailed report was completed to document the incident.

- On Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to a report of a hit and run collision of parked vehicles near Stratford Road. Traffic collision reports were authored for both incidents.
- On Thursday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to Arlington Avenue for a report of vandalism inside the Kensington Community Park restrooms. Officers located graffiti inside the restrooms, contacted the Kensington maintenance personnel for clean-up, and authored a report. The investigation into this incident remains ongoing.
- On Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, officers responded to Hilltop Elementary School for a report of criminal threats. This incident was documented and is followed up by school officials in conjunction with the West Contra Costa County Unified School District.
- On Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, officers responded to Ardmore Road for a medical emergency.
- On Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, officers responded to a non-injury traffic collision near Wellesley Avenue and Stanford Avenue. A report was taken.
- On Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, officers responded to the Kensington Library for a report of a stolen wallet. The wallet was later located and returned to the owner. A report was authored to document the incident.
- On Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to a non-injury traffic collision near Wellesley Avenue and Stanford Avenue. A report was taken.
- On Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to Westminster Avenue for a fraud report. A report was authored, resources were provided, and the investigation is ongoing.
- On Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to Yale Avenue for an identity theft report. A report was authored, resources were provided, and the investigation is ongoing.
- On Monday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to a non-injury traffic collision near Westminster Avenue and Kenyon Avenue. A report was taken.
- On Tuesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to Stratford Road for a deceased adult. No foul play is suspected, and the investigation is closed.



**Community Safety Cameras** Three (3) community safety cameras were installed in May. Two more will be installed in June, completing the project. As the cameras are being installed, supervisors are monitoring the captured data for function, frequency, and accuracy before fully implementing the program to patrol officers.

| May Data Captured – three (3) cameras |               |                |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Type                                  | Stolen Plates | Stolen Vehicle |
| Count                                 | 60            | 1              |

### Police Radios

On October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the California Department Of Justice (DOJ) announced new standards for police departments whenever officers broadcast citizen information over their radios. This standard required police departments to update and encrypt their radios. Kensington successfully updated and encrypted its radio inventory in May, bringing the police department into compliance with the DOJ requirements. Kensington is the first agency in Contra Costa County to comply with this requirement.

### Training



The police department once again prioritized de-escalation training and crisis intervention strategies. Sergeant Lande provided Active Listening Skills (ASL) and Crisis Communications training for Officers Thota and De Santiago. Ofc. De Santiago and Sgt. Lande attended training on the use of de-escalation/less lethal impact platforms to include the 40mm sponge round and the bean bag round. The training included an emphasis on system handling, marksmanship, implementation as part of a crisis response team, case law, policy, and scenarios. The training was conducted in

conjunction with the El Cerrito Police Department’s Advanced Officer Training program. Sgt. Lande, Ofc. Gill, and Ofc. De Santiago attended the Sacramento County Sheriff’s Office Building Entry and Search course in Elk Grove to improve officer safety when entering a building. Sgt. Lande completed an additional course on advanced reporting for DUI investigations. Safe traffic enforcement stop procedures training was completed with members of the El Cerrito Police Department. Officers received more than forty (40) hours of in-service perishable skills training.

### Traffic Safety

Two misdemeanor hit and run investigations and two non-injury collision investigations were handled this month. One of the collisions involved four vehicles on Berkeley Park Blvd between Coventry and Ocean View.

On May 11th, Kensington and El Cerrito Officers conducted a joint directed speed enforcement operation in both Kensington and El Cerrito focused on speeding motorists on both Moeser Ave and Colusa Ave. The operation involved the use of Radar and Lidar. Officers continue to identify opportunities to leverage interagency coordination and resources to improve traffic safety in Kensington.

Kensington PD will be conducting its final Grant Funded DUI Enforcement operation on Friday June 7th from 2:00pm to midnight. Officers will focus their attention on impaired drivers as well as educating the public about the dangers of driving while impaired.

### **Chief of Police**



On Thursday, May 9, four officers were officially sworn in and took the oath of office during the monthly Board of Directors meeting. These officers have an outstanding background, demonstrating exceptional skills and dedication, making them ideal additions to the Kensington Police Department. With their expertise and commitment to serving the community, they are poised to uphold the department's mission and contribute to ensuring public safety and security in

Kensington. Their induction marks a significant step forward in achieving a full staff, reinforcing the department's capabilities, and enhancing its customer service theme while furthering our ability to address the evolving challenges of law enforcement. Many families and friends were present to enjoy the ceremony.

From left to right

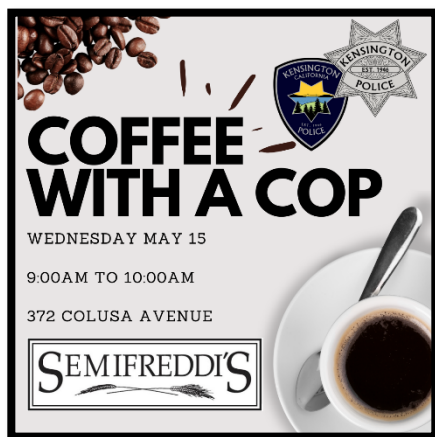
- Officer Vijayram Thota
- Officer Harjot Gill
- Officer Jesse De Santiago
- Reserve Officer Michael Tranate

I had the privilege of attending the California Police Chiefs Conference held in southern California, which boasted a robust turnout of chiefs and participants from across the state. I extended a conditional offer of employment to a highly qualified police applicant. Pending the successful completion of a thorough background check, their appointment will bring our esteemed police department to its full staff complement of nine (9) officers. Additionally, I presented the Police Department's personnel and operating budget for the fiscal year 2024/2025 to the General Manager for comprehensive review. Collaborating closely with the finance department, we made significant strides in finalizing the payroll tool with our vendors. Anticipated testing of the refined product is set to commence on June 15th or potentially sooner. Upon implementation, we expect a substantial reduction in the time spent processing payroll each month, thereby streamlining operations and enhancing efficiency across the district. Additionally, I signed an MOU with the Contra Costa District Attorneys Office related to peace officer files and transparency.

I had the privilege of meeting with Chief of Police J. Geisberger from Albany to discuss a potential extension of our existing dispatch contract. We are diligently working towards having the contract ready for review by late June or early July, ensuring continued seamless collaboration and service delivery.

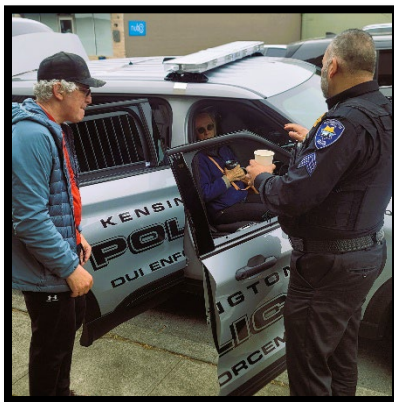
Consultant Jason Haynes authored and submitted two (2) federal grant proposals on behalf of the police department. 1) a COPS grant to fund a police officer position and 2) a micro grant to promote community outreach, transparency, and accountability within the department. These grant proposals underscore Jason's proactive approach to securing resources that directly benefit the police department and the community it serves. The COPS grant (\$90,000) aims to bolster the department's personnel, enabling it to enhance its operational capacity and better respond to public safety needs. Meanwhile, the micro grant (\$170,000) underscores the department's commitment to fostering positive relationships with the community by promoting transparency and accountability initiatives. If successful, these grants will not only strengthen the department's capabilities but also reinforce its dedication to serving and engaging with the community in meaningful ways.

## Community



On May 15th at 9:00 am, Coffee with A COP made a triumphant return to Kensington, generously hosted by Semi Freddi's Bakery. Attendees were treated to a delightful spread of coffee and pastries while engaging in lively conversations with officers and Volunteer, Mike Logan. The highlight of the event was the unveiling of the department's new patrol car, made possible through grant funding. Sergeant Nath and Volunteer Logan led informative tours of the vehicle, showcasing its innovative features and design elements. Enthusiastic discussions ensued about the car's colors, graphics, and advanced technology. The success of this event sets the stage for our upcoming Pizza with Police event, graciously hosted by Benchmark Pizzeria on

Wednesday, June 15th, from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. We look forward to another opportunity to connect with our community over delicious food and meaningful dialogue. For more information about upcoming events, visit [KPPCSD.org](http://KPPCSD.org) or our Facebook page.



## Hilltop Elementary School Carnival



Officers Gill and De Santiago exemplified the Kensington Police Department's commitment to community engagement by participating in the annual Kensington Hilltop Elementary School Carnival. With warmth and professionalism, they fielded inquiries, offered informative tours of patrol vehicles, and distributed stickers to eager attendees. Their presence at this event underscored the department's dedication to fostering positive relationships with local schools and nurturing trust within the community.

## Volunteers in Policing (VIPS)



In Kensington, our community thrives thanks to the dedicated efforts of our invaluable volunteers who generously contribute their time and expertise. In May, these volunteers collectively donated twenty-nine (29) hours of service to both the District and the wider community. Their contributions encompass a range of essential tasks, including fleet maintenance, technology integration, and active participation in various community events. Under the capable supervision of Sergeant A. Nath, our volunteer program operates seamlessly, with Sergeant Nath overseeing daily communications and task assignments. As evidenced by its growing success, the program continues to evolve, demonstrating its pivotal role in enhancing

police and district operations while fostering community well-being. Looking ahead, we are excited to expand our volunteer base this summer, confident that their dedication will further elevate our collective efforts in serving and enriching our community.

# Swearing In Ceremony

