



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Wheat Ridge City Council Passes Two Ordinances Designed to Increase Traffic Safety

**WHEAT RIDGE, Colo. June 17, 2021** – At the June 14 meeting, Wheat Ridge City Council passed two new ordinances designed to increase traffic safety for pedestrians and motorists traveling through the city. In the next few weeks, signage will be added in key locations, and Wheat Ridge Police Department (WRPD) patrol and crime prevention officers will contact pedestrians to educate them about the new ordinances prior to issuing any citations. The city will also share information through local media, their social media platforms, in city newsletters and on the website. Anyone with concerns about traffic or pedestrian safety is asked to call the non-emergency number 303-237-2220 #1.

“Traffic safety statistics for the City demonstrate that crashes involving pedestrians have increased in the last year,” stated WRPD Chief Chris Murtha. “We have also seen crashes resulting in pedestrian fatalities along roadways with a higher volume of cars or that have higher speed limits like Kipling and Wadsworth. These new ordinances control access to medians and other areas that weren’t designed for pedestrians and should also address the dangers posed by pedestrians in our roadways. These ordinances will help to increase safety for both motorists and pedestrians.”

#### Pedestrians Hindering the Flow of Traffic ([Read Ordinance 1714](#))

The ordinance, effective immediately, adopts a new section of the Code governing pedestrian and traffic safety. This ordinance provides Wheat Ridge police officers with an enforcement tool to maintain separation between motorists and pedestrians, thereby reducing motorist and pedestrian crashes and improving overall traffic safety in the City. This ordinance is intended to reduce motorist and pedestrian crashes by regulating pedestrian behaviors that interfere with traffic, including entering the roadway in a way that obstructs or hinders traffic flow, and soliciting in areas that are unsafe. The safety of pedestrians will be increased by maximizing the distance between the roadway and pedestrians.

#### Pedestrian Use of Roadway Center Medians and Prohibiting Sales and Solicitation in Certain Places ([Read Ordinance 1715](#))

The second ordinance, effective immediately, addresses pedestrian use of roadway center medians and amends Section 16-113 which prohibits sales and solicitation in certain areas. The ordinance is intended to reduce motorist and pedestrian crashes by regulating center medians that are unsafe for occupation by pedestrians. The primary purpose of a roadway center median is to enhance the safety of and ensure the free flow of traffic on roadways by separating opposing lanes of vehicular traffic, channeling traffic for turning purposes, and, within designated areas, to provide a temporary refuge for pedestrians crossing busy or wide roadways. An individual who occupies or uses a roadway center median area that is not designed or suitable for pedestrian use creates a safety hazard for the pedestrian and for traffic in the adjacent roadway. Pedestrians using entrance and exit ramps along Interstate highways for sales or collection transactions with passing motorists pose a special safety hazard where no safe pull-out or parking areas exist, and also creates a distraction for passing motorists which can inhibit the free flow of traffic. Alternative means and locations for sales and solicitations are available elsewhere throughout the City, and prohibiting these activities along certain highways will directly increase the safety of the public.

The **City of Wheat Ridge**, located west of Denver with a population of 31,000 residents, is home to a mix of retail/commercial businesses and unique residential neighborhoods. Wheat Ridge is a vibrant community in a prime location, providing easy access to the Denver metro area and to recreation west into the mountains. The City was selected as an All-America City for 2021 by the National Civic League. Info about Wheat Ridge [ci.wheatridge.co.us](http://ci.wheatridge.co.us)

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