Palos Park Crime and Road Safety

Steve Desmond for Mayor | Steve for Safety
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LOW CRIME DOES NOT MEAN SAFE ROADS.

Speeding. Impaired driving. Unlawful vehicle noise. These belong at the center of our public-safety agenda. A favorable crime ranking cannot tell us whether our roads are safe.

Safe roads protect all of us: residents, visiting family and friends, and people working in our Village. You should not have to live beside a problem road to care about the people who do.

My position

Our officers deserve support. Our residents deserve results. As Mayor, I will make road safety a priority, work with police leadership and the Council to strengthen enforcement, press for road improvements, and report what changes.

This initial assessment identifies documented concerns and actions to pursue. Location examples come from July 2025 stop records, not a complete or current inventory. The records reviewed do not establish local DUI totals, violent- or property-crime trends, or which roads have the highest overall risk.

Where the evidence points

These locations need attention. The evidence differs from place to place.

Location	Documented evidence and next step
Southwest Highway at Timber Lane and 121st Street	Village planning priority since the 2018 plan. Publish crash figures and an improvement schedule. [1, 2]
LaGrange Road at 123rd Street	Reported fatal crash and recorded stops. Obtain the final investigation and review turns and signals. [3, 4]
LaGrange Road at McCarthy Road	Recorded enforcement activity under this location label. Confirm location coding before combining it with 123rd Street records. [3]
LaGrange Road from 119th to 131st	Speeding stops at multiple locations. Measure speeds and compare crashes and patrol coverage. [3]
Route 83 near 119th and the 8200 block	Negligent-driving and speeding entries. Review speeds, crashes, and turning movements. [3]
Southwest Highway near 121st and 131st	Negligent-driving, speeding, and loud-muffler entries. Examine recurring complaints and enforcement needs. [3]

Stop entries record suspected violations and enforcement responses, including warnings. They are not findings of guilt or a ranking of dangerous roads.

Known concerns deserve visible action

Southwest Highway crossing area

The Village identifies Southwest Highway at Timber Lane and 121st Street as a priority in its 2018 Bicycle and Trail Plan. It applied for transportation-safety planning assistance in March 2025 and approved an agreement with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) in November 2025. [1]

CMAP says the plan aims to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries. That is a worthy goal. Residents should be able to see the proposed fixes, responsible agencies, costs, and completion targets. [2]

LaGrange Road at 123rd Street

Patch reported a fatal two-vehicle crash here in an article posted March 2, 2026. Its account described an ongoing investigation; it did not establish speeding, DUI, or criminal fault. The final investigation should guide a review of turns, signal timing, and other safety measures. [4]

Speed and noise enforcement locations

July 2025 police records show speeding stops at 119th and LaGrange, 131st and LaGrange, and the 8200 block of Route 83. The log also records a loud-muffler entry at 131st and Route 7. These are concrete enforcement examples. A broader review should establish where problems recur and when patrols are needed most. [3]

What the numbers tell us

Police activity	2024	2025
Calls for service	52,846	55,640
Case reports	439	377
Accident reports	215	206
Adult arrests	21	28
Adjudication citations	1,310	2,265
Traffic citations	302	294

Source: Village annual police activity summaries. Labels follow the Village reports. [5, 6]

These figures show police activity. They do not tell us which roads have the most injuries, how often drivers speed, or how many citations concern vehicle noise. The two citation categories need clear definitions before comparisons are drawn.

September 2026 alone recorded 18 accident reports and 369 traffic stops. That monthly snapshot should remain separate from annual comparisons. [7]

DUI belongs in the safety picture

DUI falls outside the standard violent- and property-crime categories used in many rankings. The FBI historically reported it separately through arrest data. A low violent-crime rate does not measure impaired-driving risk. [8]

The records reviewed do not establish the number or location of DUI incidents in Palos Park. Obtaining those figures is an essential next step. The FBI also cautions against simplistic community rankings. [9]

What I will pursue as Mayor

Make enforcement a priority. Work with police leadership to target documented speeding, impaired driving, and unlawful vehicle noise while maintaining emergency coverage. Police leadership will direct operations and individual enforcement decisions.

Publish the facts. Seek a public report covering 2023 through 2025 and January through September 2026, with location-level crashes, injury severity, speeds, DUI arrests, noise complaints, and enforcement hours. Explain missing data and costs.

Press for physical improvements. Pursue needed reviews with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Track requests about signs, speed limits, turns, signals, and crossings. Publish agency responses, approvals needed, funding, and next steps.

Follow through on resident concerns. Record each concern, assign responsibility, acknowledge receipt, and provide updates. Residents deserve to know who is handling their issue and what happens next.

Report results and adjust. Compare speeds at the same locations and similar times. Track serious crashes, recurring complaints, patrol effort, and completed improvements. Ticket totals alone are not the goal. Safer roads and quieter neighborhoods are.

How results should be measured

We need numbers residents can trust. Check that each incident occurred in Palos Park and identify the agency responsible. Count each incident only once, even if a stop involves several charges. Keep crashes, suspected violations, arrests, and convictions separate. Show how many crashes caused death or serious injury and, where traffic counts are available, compare those crashes with the amount of traffic using the road.

Palos Park is worth protecting. I will press for action, keep after unresolved problems, and report the results to residents.

Sources

Sources accessed October 15, 2026. Bracketed numbers identify evidence; policy commitments are Steve Desmond's proposals.

[1] Village transportation safety plan
https://www.palospark.org/488/Transportation-Safety-Plan-with-CMAP

[2] CMAP Palos Park transportation safety plan
https://engage.cmap.illinois.gov/palos-park-safety-action-plan

[3] Village vehicle and pedestrian stops July 2025 pages 1 and 2
https://www.palospark.org/DocumentCenter/View/4402/Veh-and-Ped-Stops-July-2025pdf

[4] Patch fatal crash report posted March 2 2026 updated April 2 2026
https://patch.com/illinois/palos/1-dead-2-injured-crash-lagrange-road-123rd-street-palos-park

[5] Village police activity 2024
https://www.palospark.org/DocumentCenter/View/4297/Police-Activity-Report-for-2024pdf

[6] Village police activity 2025
https://www.palospark.org/DocumentCenter/View/4521/Police-Activity-Report-for-2025pdf

[7] Village police activity September 2026
https://www.palospark.org/DocumentCenter/View/4780/Monthly-Police-Activity-Report-September-2026pdf

[8] FBI offense definitions historical Summary Reporting System
https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2018/crime-in-the-u.s.-2018/topic-pages/offense-definitions

[9] FBI caution against ranking
https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s.-2012/resource-pages/caution-against-ranking/cautionagainstranking