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SHEBOYGAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

2018 Crash Reduction Initiative

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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In 2010 the Sheboygan Police Department adopted a vision statement for Sheboygan to be the safest community of its size in the United States. Since that time, by developing partnerships with the community and improving our allocation of resources, we have seen crime numbers steadily decline bringing us closer every year to that goal. In 2010 we had 1,609 Part I crimes, last year we had fewer than 1000.

One area we've recognized that still needs improvement is traffic safety. In 2010 we had 1,643 auto accidents in the city but in 2017 that number was up to 1,737. Of that number 185 involved personal injury and four resulted in fatalities. Compounding the tragedy of the fatal accidents is the fact that every one of them was preventable. Speed was a factor in three of them, one resulted from driving while intoxicated, and one was caused by an improper U-turn. If we're really going to make our community the safest it can be we need to reevaluate our driving habits and take seriously our responsibilities when on the roads.

In 2018 the Sheboygan Police Department will start a crash reduction initiative called "Car in Gear, Brain in Gear." As the name suggests, our focus will be on getting drivers to be mentally engaged in driving. Through education and enforcement we'll work with the community to improve traffic safety by consciously adopting safer driving habits. Our goal is to reduce total crashes for the year to fewer than 1500.

Our approach to traffic safety will be similar to our approach to neighborhood safety. Our success in reducing crime stems from the belief that crime is preventable. When people take steps to secure their property, provide adequate outdoor lighting, bring valuables in from their cars, and pay attention for suspicious activity crime decreases. The same principle applies for reducing auto accidents. When drivers put down their phones, drive the speed limit, leave plenty of space between their car and the next, and keep their minds focused on driving, the number of auto accidents will decrease.

We're asking the public to join with us in making traffic safety a high priority. Make a commitment that every time you put your car in gear you'll make a conscious decision to put your brain in gear. Let your friends and family know that you won't be answering their calls or texts while you're driving. Give yourself extra time so you don't have to rush to your destination. Drive the speed limit, give space to other vehicles, be alert for pedestrians, stay focused and in control.

These simple actions could literally be the difference between life and death for you, or someone you love.

Together, let's make Sheboygan the safest place to drive. #CarInGearBrainInGear
