

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 9



City and County of San Francisco

JACKIE FIELDER

February 11, 2025

Chief of Police William Scott
1245 3rd Street
San Francisco, CA 94158
SFPDchief@sfgov.org

RE: Letter of Inquiry to further understand the decision that SFPD made to pursue a vehicle on February 9th, 2025 that resulted in bystander injuries and damage to a small business parklet.

Dear Chief Scott:

In response to the police chase on Super Bowl Sunday, February 9th, that resulted in a car crashing into a parklet on 24th Street at the Napper Tandy Bar, 6 people being sent to the hospital including a woman and child, and an entire parklet destroyed, I am submitting this Letter of Inquiry to further understand the decision that SFPD made to pursue a vehicle on February 9th, 2025 that resulted in bystander injuries and damage to a small business parklet.

I would like to understand:

1. What were the circumstances surrounding this case?
 - a. Please share the top speed of the police car or cars that were involved in the accident.
2. What is the existing SFPD policy regarding police chases and how have officers been trained on it?
3. How did this incident comply with current SFPD policy, and how did it rise to the level of vehicle pursuit that ultimately put many lives in danger?
4. What is the SFPD protocol after a car chase that leads to injuries or fatalities?
 - a. What data is collected and reported after a police chase occurs, when someone is killed during a police chase, or when someone is injured?
5. Who made the judgement call to engage in a police chase, and based on what factors?
6. Were there other options, such as drones, or other measures that could have been deployed to avoid a vehicle pursuit that puts lives in danger?
7. And lastly, what accountability mechanisms are in place for officers whose decisions injure innocent bystanders and extensively damage local businesses?

Between 2018 and 2023, SFPD reported 150 police chases. 38% of these ended in a collision and of those, 15% resulted in at least one person getting hurt, resulting in almost 10 injuries annually. In 2023, a police chase led to a fatality and a cruiser crashing into a storefront in June.

SFPD's car chase policy calls for police to "safely apprehend a fleeing violator without unnecessarily endangering the public and/or officers." According to state law, members of law enforcement are also supposed to balance the offense and need for immediate capture against the risks to motorists, pedestrians, and officers.

Of course when there is a threat to people's lives, it is understood that there may be a need for such a policy, however in this case, the public deserves to know if there were other options that could have avoided such a confrontation that resulted in significant bystander injuries, and extensive damages to a local business establishment.

Public safety requires holding all people accountable for the harm they cause, no matter who causes it. I am concerned for the safety of our community, and want to ensure that the San Francisco Police Department is doing all that it can to avoid such an incident in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jackie Fielder".

Jackie Fielder