Team Members: Joseph Eagan (Still awaiting approval to join a group)

GitHub repository: Project2\_Eagan

I intend to analyze the Traffic Stops dataset sourced from the St. Paul Government website. This dataset shows the number of traffic stops that resulted in driver searches by the Saint Paul Police Department. In addition, there are tables and graphs this will help us analyze the trends and patterns to these traffic stops. The data includes columns that describes year, explains who is stopped, where the stops are occurring, and why officers are making the stops. Taking a glance at the data, we can quickly see that Officers made 12,903 traffic stops, 11,751 traffic stops were made for moving violations, 23 traffic stops were made for equipment violations, 714 investigative traffic stops were made, 14 traffic stops were the result of 911 calls, and 1 stop was made for other reasons.

It is important to study these trends because traffic stops are used as a public safety tool; and understanding these trends can give us clarity on claims that traffic stops are motivated by race. The data shows us that most traffic stops occur in areas of the city that have the highest number of 911 calls received. Most traffic stops occur in neighborhoods experiencing the highest levels of violent crime. Officers are most likely to issue citations for behavior that leads to crashes, injuries, and death. And traffic stops help officers take illegally possessed guns off the streets—in 2022, 61 firearms were recovered during traffic stops.

I plan to explore common trends of traffic stops year-over-year to see if traffic stops increased or decreased. I plan to look at the column “Date of Stop” to determine if stops are made on specific dates, when police traffic stop quotas are due. And it will be worthwhile analyzing gender and race during traffic stops to see if those variables have a higher frequency of traffic stops. Lastly, location of stop by police grid is very important, because it will help us determine if police stop drivers more often in certain areas. I would like to join this traffic stop data with other datasets from St. Paul, MN, for example, datasets that consider firearm discharge, and datasets that consider bodycams for the St. Paul, MN police force.

In the final report, I plan to see the effects of race and location on traffic stops that leads to searches or firearm discharges. I want to understand if the color of your skin leads to more violent traffic stops. St. Paul, MN is the same city George Floyd could not breathe in and I want to see if that’s the case for other minorities living in the city.

A graph of a driver search

Description automatically generated

