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July 9, 2024

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Olmsted County Attorney Mark Ostrem announced today that criminal charges have been filed against Shane Roper for his actions causing a motor vehicle crash on May 18, 2024, at the intersection of Apache Mall Dr. and 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW in Rochester, MN. As a result of the crash, 18-year-old Olivia Flores died, and five other persons were injured. Charges include Second Degree Manslaughter along with Criminal Vehicular Homicide related to Ms. Flores as well as several charges of Criminal Vehicular Operation related to the other victims.

At approximately 5:44 p.m. on May 18, 2024, emergency responders were dispatched to a serious motor vehicle crash at the entrance to Apache Mall. Three vehicles were involved with seven occupants. Initial observations were that a Minnesota State Patrol unit driven by Trooper Shane Roper had t-boned a Ford Focus and one or both vehicles were then pushed into a Toyota Rav4. Emergency personnel were rapidly extricating and providing medical treatment to the occupants of the Focus and Rav4. All occupants were taken to the emergency department. Ms. Flores died a few hours later as a result of her injuries. Five other occupants suffered serious injuries including broken bones and other significant injuries. Trooper Roper had minor injuries.

The Rochester Police Department investigated the crash. The investigation revealed that Trooper Roper had been stationary on the exit ramp from 6<sup>th</sup> St. SW onto Hwy 52 doing traffic enforcement. Trooper Roper activated his emergency lights and exited the ramp at a very high rate of speed reaching 98 miles an hour, attempting to catch up to a traffic violator, before exiting onto 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW. Exiting the ramp and entering 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW eastbound, Trooper Roper turned off his emergency lights and sirens and accelerated to full throttle reaching 83 mph approaching the mall entrance. The speed limit on 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW is 40 mph.

East and west bound traffic on 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW had green lights. Other vehicles were in and around the intersection. Trooper Roper maintained a full throttle without lights or sirens. A westbound Ford Focus began a left turn into the mall and Trooper Roper's squad slammed into the passenger side of the Focus. Investigation revealed that Trooper Roper did not come off the full throttle until the Focus started into the intersection, approximately 1.4 seconds before impact. Trooper Roper's vehicle violently impacted the Focus.

The Minnesota State Patrol has specific guidelines and policy related to high-speed driving. The State Patrol requires periodic driving related training for its troopers. Over the course of his 8-year career, Trooper Roper has attended approximately 13 driving training courses for a total of 107 hours. Investigation revealed that at least four times earlier in the day on May 18, Trooper

Roper engaged in high-speed driving without emergency lights, in one instance reaching a speed of 135 mph, other times over 99 mph. Each of these instances Roper either did not initiate emergency lights or turned them off while maintaining extreme speeds.

It is the policy of the Minnesota State Patrol that personnel have a “duty to protect all peoples’ lives to the extent possible when enforcing the law.” Trooper Roper violated that policy driving in a grossly negligent manner attempting to catch up to a petty traffic violator on a consistently busy roadway.

Ostrem commented, “Trooper Roper, violating his duty in such a gross fashion, caused the death of a young lady celebrating her impending graduation from high school. Several other persons suffered serious injury. Roper’s conduct violated the State Patrol’s Core Values. As with any other person driving recklessly and without regard to very basic rules of the road, Mr. Roper’s conduct cannot be tolerated.”

The Olmsted County Attorney’s Office express our deepest condolences to the family of Olivia Flores. We also share our sympathy to the other vehicles’ occupants who experienced injury and trauma in this event.