



DATE: September 20, 2016
TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Director of Public Works

SUBJECT

Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program Update

RECOMMENDATION

That Council reviews and comments on the recommended strategies/policies for the proposed Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program (NTCP).

BACKGROUND

Hayward residents frequently voice traffic safety concerns to staff and elected officials. Speeding through residential neighborhoods, cut-through traffic, and bicycle and pedestrian safety continue to be sources of concern for the community. Although City staff continues to address these issues, the lack of a comprehensive traffic calming program has resulted in an uneven approach in implementing traffic calming strategies. In the absence of a broad range of solutions, residents have typically requested the installation of speed lumps, STOP signs or police enforcement, some of which are not necessarily warranted, practical or cost effective. In order to overcome these issues, a Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program (NTCP) was developed. The NTCP will provide a well-defined toolbox to effectively utilize the most appropriate solutions combined with flexible policies to better address neighborhood traffic calming concerns.

TJKM was selected as the project consultant to collaborate with staff in the development of the NTCP. The purpose of the program is to develop a guide for City staff, elected officials and residents to become acclimated with the policies and procedures for the successful implementation of traffic calming strategies, evaluation and prioritization criteria and processes that will benefit Hayward residents and businesses.

DISCUSSION

A comprehensive NTCP can bring added value to the City, including fulfilling its overall transportation vision and priorities as outlined in various planning documents and City Council directives. This proposed program is supportive of the Mobility element M-4.7 (Neighborhood Traffic Calming) and M-10 (Traffic Calming Measures) of the City's 2040 General Plan. Implementation of a NTCP would bring numerous benefits that include

improved driver awareness and attention, modified driver behavior to achieve long term benefits, enhanced safety for all users (auto, transit, bicyclist and pedestrians), and enhanced livability of residential neighborhoods.

In order to eliminate inconsistencies in the application of traffic calming strategies, the NTCP is formulated based on a collaborative approach of extensive public outreach and benchmarking (i.e. a comparative assessment of other cities in the Bay Area with similar programs). A well-crafted NTCP and active engagement of neighborhoods are key to documenting traffic related problems and jointly developing solutions that benefit a community and minimizing the risk of creating unintended consequences. One primary objective of the program is to help mitigate the City's traffic related issues by developing a robust traffic calming toolbox that will assist in addressing the community's concerns.

A comprehensive summary of the NTCP (See Attachment II) was developed to provide the community with information about key policies, procedures, implementation processes, and the types of measures considered to address various issues. This document will be published online and made available to the public once adopted by Council.

Key development goals of the NTCP are:

- Utilize a four "E's" approach – Education, Empowerment, Enforcement and Engineering to expand the available strategies address traffic calming concerns
- Formulate effective policies that can be applied consistently throughout the City while reviewing traffic related complaints, and making necessary improvements
- Develop a systematic process to prioritize allocation of limited City funds to traffic calming improvements
- Address traffic calming concerns with the most effective and least intrusive solutions first, and seek out more costly physical improvements only when appropriate through a tiered approach.

Four "E's" Of Traffic Calming:

In the early days of traffic calming programs, most agencies were narrowly focused on Engineering solutions. Over time, additional strategies were tried, tested and implemented. These concepts included Education, Enforcement, and Empowerment as exhibited in the City's proposed NTCP, and briefly discussed below.

Education: The intent of this component is to educate the community to safely use public streets and enjoy their travel experience. It is also intended to inform the public of the pros and cons of various traffic calming devices, their applicability, and associated costs. In the future, it is anticipated that the City would adopt a Street Smarts program, which is a traffic safety campaign whose primary goal is to educate drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians on issues related to traffic safety through outreach programs.

Enforcement: The NTCP provides options for enforcement to ensure that effective deployment of resources continues in a collaborative manner. The program explores various enforcement strategies while remaining fully cognizant of the effectiveness, resource constraints, and the public image of enforcement efforts. The issuance of warning citations, targeted enforcement and the utilization of radar speed trailers are specific examples.

Engineering: Engineering solutions would include physical improvements, roadway diet strategies (i.e. lane narrowing), signage and physical improvements. Pros and cons of each strategy along with an approximate cost range, as well as a thorough description of the evaluation process and project prioritization criteria will be provided as part of the overall program.

Empowerment: While traditional traffic calming strategies rely heavily on “Three E’s”, the fourth “E” (Empowerment) has proven to be far more effective and the least expensive. The NTCP recommends effective public empowerment strategies where community members take an active role in solving neighborhood traffic related problems, such as the PACE car program that allows residents/communities to commit to driving the speed limit. This fourth “E” can also provide residents with the tools necessary to conduct safety education workshops and meetings in their neighborhood without the City’s direct participation.

Implementation Process:

The NTCP aims to address traffic and safety related concerns through collaborative partnership with the community. Hayward citizens are active and well engaged in various City services and programs. Staff will continue to accept traffic related concerns from the community and will conduct necessary field reviews, complete investigations, receive community feedback, design improvements, and identify funding for necessary improvements. A formal petition process is proposed in key stages of the implementation process to garner the support of the neighborhood. The draft NTCP implementation process flow chart included in Attachment II is intended to provide a clear, graphical representation so that the general public can clearly understand the process. The key steps of the proposed process are described below.

Identification of Solutions:

The NTCP proposes a three-tier system to classify problematic traffic conditions and associated remedies. Each tier incorporates elements of one or more of the 4E’s. Through this system, traffic safety observations made by the public are assessed and assigned a level of severity. A three-tier system allows for implementation of traffic calming measures in a timely manner, allowing problems to be resolved with fairly routine solutions. When dealing with more complex issues, the process allows for effective management and allocation of resources by prioritizing project areas.

Tier I involves basic studies and improvements while Tiers II and III involve more comprehensive solutions. By utilizing this broader approach, the City intends to begin addressing traffic calming concerns with the most effective and least intrusive solution first,

such as Tier I, and seek out more costly improvements only when appropriate and feasible, such as Tier II and Tier III.

Tier I measures bring increased awareness to an area, can be quickly implemented, and are extremely effective in creating more livable street environments at a low cost without the potential negative impacts of higher level plans. Tier II and Tier III measures are explored when Tier I strategies do not fully address the traffic calming concerns.

Prioritization:

The City has limited funds available through the annual budgetary process, and the number of requests for improvements far exceeds the number of projects that can be funded in a given year. Therefore, the goal of the program is to seek out low-cost/high-return improvements before implementing high-cost alternatives while maximizing the use of available resources. Establishing a project priority list is essential to allocating resources more appropriately. The NTCP outlines a priority system (Attachment III) that places heavy emphasis on speeds, accidents, volumes, schools, and pedestrian generators pertinent to traffic calming. With a prioritization system, the City can budget funding more efficiently and provide improvements at the most needed locations.

Funding:

Many cities experience funding challenges while addressing the growing need of traffic safety related projects. In the past several years, the City's total budget for traffic calming ranged from \$130,000 to \$140,000. Unfortunately, requests have far outpaced the available resources needed to address each potential improvement. While this program provides a well-defined set of traffic calming measures, it can only be as successful as the level of funding that is allocated to it. The NTCP outlines several methods proposed to help reduce the on-going funding challenges. Those methods may include:

- *Community Funding/Public Private Partnerships:* Many cities are also exploring the option of community funded projects. Some agencies do not require, but encourage community participation to fully or partially fund traffic calming projects. Upon feedback from Council, formal policies can be developed if private funding for traffic calming projects is deemed an appropriate mechanism.
- *CIP Budget:* Increase funding for traffic calming so that more projects on the priority list can be accommodated in a timelier fashion.
- *Grants:* Regional and state transportation agencies may have grant programs that support traffic calming and neighborhood vitalization efforts. For example: Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) Program provides funding for eligible community-driven projects that benefit broader neighborhoods (not one or two blocks). These funds, however, are not guaranteed and require a minimum of one year's lead time to realize.

Although additional funding will make the NTCP more effective, no level of funding will eliminate speeding in any community. The goal of the NTCP is to mitigate this behavior where possible.

Collector and Arterial Streets:

In conjunction with the NTCP, where the study is focused on neighborhood and residential streets, staff is also working to develop options to address speeding on collector and arterial streets. Due to higher speeds along such corridors, accidents result in more property damage and more severe injuries compared to crashes on residential streets. Safer traffic operations along arterial streets are therefore very important and should be given high priority. Due to the role that arterials play in accommodating commute traffic, transit and freight vehicles, the nature of their operation is quite different than that of residential streets. Staff has selected Hayward Boulevard and D Street as representative arterial streets to develop design concepts for the traffic calming and safety enhancements. These concepts, which will be presented to Council, can be adapted and utilized on other arterial/collector streets throughout the city.

FISCAL IMPACT

Addressing speeding and other neighborhood traffic safety issues in a collaborative fashion and seeking to implement low-cost/high-return improvements first will allow staff to have a greater impact City-wide given limited resources.

SUSTAINABILITY FEATURES

The project will provide for complete streets that balance the diverse needs of users of the public right-of-way by reducing speeds and fostering a pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Active engagement of the community was deemed to be an invaluable component in the overall development of the NTCP. In addition to the ongoing feedback received through the City's existing community involvement mechanisms, staff held two well-attended community workshops in October (at City Hall) and November (at Matt Jimenez Community Center) of 2015. In these meetings, residents reiterated their concerns regarding speeding and pedestrian safety, while expressing their appreciation for the City starting this study.

NEXT STEPS

Following this work session, staff will incorporate Council's comments and return in late 2016 with a final draft NTCP for Council adoption.

Prepared by: Fred Kelley, Transportation Manager

Recommended by: Morad Fakhrai, Director of Public Works

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. McAdoo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kelly McAdoo, City Manager