



DATE: May 23, 2018

TO: Council Infrastructure Committee

FROM: Interim Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program Update

RECOMMENDATION

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

SUMMARY

The proposed NTCP provides a robust and comprehensive approach to address neighborhood traffic safety concerns. By utilizing this comprehensive approach, staff can address the concerns with the most effective and least intrusive solutions first and employ other tactics and tools when appropriate.

In September 2016, prior to the formation of the Council Infrastructure Committee (CIC), the NTCP was discussed before the City Council in a work session. Council was generally in favor of the program. Given the extensive time gap, staff is bringing this item to CIC for the Committee's review and comment before the item is scheduled on the City Council agenda later this year for adoption.

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 continues 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 policies, residents have typically requested the installation of speed lumps, STOP signs or police enforcement, some of which are not necessarily warranted, practical or effective. To overcome these issues, the 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.

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.

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 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 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 to address traffic calming concerns
- Formulate effective policies that can be applied consistently throughout the City while reviewing traffic related concerns, and making necessary improvements
- Develop a systematic process to prioritize allocation of limited City funds to traffic calming improvements
- Address traffic safety concerns with the most effective and least intrusive solutions first and seek out costlier and more disruptive physical improvements only when appropriate through a tiered approach.

Four “E’s” Of Traffic Calming:

In the early days of traffic calming programs, agencies were narrowly focused on Engineering solutions. Over time, additional strategies were tried, tested and implemented. These concepts included Education, Enforcement, and Empowerment as detailed 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 impacts and costs. In the next five years, 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 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 routine solutions. When dealing with more complex issues, the process allows for effective management and allocation of resources by prioritizing project areas.

The traffic safety solutions are presented in three tiers:

- Tier I – Low-cost improvements that require little or no engineering design and construction (i.e., edgeline/centerline striping).
- Tier II – Improvements that require some engineering analysis, design, and construction (i.e., flashing beacons).
- Tier III – Requires extensive analysis, design, community outreach, and funding (i.e., traffic circles).

Tier I measures can be quickly implemented, cost-effective and promote awareness while Tiers II and III measures involve comprehensive analysis and design. 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.

Prioritization:

The City has limited financial and staff resources, and the number of requests for improvements far exceeds the number of projects that can be funded and accomplished in a given year. Therefore, the goal of the program is to seek out low-cost/high-return improvements and maximize the use of available resources before implementing high-cost alternatives. Establishing a project priority list is essential to allocating resources more appropriately. The NTCP outlines a priority system 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.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The action taken for this agenda report will not result in physical development, purchase or service. Any physical work will depend upon future Council action.

FISCAL IMPACT

In the past several years, the City's total budget for traffic calming ranged from \$130,000 to \$140,000. Unfortunately, requests 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:

- *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.
- *Community Funding/Public Private Partnerships*: Public Agencies are exploring the option of community funded projects. Some agencies do not require but encourage community participation to fully or partially fund traffic calming projects.

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.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

This agenda item supports the Complete Streets Strategic Initiative. The purpose of the Complete Streets initiative is to build streets that are safe, comfortable, and convenient for travel for everyone, regardless of age or ability, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation riders. This item supports the following goal and objective:

Goal 2: Balance the diverse needs of users of the public right-of-way.

Objective 1: Increase walking, biking, transit usage, carpooling, and other sustainable modes of transportation by designing and retrofitting streets to accommodate all modes.

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 2015 (at City Hall) and November 2015 (at Matt Jimenez Community Center). In these meetings, residents reiterated their concerns regarding speeding and pedestrian safety, while expressing their appreciation for the City starting this study.

Staff presented the draft NTCP to Council on September 20, 2016. Council members were in general agreement with the proposed NTCP policies. Minor changes to prioritizing criteria were made based on Council recommendations.

In anticipation of the adoption of the NTCP, staff has conducted experiments based on Lean Innovation principles utilizing the components of this program to gauge feedback from the community and overall effectiveness of the proposed program. During this period, staff implemented a tiered approach to the community's traffic safety concerns. Using this approach, staff addressed numerous speeding and traffic safety concerns.

NEXT STEPS

Following receipt of feedback from the committee, staff will incorporate the recommendations in a final NTCP and present to Council for adoption in June 2018.

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Approved by:



Kelly McAdoo, City Manager