

Minutes from the September meeting of the Seventh St Committee,
prepared by Julie Boland

Date: Sept 16, 2020

Attendees:

Staff: Kayla Coleman, Cynthia Redinger, Raymond Hess, Eli Cooper, Jamie Adkins

Committee members: Julie Boland, Seth Peterson, Linda Diane Feldt

The following items were discussed.

We received a report from staff on the speed data trends on Seventh Street (attached). On the graphs, each data point shows a 2 week time period; data are incomplete because the data must be manually retrieved from the radar signs. The dataset includes both turning vehicles (which are presumably slowing) and vehicles going straight. Some upward trends in speed were noted, despite the improvements that have already been made to 7th St. (e.g. crosswalk enhancements, bike lanes) Some committee members expressed frustration at the percentage of drivers that were speeding.

One committee member asked why Seventh Street is categorized as an arterial, given that it is highly residential. The staff explained that the classification is based on the function that Seventh St. serves in the city-wide system. Reclassification is not an option.

Discussions with staff suggests that there are unlikely to be any more simple solutions that are would reduce speeds in the short term. Most interim and short term treatments per report recommendations have been implemented. However, painting the speed limit on the street is planned to be completed. There may also be some new "Tactical Urbanism" or "Paint and Post" ideas in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan; these might provide short term solutions or allow us to pilot-test longer-term solutions.

A possible long term solution might be a program in which neighborhoods could request Traffic Calming measures suitable for large streets (including Seventh, Dexter, Miller, etc). One committee member suggested a more systemic approach, such as implementing traffic calming measures on all arterial streets where they are densely lined with houses. Staff suggested that a top-down approach would be likely to lead to resident complaints, and that the city has been more successful with neighborhood-initiated projects. Even so, these arterial streets pose a challenge because they are widely used by residents and non-residents from a broad area. Such a Traffic Calming program would need funding in the CIP for both development and implementation, to be successful. The committee urged the collection of systematic baseline data for the arterials, to ensure that we are making data-driven recommendations and pursuing options in locations that are likely to have a large impact.

Some other issues were briefly discussed:

Is it possible to create more friction (for drivers) on 7th in order to redirect traffic to other streets? Are there changes that can be made incrementally so that it isn't such a shock to the system?

Is it possible to explore traffic signal changes to see if changing the signal patterns impacts speeding along the corridor? Or change traffic signals to stop signs?

There are speeding challenges due to the grade (slope) of the street, with speeding difficult to avoid on steep downhill portions.

Before closing, Julie Boland agreed to prepare final committee notes for Legistar, and Linda Diane Feldt agreed to draft recommendations for the October 21 Transportation Commission meeting [Note: This has been tabled until November, because the October meeting agenda is full].

Data Sources:

2017 Counts obtained by A2 staff using traditional pneumatic tube counters.

2019 and 2020 data were obtained from the speed feedback signs.

Data for average speed, 85th percentile speed, and percent speeding are provided in the following charts for the Committee's Use.





