

Transportation Commission
Traffic Calming Task Force Recommendations

Task Force Members: Councilmember Ackerman, Jared Hoffert, Bradley Parsons, Patti Smith

Task Force recommendations regarding the proposed Traffic Calming Program Update are provided below. Additional background and detail is provided in Appendix A.

1. Recommend allowing streets with an 85th percentile speed less than 25 mph the opportunity to qualify and replace <25mph "does not qualify" with "-1" on the qualification criteria rubric.
2. Recommend Traffic Calming Program annual budget of \$100,000-\$150,000 and exploration of funding options outside of ACT51.
3. Recommend ongoing exploration of a "Tier 2" addition to the existing Traffic Calming Program to address speed, safety and cut-through traffic.
4. Recommend that unanticipated outcomes of treatments be identified in the toolbox.
5. Recommend flexibility to expand the toolbox of treatments, including temporary treatments, and treatments not specifically identified in the Program.
6. Recommend staff utilize a variety of tools and techniques for public input and reaction including presentation of design alternatives for a project area, when appropriate.
7. Recommend that staff improve public awareness about programs that are complementary to Traffic Calming, including an updated, user-friendly online interface.
8. Recommend staff consider ways to better integrate Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) into discussions and solutions when Traffic Calming requests are near schools, and encourage AAPS to involve staff and the community in traffic calming related work they may pursue or recommend.
9. Recommend that Council maintains authority for Traffic Calming Program approval.

MOTION: The Transportation Commission accepts the Traffic Calming Task Force recommendations and recommends that City Council approve the revised Traffic Calming Program inclusive of the changes described above.

Appendix A

Background

The Traffic Calming Task Force met with staff four times in July and August to review the draft Traffic Calming Program update. The following are highlights from the discussion which resulted in the Task Force recommendations. Staff comments are provided in italics.

Supporting Detail

1. 85th Percentile Speed Qualification Criterion

As currently drafted, the Traffic Calming Program requires the 85th percentile speed to be at or above 25 mph in order to qualify for the Traffic Calming Program. The Task Force recommends that this criterion be changed so that neighborhoods could qualify if they experience an 85th percentile speed below 25 mph and that a value of negative one (-1) be given for an 85th percentile speed below 25 mph.

- *Staff agrees with this recommendation.*

2. Traffic Calming Program Budget

Currently, City Council budgets under \$40,000 annually for the Traffic Calming Program to cover all staff costs and construction costs associated with traffic calming petitions as well as maintenance of existing treatments. The Task Force believes this funding amount to be inadequate to fund the desired two to three traffic calming petitions per year and recommends a budget between \$100,000 and \$150,000 annually. The Task Force has concerns about the exclusive use of Act 51 funds for the Traffic Calming Program because of possible limitations on that funding source.

- *Staff believes that a budget between \$100,000 and \$150,000 would adequately fund between two and three traffic calming projects from petition through construction. Staff will request augmentation of the Traffic Calming budget as part of the next biennial budget process.*

3. Tier 2 Traffic Calming Program

As currently drafted, the Traffic Calming Program applies to neighborhood streets only (i.e., functional classification is 'local') and emphasizes speed reduction. The Task Force recommends that the City explore a Tier 2 Traffic Calming Program so that community stakeholders can address concerns related to safety, speeds, and cut-through traffic. The San Jose Tier 2 Traffic Calming Program should be referenced as an example.

- *Staff agrees and will pursue development of a Tier 2 Traffic Calming Program upon completion of the neighborhood street Traffic Calming Program update and contingent upon available budget and resources. Staff will engage the Transportation Commission in the development of the Tier 2 Traffic Calming Program.*

4. Treatment Considerations – Unanticipated Outcomes

The Task Force has observed that certain types of treatments may have unanticipated outcomes. For example, vehicles may swerve into the crosswalk as the driver navigates

through a residential traffic circle. Therefore, the Task Force recommends that these considerations be added to each treatment in the toolbox.

- *Staff agrees with this recommendation.*

5. Flexibility to Expand the Toolbox

The Task Force recommends that flexibility for temporary traffic calming installations be accommodated as part of the Program, including use of tools not specifically identified in the toolbox.

- *Staff agrees with this recommendation.*

6. Public Engagement Tools

The Task Force suggests that a menu of options for public engagement be provided, including development of design alternatives for a traffic calming project area.

- *Staff agrees with this recommendation.*

7. Increase Public Awareness about Complementary Programs

The Task Force has observed community confusion about what is (and what is not) included in the Traffic Calming Program. Information about requests for stop signs, street lights, increased speed enforcement, and other programs require different processes and lines of communication. The Task Force recommends that information about programs that complement the Traffic Calming Program be added to the Traffic Calming website.

- *Staff agrees with this recommendation.*

8. AAPS Coordination

The Task Force recommends improved communications with AAPS, including AAPS involvement in Traffic Calming project area discussions and neighborhood engagement on AAPS initiated projects. Leverage opportunities to coordinate complementary Safe Routes to School projects and traffic calming projects.

- *Staff agrees with this recommendation.*

9. Program authority

Recommend that Council maintains authority for Traffic Calming Program updates and approval instead of authorizing the administrator to manage and maintain the Program. This is consistent with Council's role to establish policy. The Task Force agrees that individual Traffic Calming project plans should not require City Council approval. The City Administrator, or designee, should have the authority to implement the approved Program.