

Resolution to Adopt an Improved Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program

Whereas, The purpose of the neighborhood traffic calming program is to slow vehicle traffic to improve conditions for people living, walking, and bicycling in or through a neighborhood;

Whereas, City Council adopted an improved neighborhood traffic calming program in 2018 that lowered the barriers to qualification, increased the program budget, and raised awareness of the program;

Whereas, There are currently 17 active petitions in the existing Traffic Calming Program queue, and staff has engaged a consultant to expedite the review process so an anticipated 10, rather than 3 petitions, can be processed annually;

Whereas, Improving the comfort of people walking and biking on city streets addresses key elements of Ann Arbor's A2Zero carbon neutrality plan and comprehensive transportation plan, both adopted after the last evaluation of the neighborhood traffic calming program;

Whereas, The A2Zero carbon neutrality plan calls for reducing vehicle miles traveled by 50% by 2030, which will require significant mode shift to walking, biking, and transit use;

Whereas, The Moving Together Towards Vision Zero Transportation Plan calls for addressing dangerous driving behavior and improving the safety and comfort of people walking;

Whereas, The Moving Together Towards Vision Zero Transportation Plan calls for creating an All Ages and Abilities Bike network and asserts that consideration for traffic calming treatments should factor in building this network;

Whereas, The neighborhood traffic calming program is popular, demonstrating high demand for slowing vehicle speeds on local streets;

Whereas, City Council maintains oversight over the traffic calming program updates and approval, requiring City Council action to change;

Whereas, City Council currently maintains authority over the approval of individual traffic calming project plans before construction, even though such plans are an implementation of Council-approved policy;

Whereas, vertical traffic calming tools such as speed humps and raised crosswalks are deployed exclusively as part of the neighborhood traffic calming program and are, hence, limited by the traffic calming budget and not considered as options in capital improvement projects;

Resolved, The Transportation Commission recommends that City Council pass a resolution to empower the administrator to manage and maintain the neighborhood traffic calming program and remove the requirement of City Council approval for individual calming project plans;

Resolved, The Transportation Commission recommends that City Council maintain or increase the current level of funding in order to accelerate the processing of petition-led neighborhood requests for traffic calming and meet the demand;

Resolved, The Transportation Commission recommends that City Council direct staff to amend the neighborhood traffic calming program to a collaborative model of public engagement, instead of the current empowerment model;

Resolved, The Transportation Commission recommends that City Council direct staff to routinely evaluate opportunities to incorporate traffic calming elements into all capital projects which disturb the existing road surface, particularly those that are a part of the All Ages All Abilities network identified in the transportation plan, in a school walk zone, where a record of crashes, speeding, and/or resident complaints exists, or otherwise suggest a need for calming to enhance comfort and safety for non-motorized uses, regardless of petition status;

Resolved, The Transportation Commission recommends that City Council direct staff to consider the full range of established speed control elements as identified by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) or Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), or tools identified in the Traffic Calming Program and the Speed Management Program, including vertical devices such as raised crosswalks, speed humps, and speed cushions, as well as bump-outs, chicanes, narrowing etc. in all Capital Improvements Planning projects that disturb the road surface;

Resolved, The Transportation Commission recommends the development of a school traffic calming toolkit;

Resolved, The Transportation Commission's Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee will continue to work with staff to further define the updates to these programs.