



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: JANUARY 10, 2023

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

FROM: DAVID JACOBS, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

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TITLE: WEST ACACIA STREET NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC
CALMING PLAN

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution to implement the West Acacia Street neighborhood traffic calming plan supported by residents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At its June 21, 2022, meeting City Council approved the 2022-2023 fiscal year priority traffic calming projects, whereas West Acacia Street ranked the second highest priority. Staff worked with residents of West Acacia Street to develop a traffic calming plan and distribute ballots to help determine neighborhood support of the plan. As required by City policy a vote was conducted to gauge community support, and the West Acacia Street traffic calming plan received the support votes required as prescribed by the City's Traffic Calming Policy.

BACKGROUND:

In October 2009, the City Council adopted the Salinas Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (Resolution No. 19764) to address residential neighborhood traffic concerns. The program was established initially to address concerns from neighborhoods that could not be supported by traffic enforcement since it was impractical at the time to deploy traffic enforcement officers in residential areas. There had been a growing request for speed reduction throughout the City for which the City had no tools to address the residents' concerns.

Traffic calming tools are not part of the State and Federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The City started accumulating traffic calming studies in 2002 and found there was very few applications in California. To assist in the development of the City's Policy, the City hired a consultant to help develop the City's traffic calming policy based on best practices.

The resulting policy contained a toolbox of traffic calming measures that would be used to address neighborhood problems associated with speeds and vehicle volume on residential streets. The adoption of the policy also included the adoption of traffic calming tools that can be provided on

City streets. The policy also provided the process for consideration of projects under the Traffic Calming Program which is important for securing support from residents of a neighborhood who would be affected by traffic calming implementation.

In the development of the City's traffic calming policy, City staff met with all affected parties including emergency response providers as well as other service providers such as solid waste collection services and street sweeping. These agencies and providers were all invited in the discussion of the traffic calming policy development. The traffic calming program implementation therefore includes considerations and understanding of the program by potentially affected parties. The City's policy only applies to city streets that have residential uses.

On September 14, 2017, with an influx of traffic calming requests received, the City approved criteria for prioritizing traffic calming requests based on traffic conditions, collision history, nearby land uses, geometrics and facilities. These criteria provide a transparent way to prioritize requests given the City's limited resources. Every year, staff presents traffic calming recommended priorities based on the criteria to the City Council. Council proceeds with implementation based on Council approved priorities.

Residents of West Acacia Street submitted a petition requesting the City to investigate speeding issues along West Acacia Street. Traffic studies were conducted in various locations along the street, and the results confirmed high speeds on West Acacia Street. Results met the criteria for traffic calming implementation.

The Traffic and Transportation Division held one (1) meeting on October 12, 2022, to develop a Traffic Calming Plan with residents of the West Acacia Street neighborhood to address the speeding concerns of the neighborhood. With residents' input received at these meetings, a neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan was developed and finalized.

In accordance with the City's Traffic Calming Policy, the plan was taken to vote to determine support from residents. Ballots with pre-paid envelopes were mailed to residents of West Acacia Street, and the vote was conducted over a 4-week period. Residents were encouraged to talk to and inform their neighbors. On November 17, 2022, the voting period ended, and the neighborhood met the support vote requirement as prescribed in the City's Traffic Calming Policy. The City received ballots from 67% of all applicable households, meeting the 50% return rate requirement. Of the ballots received, 92% were in favor of the Plan, meeting the 67% in favor requirement. Staff is therefore recommending the implementation of the West Acacia Street Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan.

The proposed West Acacia Street Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan includes the installation of three (3) speed cushions. Speed cushions are vertical traffic calming devices and are similar to speed humps but are made of rubberized material. Speed cushions are designed to have lesser impact on fire department response and are spaced to maintain a speed of approximately 25 mph, which corresponds to the speed limit on residential streets. Attachment 1 shows the approximate locations of the speed cushions.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION:

The West Acacia Street Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan was presented to the Traffic and Transportation Commission at its December 8, 2022, meeting. The Commission voted unanimously (4-0) recommending City Council approve a Resolution to implement the West Acacia Street Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan supported by residents.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Staff has determined that the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Section 15301, Class 1). The project consists of the operation, repair, or minor alteration of public streets involving no expansion of use. There would be no significant effect on the environment.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The Traffic Calming Policy support Council's goal of "Public Safety".

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

Public Works staff coordinated with the Salinas Fire Department to develop the toolbox of traffic calming measures available within the approved Salinas Neighborhood Traffic Management Program. Staff also coordinates with the Salinas Police Department if traffic calming enforcement assistance is necessary.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The estimated total cost of these improvements is \$82,250 using the City's job order contract program. Alternatively, in the past the City's maintenance crews have been able to assist in the installation of speed cushions as overtime work. If the City's maintenance crews are available to perform this work the estimated cost to install the speed cushions is \$35,000. There are sufficient funds available in the Traffic Calming Program budget (CIP 9163) to complete this work.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

Attachment 1: West Acacia Street Proposed Traffic Calming Plan