



CITY OF SALINAS

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

DATE: October 12, 2017

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

FROM: JAMES SERRANO, TRANSPORTATION MANAGER

TITLE: TRAFFIC CALMING UPDATE

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Recommend the approval of the Laurel Heights Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan to the Salinas Council and deem the Nacional Street Traffic Calming Project as complete.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend the approval of the Laurel Heights Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan to the City Council; receive the after study report on Nacional Street and recommend the evaluation of traffic calming for the Nacional Street neighborhood as complete with no further action on traffic calming.

BACKGROUND:

Laurel Heights Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan

City staff received a request from the Laurel Heights neighborhood for reducing speeds in their neighborhood. Laurel Heights is a neighborhood in northeast Salinas bounded by East Laurel Drive to the north and North Sanborn Road on the east. Three collector streets provide residents access to these arterial streets, Saint Edwards Drive, Madeira Street and Circle Drive.

Traffic staff conducted traffic studies and confirmed that speeds on these collector streets meet the requirements for consideration of traffic calming at Laurel Heights. Staff therefore engaged the community in a series of neighborhood meetings until a neighborhood traffic calming plan was developed. A draft neighborhood traffic calming plan was presented to residents in July 2016. A revised draft with comments from the residents was discussed at a November 2016 community meeting where residents recommended seeking support for the plan. However, the neighborhood traffic calming plan failed to get the required neighborhood support in April 2017. At the request of the neighborhood, a revised neighborhood traffic calming plan was developed and presented at a community meeting on July 25, 2017. Residents at the meeting agreed to seek another support vote from the community. This time the neighborhood traffic calming plan for Laurel Heights received the required support from the neighbors. The final tally of support votes in September 2017 showed strong support for the neighborhood plan.

The final vote is as follows:

Ballots Returned: 58% (Required 51%)

Submitted ballots in favor of the traffic calming plan: 97% (Submitted ballots in favor required: 67%)

The Laurel Heights traffic calming request consideration followed the traffic calming policy process and the neighborhood plan received the required amount of support from the residents. Staff is therefore requesting the recommendation for approval and implementation of the Laurel Heights Traffic Calming Plan.

Nacional Street Traffic Calming

Nacional Street was the first street to receive traffic calming treatments. Staff received a request from neighbors to address concerns of speeding on Nacional Street near Catalina Avenue. A traffic study conducted in October 2014 showed 85th percentile speeds to be 31-32 mph with traffic volumes of 1,856 vehicles per day. These did not meet traffic calming criteria. The criteria for traffic calming is an 85th percentile of 35 mph or greater and vehicle volumes greater than 3000 cars per day. City staff worked with residents on an education program but residents desired more and were willing to contribute to fund a traffic calming project.

In 2015, staff expanded the study area on Nacional Street to include other locations on Nacional Street. The 2015 studies identified a segment of Nacional Street that met the traffic calming criteria. With justification to consider traffic calming, staff worked with residents to develop a traffic calming plan. The final neighborhood traffic calming plan utilizes the following tools:

- Chicanes-islands constructed to physically narrow the road at two locations;
- Striping-Striping of a center lane and the parking lane to encouraging drivers to stay on their side of the road therefore inducing slower speeds;
- Radar feedback signs - Education tools that provide a reminders for drivers of the speed limit on residential streets

The traffic calming plan was implemented in 2016. It has been approximately a year from the implementation. Total cost of the Nacional Street traffic calming plan implementation was \$44,000. Since the Traffic Calming Program was not funded at the time, the neighbors contributed \$2,500 that included funding of \$750 from a City of Salinas neighborhood grant and a contribution from the residents for \$1,750. The balance of the project costs came from the City street maintenance budget.

Staff conducted a traffic study at the request of residents to determine if the project resulted in changes. The results of the traffic study indicate substantial reduction of speeding near Central Avenue. Along the rest of the corridor, the speeds remain unchanged, however the speeds are acceptable and do not meet the criteria for further traffic calming consideration. It is staff's recommendation that the traffic calming work at Nacional Street be deemed complete.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

There are sufficient funds to implement the Laurel Heights neighborhood traffic calming plan in this year's Capital Improvement Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit – Laurel Heights Traffic Studies

Exhibit – Laurel Heights Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan

Exhibit – Nacional Street Traffic Calming Project and After Study