

Complete Safe Streets Committee Meeting Minutes

Takoma Park Community Center

Thursday, November 14, 2019

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm and adjourned at 9:04pm

Members Constituting a Quorum: Cindy Herrera, Tracy Duvall, Laurie Kelly, Diana McCown, Emanuel Wagner, Frank Demarais, Jessica Landman, David Cookson

Members Absent (excused): Mimi Diaz, Lacey McMullan, Michael Moore

Takoma Park Staff Present: Jamee Ernst

Guests Present: Wade Holland-Vision Zero, Wendy Landman-America Walks

Motions

- I. CSSC Meeting Minutes from October 10, 2019: Laurie Kelly motioned to accept, Tracy Duvall seconds. Approved at 7:04
- II. To make Committee Priority 1 to review the existing traffic calming request policy and the new sidewalk request policy and provide recommendations to Council in early 2020. Emanuel Wagner motioned to accept, Frank Demarais seconds, all in favor. Approve at 9:03

Actions

Due Date	Action	Person(s) Responsible	Notes
12/12/2019	Review Traffic Calming Work Group Document	All	Committee will read documents and comment
12/12/19	Share working document on traffic and sidewalk recommendations vis google docs to all committee members	Emanuel	

Committee Discussion

- I. Introduction and Presentation from Wade Holland (Vision Zero Coordinator job posting launched today) montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/data.html
 - a. Vision Zero = ADD

- i. Transportation related deaths and severe injuries are preventable and unacceptable
 - ii. Human life take priority over mobility and other objectives
 - b. Why equity with traffic safety?
 - i. Difference of everyone has the same (equality) and everyone has what they need (equity)
 - c. MoCo and TkPk Demographics
 - i. 1.1 million in MoCo
 - ii. 17,600 in TkPk
 - iii. 103,00 average income
 - iv. 6th highest county in the country with post secondary degrees
 - v. Poverty and median income vary widely across the county, touch both extremes
 - d. Vision Zero Overview
 - i. Creating Complete Streets
 - 1. Shared use path
 - 2. Planting strip/median
 - 3. Level pedestrian/bicycle crossing
 - 4. Bus lane
 - 5. Planned transit stop
 - ii. Other complete streets alternatives
 - iii. Pedestrian scramble (diagonal crossing)
 - iv. Protect bike lanes
 - v. Pedestrian hybrid signals (hawk beacon)
 - vi. Signal timing
 - vii. Lighting
 - viii. State has adopted Vision Zero state-wide
 - e. MUTCD manual controlled timing devices
 - f. Crash Data for TkPk
 - i. Countywide, Since 2012 Driver/Passenger fatalities have decrease from over 500 to 181. Pedestrian and Bicyclist had maintained at a consistent level with little decline
 - ii. In Takoma Park was 7 drivers, 4 pedestrians and 1 cyclist
 - iii. VZ/County has access to TkPk Police data
 - iv. County does not have access to data from Eastern Ave and parts of NH in PG County
 - g. 2-Year Action Plan
 - i. Engineering
 - ii. Enforcement
 - iii. Education
 - iv. Traffic Incident Management
 - v. Law, Policy and Advocacy
 - h. Relationships between crashes and demographics
 - i. Slide 28 Higher percentage of households t
 - i. Considerations for equity and traffic safety
 - i. How are projects selected?
 - 1. Develop triage/filtering system to ensure resources fo to where they are needed
 - 2. Ensure residents know how to engage with the city about concerns

3. Meet people where they are to broaden the voices being heard
 - ii. If your staff trained to identify their implicit biases?
 1. Bias training for all employees
 2. Outreach staff to communicate with residents using primary mode/language of communication.
 - iii. How or where are enforcing traffic laws?
 1. What charges are written most often and do they correspond with the most dangerous traffic violations.
 - iv. Questions
 1. How are speed limits set?
 - a. Is the 85% rule still in place?
 - i. Answer-don't know.
 2. Did we (TkPk) not ask any questions we should have?
 - a. Use crash data
 - b. Sidewalk inventory
 - c. What are the knowns? Unknowns?
 3. Pedestrian Master Plan
 4. Purple Line
 - a. We can connect with Vision Zero on pedestrian safety around the changing of walk patterns.
- II. Wendy Landman-America Walks; speaking on walk audits, www.walkboston.org
 - a. What is a walk audit from the advocacy perspective?
 - i. Groups of people walk a section of a community and come to the table to discuss what they saw. Groups consist of residents and community stakeholders.
 - ii. Audits provide good data that isn't necessarily reflected in numerical data
 - iii. Having a third party lead the walking audit can provide the space for more authentic dialogue
- III. Update on Amendments on Traffic Calming and Sidewalk Request Procedures
 - a. Shout out to Lacy on all her hard work and congratulations on the birth of her daughter
 - b. See attachment 2 for working document
 - c. Emanuel will send the working document to committee members for review prior to the December meeting.
- IV. Next Steps and Procedure for Updating Amendments (Committee Priorities)
 - a. Committee Priorities
 - i. Full agreement on traffic calming and sidewalks per Council request.
 - ii. The committee explored the broad concepts, as discussed during the October meeting; a sidewalk on every street in Takoma Park, a meshing of policies and recommendations with the Vision Zero, Montgomery County Bike Master Plan and upcoming Pedestrian Master Plan, included diverse voices to inform decisions and gain greater input, and the development of general vision for Takoma Park's transportation future and the need to identify specific, actionable priorities.

- iii. How can we as a committee have a bigger impact? Need to take into consideration SHA, state and county roads.
 - iv. Consensus to formalize the first priority to on traffic calming and sidewalks through the lens of equity
- V. Peter Kovar joined meeting and thanked the committee for working on these issues. Reiterated the desire to have committee to work closely with Council. Council meets with SHA three times a year. New study coming out on traffic on Philly between MoCo College and Piney Branch.
- VI. Next Meeting Date and Agenda Suggestions
 - a. Review Traffic Calming Work Group document
 - i. With special attention to the work group's recommendations and further questions.
 - b. Most of the meeting will be devoted traffic calming and sidewalks

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Responses to Questions from the September 2019 meeting for the City of Takoma Park, as gathered by Jamee Ernst

Responses to City Questions

- Can CSSC continue to recruit a representative from Ward 4?
 - **Response from Jessie Carpenter:** You can certainly encourage Ward 4 residents to attend meetings and the CSSC can decide if and how it wants them to participate. The Council would have the option to appoint an additional person if it chooses. However, it isn't necessarily the case that Ward 4 interests can only be represented by a resident from Ward 4. The CSSC is free to talk to people, observe, request public comment, gather data from the Police Department, and, of course, speak with Terry Seamens, and so on. I'd encourage that route rather than spending Committee time specifically trying to recruit a member from Ward 4.

- What is the process for amending a resolution vs. administrative regulations?
 - **Response from Jessie Carpenter:** The sidewalk policy is set forth in the resolution, which can be revised or replaced by the City Council.
 - Traffic calming is included in Ch. 13.28 of the City Code and there are some relevant definitions in Ch. 13.04. School zones are designated in 13.08. The City Code is amended by a two-reading ordinance adopted by the Council. Administrative regulations are proposed and promulgated by the City Manager. Regulations can be drafted by staff or by a committee. There is a publication and public review process. The Council has the option to intervene in the process and can schedule a public hearing or address administrative regulations in work session. The administrative regulation process is regulated by Ch. 2.12 of the Code.

- What are the current standards for speed humps in the City? Has the City phased out the design seen on Maple Avenue?
 - **Response from Daryl Braithwaite:** The City Code defines speed hump height to be 3 to 4 inches. In addition we offer 2 types, the County standard - which is Montgomery County's version and the City standard, which is our own special hump on a bump.
 - Council has not restricted the type of speed hump we install at this point.
 - The speed humps installed on Maple Avenue (7200-7400 block) was a special case where the Council agreed to violate the City Code and install speed humps higher than 4 inches.

- Does the City use speed cameras as a form of traffic enforcement? If so, how does the program work? Does the City receive any revenue?
 - **Response from Sgt. Robison:** Yes. Speed cameras are used by the Police Department for traffic enforcement. Speed cameras are utilized 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to slow drivers down to keep the roads safe. This allows officers to focus attention on other areas and other high crime problems. The speed camera units are tested daily to ensure they are functioning properly. The city does generate revenue through the speed camera program however, the revenue generated can only be used for public safety matters. Public safety matters could be anything from

improving crosswalks and sidewalks to purchasing new equipment for officers.

- Can you provide a brief overview of the way that traffic enforcement in the City generally works? What is the general procedure?
 - **Response from Sgt. Robison:** The way traffic enforcement works is we typically go where we are currently getting the most complaints. So, for example if someone emails the city and says there are a lot of people violating stop signs in their neighborhood we will send out the information to all the officers and have the beat officer focus some attention on that area. Other than that, all officers have their own areas that they like to enforce where they know there are a lot of violators.
 - Every once in awhile we will conduct special details to focus on a particular violation. Right now I am working on trying to put together a detail to enforce pedestrian safety laws, and every winter we work in conjunction with Montgomery County to enforce DUI/DWI laws.

- Does the Police Dept collect crash data?
 - **Response from Sgt. Robison:** We do collect crash data. We use the same reporting guidelines as Maryland State Police. So, only serious accidents are recorded. The guidelines for serious accidents are if anyone was injured, if a vehicle was towed, if anyone was cited, if there was a hit-and-run with suspect info, and if government property was damaged. If any one of those criteria are met then the officer will have to write a report and the data from that report is collected. We do not keep data on minor accidents unless it meets one of the guidelines

Attachment 2 Working Document: CSSC – Subcommittee Recommendations for Revisions to Traffic Calming / Sidewalk Petition Process

November 18, 2019

Contents

<u>Our Mission</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>I. Finding ways to make the policy more effective to improve safety;</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>II. Fixing the current policy’s focus on speed humps;</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>III. Racial and economic equality;</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>IV. Ability to rank and prioritize locations for funding of projects;</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Working Group Recommendations / Topics for Discussion;</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>I. Breaking down / defining different traffic calming measures.</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>II. Reducing the burden / promoting racial and economic equity.</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>III. Creating a data-based / fact-driven model to evaluate and address (1) speed; (2) volume; and (3) pedestrian safety.</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>IV. Ranking and prioritizing project funding.</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>V. Temporary Traffic Calming (suggested for discussion by Daryl Braithwaite).</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>VI. Other Considerations;</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Resources Considered</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>I. March 22, 2017 TKPK Safe Roadway Committee Report.</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>II. October 16, 2019 Phone Call with Daryl Braithwaite, Dep’t of Public Works.</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>III. Traffic Calming Policies in Other Jurisdictions;</u>	<u>11</u>

Our Mission

Provide recommendations for revisions to the City of Takoma Park’s traffic calming / sidewalk petition process in early 2020, with a specific focus on:

I. Finding ways to make the policy more effective to improve safety;

i. **Working Group Recommendation:** The policy should have a data-driven / fact-based model with set criteria for determining when speed, volume or pedestrian safety has become a problem that must be addressed ... once this threshold is met, some sort of calming measure should be imposed, the question becomes which measure is most appropriate.

1. **Question for Future Discussion:** What are these criteria? Look to other jurisdictions, some examples provided here.

II. Fixing the current policy’s focus on speed humps;

i. **Working Group Recommendation:** To guide the resident, the policy should break down, and define, the different mechanisms that are available ... see pavement markings, signage, and infrastructure projects. The policy should not only describe the mechanism (“what is a bump-out?”), it should explain the potential impact (e.g., whether a mechanism is driven towards reducing speed or volume, or encouraging

/ increasing safety for bike and pedestrian traffic, and relative risk of shifting the problem to another street).

1. Residents should be able to request a particular mechanism, but also able to simply request that a data-based study be done and allow for consideration of what mechanism is appropriate later. A list of traffic calming measures with a description should be made available.

III. Racial and economic equality;

Working Group Recommendation: Reduce the number required to get the process started (e.g. from 66.6% to 25%) and create a second/separate process allowing for a single resident to approach their Councilperson and, if the request has merit (discretionary), that council member can initiate the data-driven process. Other options should include mandating a study after a certain number of traffic / safety incidents, to be defined.

IV. Ability to rank and prioritize locations for funding of projects:

Working Group Recommendation: For traffic calming, priority should be for low budget but high impact measures that are deemed warranted under the data-driven approach (e.g., pavement markings, traffic restrictions via signage). Infrastructure projects should be prioritized based on the safety impact. For sidewalk, priority for projects near schools / transit / commerce / playgrounds and/or linking existing pedestrian networks such as path-to-school.

Note: The emphasis in this discussion document is on traffic calming measures, there seemed to be less engagement / concerns surrounding the sidewalk petition process. However, if the % of residents required for initiating a traffic calming petition is reduced, query whether a like reduction should be recommended for sidewalks.

Working Group Recommendations / Topics for Discussion:

I. Breaking down / defining different traffic calming measures.

The policy should clearly outline and define a range of different traffic calming measures, including an analysis of whether the measure more greatly impacts speed, volume, or pedestrian safety, and potential risk of shifting the burden to another street. Ideally, the resident would be provided a visualization of the calming measure ... either in the policy itself or at the first meeting to discuss options.

- i. **Note that some measures do not require City Council approval**, only City Manager, e.g., “Slow Children Playing,” Crosswalk Signage, “Local Traffic Only” ...
- ii. **should these distinctions be spelled out in the policy?**

1. Should we recommend that the Council delegate/**add** to the list of mechanisms that can be put into place without their approval? Should “pavement markings” (parking lanes, bike lanes, crosswalks) be delegated to the City Manager for ease of implementation.

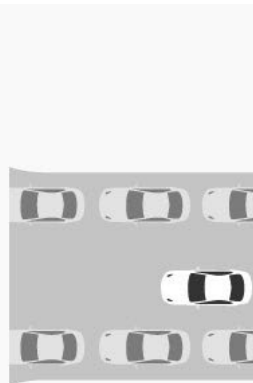
iii. Breakdown:

2. **Pavement Markings** – parking / bike lanes*, crosswalks**, etc.

- a. *** Bike lane design standards:** Painted/colored bike lanes could increase visibility; adding rumble strips marking the beginning of the lane.



- b. **** Crosswalk design standards:** Flexible delineator poles adjacent to crosswalks forcing cars to slow down.



3. **Increased Enforcement** – increased fines, speed cameras (both stationary and mobile).

- a. **Signage / Traffic Restrictions** – speed limit change, turn or rush-hour traffic restrictions, one-way street, etc.

5. **“Hardscapes” / Infrastructure** – chicanes, curb extensions, bump outs, speed humps/tables (break out different types here as well), medians and islands, raised crosswalks, mini circles.

Sample Descriptions: [From the Hagerstown policy]

“Using paint or tape to narrow wide travel lanes can create the perception of a narrower roadway and have a calming effect while also providing extra room for bicycles and parked cars. Road diets, which reduce the number of

available travel lanes, are another example of pavement marking changes. This measure can be used on streets with AWDT volumes over 5,000.”

“The restriction of access (Do Not Enter, No Left Turn) at all times or during peak hours from higher functional roadways into to local streets, as well as conversion of local streets from two-way to one-way is a cost-effective tool for traffic volume management that can be successful when the resulting diverted traffic movements do not relocate the speed or volume problem to an adjacent roadway.”

Sample Visualizations:

These images from the NACTO Global Street Design Guide (see resources) are traffic calming and pedestrian safety tools that can be employed together along a street and added over time. They can be tested with temporary materials.



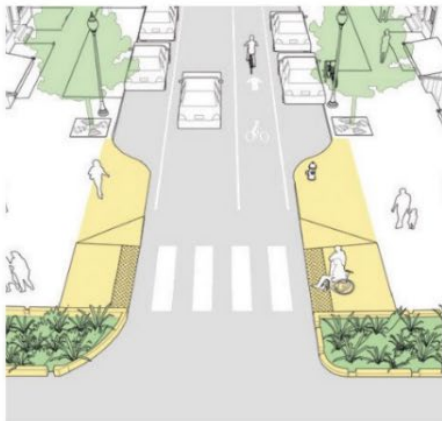
Mini Circles are installed in the middle of an intersection to slow down cars passing through. They function like a small roundabout.



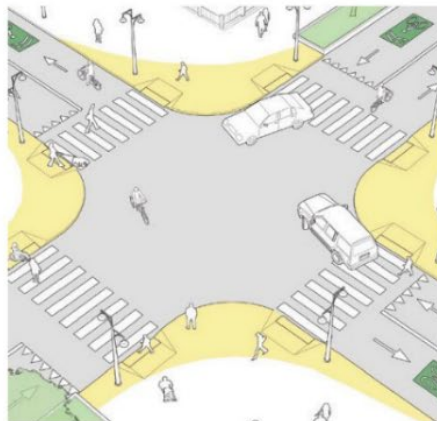
Neighborhood Gateways are a combination of a raised crosswalk and curb bulbouts at the entry to a low-speed street, forcing slower speeds.



Pinch points narrow the street in the middle of a block, forcing drivers to slow down and possibly yield to oncoming traffic. They also create a narrow place for people to cross.



Curb Bulbouts or Curb Extensions narrow the crossing distance at an intersection for safer crossings.



Tighter Corners force cars to slow down if they are taking a turn.



Refuge Islands on extra wide streets are like medians that let people cross in two stages.

II. Reducing the burden / promoting racial and economic equity.

i. Option 1: Eliminate the petition process entirely. Any resident can request traffic study to start the data-driven process. Does this create too much of a burden on City staff? Do we need a “critical mass” of residents? If so, what should that number be?

ii. Option Two: Create two avenues, a reduced (25%?) petition process that **mandates** the data-driven approach, and a single (or very few) resident process, with **discretion** to the councilmember.

1. Potential third avenue based on a certain number of traffic-safety incidents. If so, what are the criteria? Who would collect / analyze that data?
2. Should a council member or Public Works staff member be able to initiate the process without prompting from a resident?

iii. Other concerns:

3. Should a TKPK resident have to live in an affected area to request traffic calming, what if they bike or walk through the area?

III. Creating a data-based / fact-driven model to evaluate and address (1) speed; (2) volume; and (3) pedestrian safety.

i. Petition triggers a traffic-calming study - “a formal study typically including (1) technical and qualitative analysis of existing traffic conditions such as speeds and traffic volumes; and (2) development of a plan for implementing one or more traffic calming devices; and (3) the assessment of potential consequences for such action.”

ii. Hagerstown’s traffic calming policy ([LINK](#)) and Calvert County ([LINK](#)) have some ideas for criteria, but more research needs to be done.

1. E.g.: Regarding traffic volume, in Hagerstown, parking/bike lanes are considered warranted on streets with average weekday traffic (AWDT) of 5,000. In Calvert County, traffic calming measures are considered “if peak hour volume is greater than 150.”
2. The Hagerstown policy has a “Point Assignment Analysis” at P 15. Based on the traffic study, points are allotted for assessing speed, volume, crash history, whether there’s a sidewalk or playground nearby, cut through traffic, etc. ... 100 point maximum, 45 point minimum to justify a traffic calming measure.

iii. After the data-driven study ... public notification / meeting / voting, similar to current process. However, should we re-visit whether 51% of residents should be needed if the study reveals safety issue?

3. Turn it on its head? If the study indicates a need for traffic calming to reduce speed / volume or improve pedestrian safety, should the policy require 51% of affected residents to vote the measure down?

IV. Ranking and prioritizing project funding.

i. WG Member suggestions:

1. Low budget / high impact measures (pavement markings, signage);
2. Sensitive uses – bus stops, school/daycare/playground/rec center nearby, parks and arterial streets.
3. If we implemented a point-system as in Hagerstown, could this be used to prioritize projects?

V. Temporary Traffic Calming (suggested for discussion by Daryl Braithwaite).

i. **Measures** – Pavement markings, temporary road signs, cones, pedestrian paddles / in-street crosswalk signs.

1. **“Street Furniture,” e.g. planters.** Temporary traffic calming could include street furniture that imitate possible permanent measures to familiarize residents with the feature and gain broader acceptance. Also, it could help determine if a proposed permanent traffic calming measure will actually work prior to spending much money for such a permanent solution.

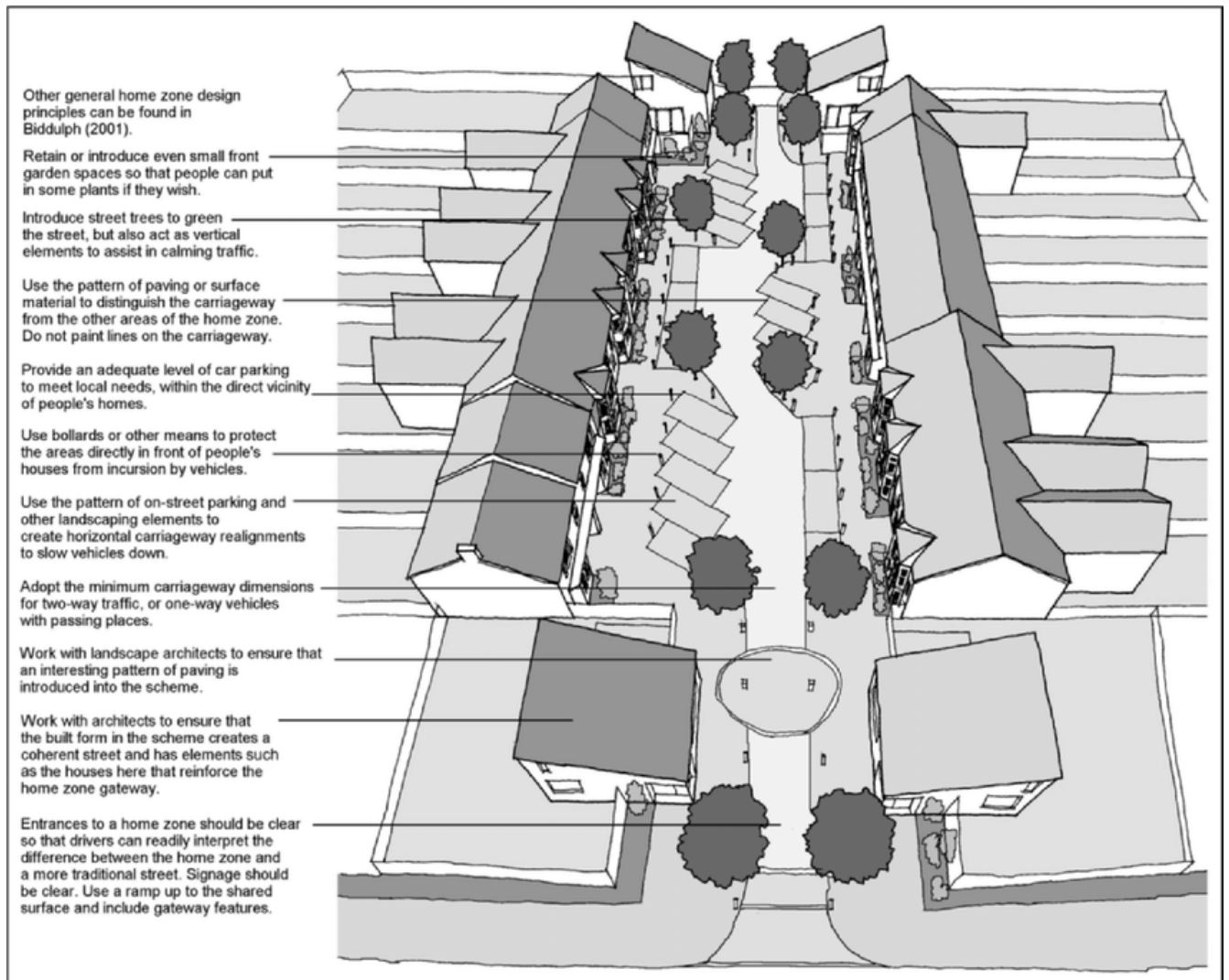


ii. **Process** – Should there be a (tighter) timetable placed on requests for temporary calming measures aimed at temporary issues (e.g. construction on Eastern)? E.g., council must conduct a public meeting and complete a study within X days. If so, what should that number be?



VI. Other Considerations:

- i. **Home Zone Scheme/Neighborhood gateways/ Holistic Approach to street traffic calming.** Most streets in TKPK are residential but are used for through traffic. If the access points to these residential streets, or zones, are more clearly marked/ designed as residential zones, traffic throughput would decrease and less need for individual traffic calming measures.
- ii. **Focusing on speed / volume reduction doesn't address the issue of encouraging public transit, walking, biking.**



1. Should we also be discussing processes for residents to request other changes – making transit buses more frequent, increasing the number of bike share stations, linking bike paths and sidewalks, providing more trees / shade to existing sidewalks.

iii. Sidewalk Petition Process:

1. Propose the same process as traffic calming ... e.g., if we reduce the % of residents required for a traffic calming petition, the same number should be used for sidewalk requests.
2. Data-driven process ... Sidewalk and slowdown measures should be considered together. Speed/volume problems are exacerbated on streets with no sidewalk. If a speed / volume issue is identified via the data-driven process, a sidewalk project be implemented if there is no sidewalk.
 - a. Priority areas should be identified, e.g. areas near and to/from public transit, routes to school, etc. Also, density should be a consideration, as high density areas would require a higher priority for sidewalk installation than low density areas.
 - b. In areas deemed dangerous or accidents with pedestrians have occurred, city manager is required to develop sidewalk planning and

budget for sidewalk construction, with a petition process required for residents to overrule the initiative.

- c. In areas where residents request sidewalk, petition process similar to traffic calming may be applied.
- d. Currently, sidewalks seem to be installed on the easement, thus impacting residents' perceived property. Should / can the default be sidewalks are installed on the road surface?
- e. If there is limited space for sidewalks, establishing one-way streets should be considered.

Resources Considered

I. March 22, 2017 TKPK Safe Roadway Committee Report.

i. Key Takeaways:

- 1. Eliminate the presumption in Chapter 13.28 that speed bumps are the default traffic-calming measure of choice. Replace AR 96-1 with administrative regulations that do not have a bias for speed bumps.

2. Direct that City staff utilize a step-by-step process:

a. Determine the appropriate street-segment speed by using methods described in the Federal Highway Administration's Methods and Practices for Setting Speed Limits.

b. Do three-week studies of vehicle, pedestrian and bike use. Study should also note if there are uses such as a school, recreation center, dense housing, or other sensitive uses.

c. Capture the average vehicle speed over three-week period.

d. If the average traffic speed exceeds the speed determined appropriate under (a), install a traffic calming device using this rank-file priority list:

- i. Lower speed limit;
- ii. Additional police enforcement;
- iii. Sidewalk installation;
- iv. Choke-points;
- v. Overall street narrowing;
- vi. Speed tables;
- vii. Raised crosswalks
- viii. Intersection bulb-outs.

3. Ensure that each traffic-calming solution installed has no significant negative impact on emergency vehicle response times.

4. Implement traffic-calming mechanisms that promote alternatives to driving ... walking, bicycling, and transit.

5. Direct City Staff to adopt design standards for each traffic calming measure employed within TKPK and set a deadline.

6. Evaluate speed limits on various street segments per the Federal Highway Administration's Methods and Practices for Setting Speed Limits, do three-week studies of vehicle, pedestrian and bike use, and then install traffic calming measures if needed. The Committee also recommended the Council codify a rank-ordered list of traffic calming measures.

ii. **Question for Discussion:**

1. Does the Safe Roadway Committee Report adequately address volume issues? The emphasis seems to be on speed. Do we agree with the rank-file order of the traffic calming measures? Are there any measures missing?

[LINK TO REPORT EMBEDDED HERE.](#)

II. **October 16, 2019 Phone Call with Daryl Braithwaite, Dep't of Public Works.**

iii. **Key Takeaways:**

2. Regarding changing the focus on speed humps, recommend that we group different traffic calming measures by method:

a. **Pavement Markings** ("things that require paint") ... parking and bike lanes to visually narrow the street to reduce speed and volume. Low budget and low risk of shifting burden to another street.

b. **Signage** ... "Slow Children Playing," "No Parking," "Local Traffic Only / "No Thru Traffic," Reducing the Speed Limit, "No Left Turn" and rush-hour restrictions, etc. Low budget but the potential impact to other streets varies. Some do not require City Council approval, only City Manager.

c. **"Hard-scapes" / Infrastructure Projects** ... curbs, bump-outs, changes to the road pattern, speed humps, medians, raised crosswalks. Big budget, big impact.

3. Doesn't see the "2/3" number attached to the petition process as a must. This could be reduced to lessen the burden on the resident, or, create an alternative pathway for one concerned resident to engage their council member, who can initiate if the request has merit.

4. It would be good to have a **fact-based / data-driven model**. Ideally have set criteria. We have criteria for reducing the speed limit. But we should look to other jurisdictions for criteria on assessing when traffic volume is a problem that must be addressed.

5. Additionally, Daryl suggested that the CSSC recommend a process for tackling **temporary traffic calming requests**, e.g., traffic issues caused by construction on Eastern Avenue, etc.

6. Noted that we do not have a good way under the current policy for a **"neighborhood-wide" approach**. When should a neighborhood-wide traffic study be conducted to come up with a comprehensive issue to a problem?

7. Daryl cited real issues with the sidewalk petition process, thinks it is a "good-working process," with a lot of opportunity for notice and comment from the public. Noted that the current policy is broader than traffic calming because it requires cross-streets to be included in the vote ... perhaps we revisit that aspect.

III. **Traffic Calming Policies in Other Jurisdictions:**

i.Links provided to the Committee via e-mail.