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WEST ALLIS

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Safety and Development Committee

414/460-6442

7525 West Greenfield Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214

mmay@westalliswi.gov
www.westalliswi.gov

October 15, 2015

City of West Allis
Mayor Devine & Common Council
7525 W. Greenfield Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214

RE: City of West Allis Neighborhood Traffic Management Program

Mayor Devine & Honorable Fellow Council Members,

Speeding and cut-through traffic on our neighborhood streets impact our resident's safety and quality of living. In an effort to minimize impacts, I am proposing the implementation of a Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) for the City of West Allis. Alderman Lajsic and I will cosponsor the necessary policy and ordinance changes to accommodate the program, and we wish to obtain your input on the basic framework of the program to guide our Engineering Department, Finance Department, and Attorney's office in the development of such.

What does an NTMP accomplish?

A common response to speeding and cut-through traffic complaints is to perform a traffic volume/speed study in the area of the concern. In most cases the data shows that the perception of speeding or cut-through traffic is higher than reality. The City does not currently have a written policy or the funding available to implement "hard" street improvements (traffic calming projects such as. speed humps, mid-block chokers, partial or full street closure, etc.) for those cases where traffic problems are verified and low-cost solutions (e.g. enforcement, speed trailer) are shown to be ineffective. An NTMP would provide the Engineering Department a policy for working through neighborhood traffic complaints as well as a mechanism to fund traffic calming projects.

How would an NTMP work?

A basic policy for the operation of an NTMP, mirrored closely to a City of Milwaukee program (http://city.milwaukee.gov/City-2014mpw/divisions/infrastructure/NeighborhoodTrafficManagement.htm), was prepared by Mike Lewis and is attached (see Attachment A).

Under the NTMP, a citizen or organization interested in the program (the requestor) would complete an NTMP request form and submit it to the Engineering Department. With approval of the district alderpersons, the Engineering Department would provide the requestor with a map of impacted properties and a blank petition. If 50% or more of the property owners in the impacted area agree to a neighborhood traffic management planning effort, the Engineering Department will complete a traffic volume/speed study

– much like it does now when it receives a traffic complaint. The Engineering Department will provide the residents the traffic study results.

If requested by the district alderpersons, a meeting with the impacted property owners and residents will be held and the Engineering Department will assist neighbors in developing a "Proposed Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan". The plan would include an evaluation of problems and needs, identify goals and objectives, and identify suggested "Phase One" non-construction solutions (see examples, Attachment B) and "Phase Two" traffic calming projects (see examples, Attachment C).

If Phase One non-construction solutions do not achieve the anticipated results and a Phase Two traffic calming project is desired, the Engineering Department would identify and consult with the district alderpersons on appropriate traffic calming devices and their approximate costs. Examination of the impact on city operations – emergency service response, street sweeping and snow plowing – would be a consideration in this phase.

Phase Two projects would involve a 100% special assessment to property owners in the impacted area. The thinking behind an assessment is those in the impacted area receive a unique benefit that other citizens in the City do not. If 75% or more of the property owners agree to the special assessment, and if the traffic calming project is approved by the Common Council following a public hearing, staff will cause plans and specifications to be prepared and solicit bids for construction.

How would the special assessment work?
Property owners would be given the option of paying their special assessment in one year or spreading the cost over up to five years. In consultation with the Finance Department, spreading the assessment across multiple years could be done without bonding. The City of West Allis routinely calculates special assessments per linear foot of street frontage. The Engineering Department anticipates that it will continue to calculate assessments per linear foot of street frontage, but may use other means, such as a fixed rate per property, if it is decided to be a better method for the majority of residents.

What if the City already has a planned project within the Capital Improvement Plan?
If a project has already been identified in the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), such as street reconstruction or resurfacing, economies of scale would suggest that the incremental costs associated with the construction of a Phase Two traffic calming project may be diminished or eliminated. In these cases, the Engineering Department may reduce or eliminate the special assessment for the Phase Two traffic calming project if approved by the Board of Public Works.

How will projects be prioritized?
The top priority for staff remains the design and construction of projects in the CIP, and NTMP requests will be handled on a first come first served basis subject to the time constraints of the Engineering Department. If Phase Two traffic calming projects are not able to be designed and constructed by staff in a timely manner, it is recommended that these tasks be performed by consultants with consultant costs passed on through the special assessment.

Will NTMP projects proliferate and require substantial staff time?

Recall that participation in the NTMP requires a requestor to obtain signatures from 50% or more of property owners in an area identified by the Engineering Department. If those signatures are obtained, a traffic volume/speed study is conducted. This is much like what currently occurs when traffic complaints are lodged with the Engineering Department. If a district alderperson requests a meeting to develop a full neighborhood traffic management plan, the first solutions to be tried are Phase One non-construction solutions such as those already developed – the West Allis Pace Car program, yard signs, strategic enforcement, speed trailers, street signing, etc. That is, much of the staff time required for Phase One non-construction solutions already occurs.

The next step would be Phase Two traffic calming projects which involve a 100% special assessment to property owners in the impacted area, 75% or more of property owners in the impacted area must agree to the special assessment, and Council approval of the project. These requirements are expected to avoid frivolous and unfounded requests for these types of projects.

For Phase Two traffic calming projects that do move forward, design elements may be copied from one project to another (i.e. design once and modify for future projects). Sample design plans for these projects may also be obtained electronically from the City of Milwaukee to eliminate the need to "recreate the wheel" in the first place. These tasks may also be performed by consultants with the costs passed on through the special assessment.

In consideration of above points, proliferation is not expected to occur and substantial additional staff time is not anticipated to be necessary. If proliferation is a concern of the Common Council, consideration may be given to identifying a pilot project area of the City to ease into the program (I suggest District 3).

What about long-term maintenance?

Little long-term maintenance or repairs are anticipated to be necessary if projects are properly designed and constructed. Therefore, maintenance and repair costs should be covered within the annual operating budget.

What needs to be accomplished to institute an NTMP?

The Engineering Department needs to finalize a written policy following input from the Common Council. The Finance Department needs to finalize details for an NTMP fund. The Attorney's office may need to produce ordinance language to allow for the special assessment of the Phase Two traffic calming projects.

Thank you in advance for your input on the basic framework of an NTMP. It is our desire to move forward and get a final policy and any ordinance changes to the Council in the coming month or two. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Michael P. May
Alderman, West Allis District 3

ATTACHMENT A

NTMP Policy Framework
From Mike Lewis

Dear Citizen,

Thank you for your interest in making our neighborhood streets safer and more pleasant. The City of West Allis Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (included) was designed as a flexible program that can be tailored to meet the special needs of different neighborhoods. It begins with many low-cost initiatives in the Phase One section, and includes descriptions of different assessable options under Phase Two if the Phase One initiatives are not effective.

Please look through these materials carefully and discuss them with your neighbors. If you have further questions, feel free to contact me by phone or email.

Sincerely,

Michael Lewis
Director of Public Works/City Engineer
7525 West Greenfield Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214
(414) 302-8372
mlewis@westalliswi.gov

CITY OF WEST ALLIS
NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

PURPOSE

The Neighborhood Traffic Management Program is intended to slow motor vehicle traffic in a particular neighborhood or on a particular street in order to improve the safety and comfort of residents, businesses, pedestrians and bicyclists.

In order to be effective, neighborhood traffic management must include all four E's:

1. Education (neighborhood newsletter, flyers, posters)
2. Enforcement (speed board, strategic enforcement, "step out" programs)
3. Encouragement (yard signs, flyers, newsletter, demonstrations)
4. Engineering (Traffic Calming, vertical or horizontal deflection devices, such as speed humps, traffic circles, narrowing streets, one-way street reconfiguration, curb extensions, etc. **Note, the cost of these projects will involve a special assessment for a defined area of residents to recover 100% of the cost for design and installation of the project.**)

The City of West Allis's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program has two phases. During **Phase One** we focus on non-construction efforts and changing motorists driving behavior to increase compliance with applicable laws through education, enforcement, encouragement and the use of passive traffic control devices such as pavement markings and signage. These relative low cost Phase One options can be quite effective in many neighborhoods and are described in greater detail below and on the attached Phase One Guidelines sheet. If the Phase One measures prove to be ineffective, we proceed to **Phase Two** where active traffic management techniques (traffic calming measures) such as traffic circles, curb extensions and speed humps are considered.

TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY

As a general policy, the City of West Allis Department of Public Works/Engineering incorporates the needs of all users (bicyclists, pedestrians, public transit, and motorists) when designing a new road or reconstructing an existing one. In the same way we consider adding bike lanes on all road projects, the West Allis Engineering Division will consider adding appropriate traffic calming devices during the design phase of all paving projects. Traffic calming measures can also be considered through the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program or in accordance with applicable City Ordinance(s).

Traffic calming measures are typically implemented on residential streets or in business districts where speeding vehicles or cut-through traffic is a problem. We avoid putting traffic calming on streets designated as through highways. However, there are circumstances when certain traffic calming measures, such as curb extensions and median islands, may be appropriate on through highways, collector or arterial streets.

The following procedure will be used to identify, evaluate and implement a Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan in the City of West Allis.

1. A citizen or organization requesting neighborhood traffic management improvements will fill out a Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan Request Form available from the City of West Allis Engineering Division or on the City of West Allis web site. This form will be submitted to the Director of Public Works/City Engineer and the district alderpersons will be notified of the request.

2. Upon receipt of a Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan Request Form and preliminary approval from the district alderperson, the Engineering Division will define an area directly affected by the traffic issue, known as the ***affected area***, and an area that would be impacted by any proposed traffic management solutions, known as the ***impacted area***.

   The size and extent of the impacted area will take into consideration the type of traffic management project being proposed, the type of properties in the vicinity, and the characteristics of the street network surrounding the proposed project site(s). Depending on the circumstances, the area may include:

   - All properties abutting the proposed street segment to be modified.
   - All properties on adjacent street(s) with ingress/egress only possible via the modified street segment.
   - All properties on adjacent street(s) that have alternative points of ingress/egress but will be otherwise affected by the modified street segment.

3. The Engineering Division will provide the requestor with a map of the impacted area which indicates the individual properties and a blank petition. To ensure neighborhood or community support, requestors must obtain signatures from at least 50% of property owners within the impacted area to move forward with the request for a neighborhood traffic management planning effort.

4. After receiving a copy of the signed petition, the Engineering Division will conduct a traffic study which will include traffic volumes, speeds and crash history. After the background data has been gathered and evaluated, engineering staff will provide the residents the traffic study results. At that time, the district alderpersons may organize a neighborhood meeting inviting the impacted residents.

5. At the meeting, the Engineering Division will help the neighbors develop a "Proposed Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan". The Plan will include:

   - Evaluation of problems and needs
   - Identified goals and objectives
   - Suggested Phase One non-construction solutions (education, encouragement, enforcement and passive traffic control devices), a work plan for implementation and a plan for post evaluation to determine if the non-construction solutions have been effective.

- Suggested Phase Two traffic calming measures will be discussed, including general estimated costs and an assessment report so residents will know about what it may cost if it is decided to proceed to Phase Two.

6. Once the plan has been written, engineering staff will assist the interested community members in implementing the Phase One non-construction related elements of the Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan. This may include distributing yard signs; coordinating a neighborhood speed watch effort; requesting added enforcement or speed board; writing a flyer/newsletter and distributing it to the neighbors; helping organize other encouragement efforts such as the West Allis Pace Car program.

7. After a predetermined time period, engineering staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the non-construction elements of the Phase One plan. The results of this study will be presented to the district alderpersons and Board of Public Works.

If the Phase One efforts are not satisfactory, Phase Two traffic calming techniques will be considered.

8. The Engineering Division will consider Phase Two traffic engineering solutions such as bump outs, chokers, traffic circles, chicanes, speed humps, diverters, closings, etc. if warranted using traffic engineering guidelines. Staff will analyze the options and make a recommendation for the appropriate traffic engineering solution. Staff will take into consideration such items as snow removal, street sweeping, and the impacts of ambulances, fire and police when determining these solutions.

9. All cost estimate and special assessments will follow the public hearing process in accordance with City Ordinances and State Statutes.

10. Once project funding is approved by the Common Council, staff will cause plans project specifications to be prepared and solicit bids from contractors to construct the traffic calming devices.

CITY OF WEST ALLIS REQUEST FOR NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

The Neighborhood Traffic Management Program is intended to slow motor vehicle traffic in a particular neighborhood or on a particular street in order to improve the safety and comfort of residents, businesses, pedestrians and bicyclists typically, traffic calming is considered on residential streets, but it may be appropriate for some collector and through highways.

Please read the attached City of West Allis Neighborhood Traffic Management Program. That policy explains the Phase One education, enforcement and encouragement efforts and how to get things such as "slow down" yard signs, a neighborhood traffic calming newsletter and "speed watch" programs. The City will help with those Phase One efforts which should happen before the City considers any Phase Two changes to the roadway.

To request that the City of West Allis consider undertaking a Neighborhood Traffic Management Project, the requester should complete this form and submit it to the Department of Public Works/Engineering; 7525 West Greenfield Avenue; West Allis, WI 53214. You can also fax the form to (414) 302-8366 or email to engineering@westalliswi.gov. The requester will be required to obtain signatures on a petition after this request has been reviewed by the Department of Public Works/Engineering and approved by the district alderpersons. If you have any questions, please call Michael Lewis, Director of Public Works/City Engineer at (414) 302-8372.

Requester's Name: _____

Requester's Address: _____

_____

Requester's Phone Number: _____

Requester's Email: _____

Street(s) where Traffic Calming is being requested: _____

_____

_____

Reason(s) for request (speeding, cut through traffic, difficult to cross street, etc.): _____

_____

_____

_____

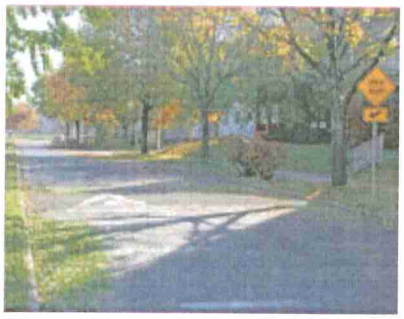
ATTACHMENT B

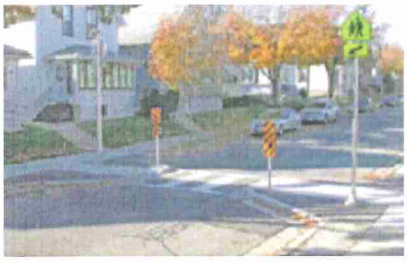
Example Phase One Countermeasures From Mike Lewis

Phase One Countermeasures	Description/Purpose	Recommended Guidelines
High Visibility Pedestrian Crossing Signs	Install the appropriate high visibility signs to tell drivers the law requires them to yield the right of way to pedestrians. Can be in-street, mast-arm overhead, or next to road depending on circumstances. Re-educate motorists about crosswalks and ROW laws.	Install in-street sign only on two lane roads Only at uncontrolled crosswalks 200-10,000 ADT speeds below 35 mph
Speed Limit Signs	Check to make sure the street is signed appropriate. Heightens driver awareness of posted speed limit.	-Sign appropriately as needed. -15% of motorists exceeding 28 mph
Speed Limit Pavement Markings	White painted MPH (6ft tall letters) 6 feet after 25 (6ft tall) Heightens driver awareness of posted speed limit	-Note that 100% of cost of installation and maintenance is assessed to residents in a defined area of impact. Residential streets with speed of 25 mph but no signs. -15% of motorists exceeding 28 mph
Traffic Safety Newsletter	Newsletter provides information on speeds and volumes. It also provides information about the Pace Care Program, Speed Watch program, yard signs and alerts about next neighborhood traffic meetings. Encourage neighbors to drive limit in their own neighborhood. Reduce speeds by heightening awareness to traffic safety concerns among residents in neighborhood	-posted speed limit of 25 mph 15% of motorists exceeding 28 mph -only works in residential areas -include parents of students at nearby schools
Neighborhood Speed Watch	Train residents to use a radar gun and note description, time and license number of speeding cars. Police Dept. sends out letters signed by neighbors asking cooperation in keeping neighborhood safe by driving the limit. Encourage sense of responsibility in residents and cut-through drivers not to speed.	-Posted speed limit of 25 mph -15% of motorists exceeding 28 mph -Minimum of two volunteers -20 minute training session and signed agreements -Can be especially effective near high schools where vehicles are registered to parents
Speed Board	Post police radar speed board in various places in the neighborhood. Increase awareness of speeding by residents.	More effective if used in conjunction with strategic enforcement efforts, yard signs and other Phase One efforts.
Yard Signs	Distribute "Slow Down" yard signs of various designs to residents. Encourage neighbors to drive limit in their own neighborhood. Reduce speeds by heightening awareness to traffic safety concerns among residents in neighborhood.	Ask residents to move yard signs around as they are more effective immediately after placement. More effective if used in conjunction with strategic enforcement efforts, yard signs and other Phase One efforts.
Pace Car Program	Distribute and encourage residents to participate in the West Allis Pace Car program. Each resident is then a neighborhood pace car that keeps the speed down. Encourage neighbors to drive limit in their own neighborhood. Reduce speeds by heightening awareness to traffic safety concerns among residents in neighborhood.	Make sure residents understand that they can make a difference by taking action themselves and that much of the speeding/traffic problem in the neighborhood is a result of how they and their neighbors drive.
Strategic Enforcement	Police put radar squads/motorcycle units on streets and issue tickets during peak hour periods for a couple days. "Step Out" program where a police auxiliary officer attempts to cross street and motorcycle units issue tickets for failure to yield to pedestrian.	More effective if used in conjunction with newsletter, yard signs and other Phase One efforts. "Step Out" program requires quite a bit of manpower, but is very effective in conjunction with R1-6 signs.

ATTACHMENT C

Example Phase Two Countermeasures From Mike Lewis

Phase Two Countermeasures	Description/Purpose	Recommended Guidelines	Approximate Cost (100% assessed)
 **Speed Humps**	- Sinusoidal curved hump full width of road - Reduce speeding - Reduce non-local traffic	- Two lane roads with 200-2,000 ADT - 15% of motorists exceed 35mph - 1 hump/600ft block - Acceleration/Deceleration noise	$3000-$5000 each
 **Traffic Circles**	- Small circle installed in intersection instead of stop sign - Reduce speeding and non-local traffic - Bike friendly	- Residential streets with posted speed of 25pmh - 15% of motorists exceeding 28 mph - Emergency response delay 1-9 seconds - May require removal of some on-street parking - Collisions with circle may occur	$10K/intersection
 **Mini-Roundabout**	- Small circle installed in intersection instead of stop sign - Reduce speeding and non-local traffic - Reduce right angle crashes - Bike friendly	- For wider than typical residential streets with posted speed of 25mph - 15% of motorists exceeding 28mph - Emergency response delay 1-9 seconds - May require removal of some on-street parking - Collisions with circle may occur	$25K/intersection
 **Curb Extensions**	- Curb bumped out 8 feet into parking lane at crosswalks - Shorten pedestrian crossing distance - Better pedestrian visibility - Reduce driving in parking lane where parking is light	- Only on streets with parking lane - Reduces turning radius for right turning trucks	$15K/intersection

 **Partial Closure**	- Close off entrance lane with a curb extension that leaves the exit lane open - Designed to reduce non-local traffic, but allow residents to exit	- Only on streets with parking lane - Requires difference emergency response route - Can be used on one-way streets to reduce wrong way driving	$10K
 **Full Closure**	- Completely close off street with a full curb - Designed to eliminate non-local and local traffic	- For use on streets with a very large amount of non-local or "cut-through" traffic - Requires different emergency response route	$15K
 **Entry Median**	- Install a raised curb median at entrance to residential street that meets a higher volume street - Reduce non-local traffic, slow speeds, improve pedestrian crossing	- Can be used as a neighborhood gateway on wider streets	$5K-$15K
 **Street Narrowing**	- Narrowing a street with a mid-block choker or the entire length during reconstruction - Reduce non-local traffic, slow speeds, improve pedestrian crossing	- May slow emergency response - May require elimination of some on-street parking	$10K and up
One-Way Street Reconfiguration	- Converting a one-way street to two-way or converting a two-way street to a one way - Reduce non-local traffic, slow speeds, improve pedestrian crossing, improve traffic circulation	- May increase congestion and reduce pedestrian gaps.	$500