




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Elaine Hart, Interim City Manager
Robert Goode, P.E., Assistant City Manager

FROM: Robert Spillar, P.E., Director,
Austin Transportation Department 

DATE: August 10, 2017

SUBJECT: Local Area Traffic Management Program

Earlier this month, I notified your offices that the City's Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) Program, also known as the Traffic Calming Program, would be put on temporary hold while the Austin Transportation Department (ATD) addressed a number of recently raised citizen concerns. This memorandum is intended to notify you that ATD has completed a preliminary reassessment of the LATM Program and developed a plan that we believe better addresses these recent citizen concerns.

In reassessing our process, ATD looked at recently completed street projects about which we have received substantial citizen concerns (Jester Boulevard, Webberville Road, Mesa Drive and Far West Boulevard). ATD typically does not receive numerous concerns when applying LATM on neighborhood streets, which are our typical target for implementation. However, upon reassessment, ATD has identified these particular streets as collectors or minor arterials as opposed to neighborhood streets. Based on this new awareness, ATD has sorted the remainder of the projects planned for implementation this year by category (e.g., collector/minor arterial or local neighborhood street). We plan to restart the LATM Program in the coming weeks, focusing on the neighborhood streets where we believe the public has indicated strong support. For these and all future streets, we will confirm that the appropriate Council Office is aware of the anticipated installation; notify the affected neighborhood associations; and post informational signs that indicate a traffic calming project is programmed for construction. A phone number for residents with questions will be placed on the advance educational signage as well. We will otherwise endeavor to adhere to our standing LATM procedures for neighborhood and similar streets.

For the identified collectors/minor arterials not yet implemented, we will work with the affected neighborhoods to conduct a more broad-based traffic management discussion prior to mitigation. With the larger public stakeholder group, we will pursue a range of options, including education, enforcement, engineering and evaluation, to encourage an appropriate speed on the identified collector/minor arterial. We believe, by pulling these collectors and minor arterials out of our standard process, we may be able to achieve the desired speed management with tools other than speed cushions.

However, our goal to mitigate an observed speeding issue on these streets must remain consistent. If alternative efforts fail to achieve the desired speed mitigation, speed cushions are a viable tool to be considered for implementation on collector and minor arterial streets.

For those collector and minor arterial roadways that have already received speeding mitigation treatments through the LATM process this year, ATD is committed to reassessing and potentially modifying those projects. We are in the process of communicating with the original applicants to discuss the need to reassess the projects and discuss options. Again, each of these projects has a documented speeding issue that we are professionally obligated to address. We will work with the neighborhood associations and groups in the vicinity of these projects to develop a more inclusive and thoughtful response to the documented speeding issue. Our preliminary thoughts for modification are as follow:

- **Jester Boulevard:** Early communications with the original applicants indicate a desire to maintain the existing devices. However, we are aware that other residents who were eligible to weigh in on the original petition are interested in now removing the existing devices and are seeking signatures from affected properties to promote removal. Speeding on Jester Boulevard is a documented issue, likely related to the extremely wide nature of the street. The design of the Jester community, relying on only two primary exits from the neighborhood, suggests that speed violations here can be attributed to the residents themselves. ATD will work with the affected residences and the neighborhood association to seek a more comprehensive solution to the documented speeding issue. Options might include a neighborhood-based education campaign, speed awareness efforts, expanded enforcement and alternative street modifications to encourage travelers to drive more appropriate speeds. If an acceptable alternative plan can be identified that reasonably offers a potential for addressing speeding, the existing speed cushions may be removed. Whether or not the cushions are removed, the mission of the City must remain to mitigate the documented speeding issue. Should the devices be replaced with an alternate speed mitigation plan, ongoing monitoring will be used to evaluate the success of these alternate efforts. If speeding cannot be reasonably mitigated, cushions or other street modifications may still be required to resolve the speeding issue.
- **Webberville Road:** Communication with the applicant indicates that the primary concern was with the ability for pedestrians to safely cross the road to access a Capital Metro transit stop. The applicant remains supportive of the speed cushions due to their positive reductions in observed speed. ATD will communicate directly with the applicant and original petition signers to explore alternate traffic control and speed mitigation tools.

We will expand the discussion with the affected neighborhood organization and the institutional entities located along Webberville Road. We will explore intersection control at the four-way intersection adjacent the transit stop to improve pedestrian safety options. These improvements could allow for a phased removal of the traffic cushions as we implement other improvements that achieve similar speed reductions or meet the pedestrian needs. We will also seek to restore some of the lost parking in the vicinity of St. James Church to reduce the negative impact on church operations. We will work with Capital Metro to determine if there is a

different configuration for the transit stops that would result in a safer experience for their patrons.

Lastly, we will expand our evaluation of speeding issues to include all of Webberville Road within the City of Austin. Based on input from various sources, we know there are concerns along various segments of the roadway and we will determine if a more holistic approach is needed.

- **Far West Boulevard:** The currently implemented traffic control devices on Far West Boulevard are achieving their intended speeding mitigation. Many of the complaints we have received related to Far West have been about vehicle clearance over the devices and the potential discomfort caused by the devices. The manufacturer has recommended we modify the design of these cushions, adding a flat plateau section to the devices to alleviate the identified concerns. ATD will pursue this modification and continue to monitor the effectiveness of the devices. If these devices prove to be comparable or better than the existing design, ATD will consider using these on subsequent projects. It should be noted that the modified cushions will cost more than the ones being used now, so widespread use would have an impact on the number of speeding issues we can address.

ATD previously participated in a town-hall meeting where the Far West Boulevard project was discussed. We will continue a proactive communication effort with the affected neighborhood and the original applicants. We will continue to monitor and evaluate this project, including participating in ongoing discussions with the community.

- **Mesa Drive:** We have not received significant comments related to Mesa Drive. However, because of its proximity to Far West Boulevard and to make sure we have an opportunity to evaluate the modified cushions in a wide array of settings, we will modify these speeding mitigation devices to include the flat plateau sections being used on Far West Boulevard. As with the other reassessments, we will communicate with the original applicants and with the neighborhood association so that they are aware of our planned efforts. We will monitor the effectiveness of these modified cushions and determine if we should adopt this as a revised standard practice citywide.

For all traffic calming projects moving forward, the following program enhancements will be followed as part of ATD's standard procedure:

- 1) When we receive a request for speeding mitigation, and after ATD has documented a speeding issue, we will confirm the street as a collector, minor arterial, or neighborhood street. Collector or minor arterials will receive a higher level of scrutiny, as identified above. Neighborhood streets will proceed through the standard process.
- 2) When a street is identified as having a speeding problem and is eligible for speeding mitigation, an informational sign will be posted on the street to alert drivers that a speeding issue is detected and that mitigation is being considered. For projects in this year's pipeline for implementation, we will endeavor to get the signs out as quickly as possible and no less than two weeks in advance of implementation.

- 3) We will notify Council Members of projects identified as eligible in their district at least annually, when the list of potential streets is first identified. We will again notify Council Members if a street in their district is recommended for traffic calming and also prior to project implementation.
- 4) We will notify neighborhood associations and known community groups of projects within their boundaries where we have found a documented speeding issue. We will continue to work with the applicants of record to secure the needed evidence of support within the bounds of the affected area. Should a neighborhood association engage on the project and request an alternate approach, we will work with that neighborhood organization and applicants to determine if an alternate solution can be pursued, so long as the documented speeding issue is mitigated.
- 5) We will look at the larger traffic network to determine if a transient event like construction on a major arterial roadway or freeway may be leading to the increased congestion and speeding on the local street of concern and factor this into our proposed solution.
- 6) For collector streets and minor arterials where we have successfully placed speed mitigation cushions or other devices and where the community remains in support, we will continue to monitor for speed mitigation success and community acceptance.
- 7) We will reach out to other municipalities and transportation organizations to determine if they have used innovative methods to address speeding that we may not yet be aware of so that we may be more nimble and effective in addressing both community concerns and the documented speeding issues. As part of this effort, we will more closely link the LATM Program with the City's adopted Vision Zero plan and implementation process.

Based on our assessment and the proposed modifications listed above, I believe that ATD can restart construction of previously approved Traffic Calming projects, especially those that are classified as addressing neighborhood streets. I have attached a list of the projects to be implemented this year through the LATM Program at the end of this memorandum (Exhibit 1). In the list, I identify which of the remaining projects are neighborhood streets and therefore will typically be moving towards implementation. Streets that are designed for build-in-place devices are also planned to move forward into implementation because of the project-specific public outreach already completed for those projects.

Those streets identified as a collector or minor arterial will continue to be paused so that we may expand our public involvement process on these projects. Once we have achieved informed consent from the affected communities, we will proceed with those projects or modify them based on our findings. Additionally if a neighborhood street is in close proximity to a street where we have received considerable concern, it too may be subjected to an expanded public input process. Reassessment of Jester Boulevard, Webberville Road, Mesa Drive, and Far West Boulevard will begin immediately. We will work with each Council office as this reassessment process unfolds to maintain your awareness of our planned revisions.

Background:

Earlier this month, the Austin Transportation Department (ATD) and many of the Council offices received communications from concerned citizens related to recently completed traffic calming projects on Jester Boulevard, Webberville Road, Mesa Drive and Far West Boulevard. These streets were completed under our existing Traffic Calming guidelines

that prioritized them because of their relatively high speeding issues, traffic volumes, street design characteristics, and demonstrated neighborhood support. While it is our experience that there are often some citizen inquiries following the installation of an individual traffic calming project on a street, the responses we received regarding projects on the identified streets were substantial. It is now clear that these streets are different from our typical neighborhood streets where we apply traffic calming with great success. All of these streets are ones that serve as collector streets, providing access to a number of other local streets; or, ones that operate as minor arterials, even though they may not be designated as such. In each case, our existing Traffic Calming procedures did not capture the full nature of these roadways as a functionally unique class of roadways, different from our typical neighborhood streets where we successfully apply traffic calming.

Some of the increased concern can be traced to ATD's recent ability to more rapidly deploy traffic calming devices. In the past year, ATD has moved to rubberized speed cushions as our primary device for traffic calming. These new devices are widely used within the industry and are extremely successful in reducing speeding on the streets where they are applied. The pre-manufactured nature of these devices has allowed ATD to accelerate our installation process. They are installed as traffic control devices much like traffic control signage. Prior to our adoption of these devices, the City used asphalt, build-in-place speed humps as our primary device. These require full construction plans be developed along with construction permitting. They rely on City construction crews or contractors rather than ATD's own signs and markings staff to install. Consequently, the costs for build-in-place devices is higher and delivery times are longer when compared to using prefabricated rubberized speed cushions.

In reviewing the concerns brought by citizens and Council Members before and after the temporary pause of the LATM program, ATD has identified and plans to address the following categories of citizen concerns. The realignment of the City's LATM procedures, with an expanded notification process, seeks to address these concerns:

- **Speeding is a challenge throughout Austin:** Speeding in Austin is a problem that has grown in proportion to our population and congestion levels. Its causes are many, including street designs that encourage speeding (width, lack of street features, lack of on-street parking, etc.), congested major roadways that encourage diversion of trips to local streets, lack of consistent enforcement across all areas of Austin, construction on major freeways which diverts trips to local roadways, and social pressures that normalize speeding as an excusable infraction.
- **The City should differentiate collector and minor arterial streets from local streets when planning for traffic calming:** Speeding on collector and minor arterial streets is just as dangerous as speeding on local neighborhood streets, but more travelers are likely to be affected on the collector/minor arterial streets. These two classes of streets in Austin should be treated separately, with alternate designs being considered for the higher classified roadways.
- **Lack of widespread notification:** Because collector streets and minor arterials serve a larger number of residents, notification and buy-in needs to be shared across a larger group than just the individuals living along the problem section of roadway. A more wide-spread notification process that includes the general roadway users could serve as a community education tool to make people aware

that a problem exists and might lead to alternate solutions.

- **Council Member notification:** Council Members need to be aware of projects at the earliest point possible during project development, as well as prior to construction. This provides the Council Member the opportunity to bring other concerns to the table related to mobility along candidate roadways. It allows Council Members to advise staff of issues they are hearing about from their constituents.
- **When addressing speeding issues, residents with special needs should be considered:** When possible, residents who have special needs related to a disability or chronic injury should receive consideration in the design of traffic calming projects. For example, when installing speed cushions on streets, ATD should assure that an ADA accessible sidewalk or alternate pathway exists so that wheelchairs can bypass the speed cushions. Likewise, the abruptness of the individual cushions should be considered when needs for increased comfort are documented.
- **Non-controversial neighborhood streets previously approved for traffic calming should proceed:** A number of additional streets are planned for installation of traffic calming devices, many of which appear to be typical neighborhood streets with demonstrated support. Some of these streets have neighborhood partnering commitments promised towards their costs. These streets should move forward with traffic calming per previous commitments to the neighborhoods.
- **Build-in-place LATM projects have already received expanded community discussion:** LATM projects that rely on construction, rather than the rubberized traffic cushions, and that have undergone an extensive design process, should move forward due to the expanded public involvement effort already applied in the development of these projects.

Exhibit 1: 2017 LATM Traffic Calming Projects and Actions Planned

STREET	FROM	TO	DISTRICT	RESIDENTIAL	OBSERVED CLASS	STATUS	ACTION
Spicewood Parkway	Spicewood Club Drive	Bart Hollow	6	100%	Minor Arterial	Completed 12/15	None
Northwood Road	Jefferson Street	Woodridge Drive	10	100%	Collector	Completed 2/16	None
Rockwood Lane	Primrose Lane	Steck Avenue	7	98%	Neighborhood Street	Completed 2/16	None
Corona	Cameron Road	Berkman Drive	4	97%	Neighborhood Street	Completed 7/16	None
Old Enfield Neighborhood	Various	Various	9	100%	Neighborhood Street/Collector	Completed 2016	None
Bolm Road	Koerner Lane	Gardner Lane	3	93%	Minor Arterial	Completed 4/17	None
Clawson Road	Grayford Drive	Valleyridge Drive	5	100%	Neighborhood Street	Completed 4/17	None
Teri Road	Nickols Crossing	Slasney Lane	2	99%	Collector	Completed 4/17	None
Chestnut Avenue	Rosewood Avenue	Peasant Valley	1	90%	Neighborhood Street	Completed 5/17	None
Grady Drive	Mothers Drive	Brownie Drive	4	100%	Neighborhood Street	Completed 5/17	None
Plantation Road	Longview Road	Brodie Lane	5	97%	Neighborhood Street	Completed 5/17	None
Suburban Drive	Sheraton Avenue	Battle Bend	3	96%	Neighborhood Street	Completed 5/17	None
Boston Lane	Southwest Parkway	West US-290	8	75%	Minor Arterial	Completed 6/17	None
St. Elmo Road	South Congress Avenue	South 1st Street	3	63%	Minor Arterial	Completed 6/17	None
Jamestown Drive	Research Boulevard	Payton Gin Road	4	92%	Neighborhood Street	Completed 7/17	None
Diamondback Trail	Interstate Highway 35	Garrett Run	4	80%	Minor Arterial	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install due to Neighbhd. Assoc. Support
Pickfair Drive	Spicewood Parkway	Holme Lacey Lane	6	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Ravenscroft	Machaca	Kingsgate	5	91%	Collector	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install due to Neighbhd. Assoc. Support
Georgian Drive	Wonsley Drive	Home Place	4	94%	Minor Arterial	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Monarch Drive	Curlow Drive	Roxanna Drive	5	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Oak Meadow	HWY 290 West	Scenic Brook Drive	8	85%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Harpers Ferry Lane	Galveston Lane	Longview Road	5	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Curlow Drive	Slaughter Lane	Crownpoint Drive	5	96%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
West Longspur Boulevard	Plover Drive	Oriole Drive	4	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Fairfield Drive	Ohlen Road	Research Boulevard	7	92%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
West Elliott Street	Lamar Boulevard	Georgian Drive	4	78%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Kromer Street	Beckett St.	Fairfield Dr.	7	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Peaceful Hill	Ralph Ablenado	Dittmar	2	84%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Mason Dells	Kingsgate	Curran	5	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Oakmont	W 29th	W 34th	10	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Romeria	Burnett	Arroyo Seco	7	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Beaver Street	Lamar Blvd.	Georgian Drive	4	85%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Scribe Drive	Amherst	Center Lane	7	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Mountain Ridge Drive	Hyridge	Loop 360	10	81%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Brentwood Street	North Lamar Boulevard	Yates Avenue	7	98%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Frontier Trail	Western Trails Boulevard	Manchaca Road	5	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Clearock Drive	Balcones Club Drive	Cedar Crest Drive	6	94%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Misting Falls Trail	Morado Circle	Floral Park Drive	10	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Cedar Crest Drive	Clear Rock Drive	Cedar Crest Cove	6	93%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Burney Drive	Mesa Drive	West Rim Drive	10	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Cloudview Drive	Congress Avenue	Lunar Drive	2	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Primrose Lane	Thruswood Drive	Rockwood Lane	7	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Shoalwood Avenue	Northland Drive	Allandale Road	7	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Woodridge Drive	29th Street	Northwood Road	9	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
La Casa Drive	Lamar Boulevard	Rae Dell Boulevard	5	97%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Amberly Place	Floral Parkway	Rain Creek Parkway	10	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Oakmont Blvd.	35th Street	Bull Creek	10	90%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Painted Valley Drive	Floral Park Drive	Floral Park Drive	10	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Cohoba Drive	Westgate Boulevard	Sanford Drive	5	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Mountainclimb	Highland Hills Drive	Dry Creek Drive	10	100%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install
Mount Bonnell	Fall Trail	West 35th Street	10	88%	Neighborhood Street	TB Scheduled	Schedule for install

LATM Reassess STREETS							
STREET	FROM	TO	DISTRICT	RESIDENTIAL	OBSERVED CLASS	STATUS	ACTION
Far West Boulevard	Marby's Ridge Cove	Waterline Road	10	100%	Collector	Completed 3/17	Revisit process
Webberville Road	Hedlin Lane	East Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard	1	83%	Minor Arterial	Completed 6/17	Revisit process
Mesa Drive	Greystone Drive	Myrick Drive	10	100%	Minor Arterial	Completed 6/17	Revisit process
Jester Boulevard	Anagua Drive	Anagua Drive	10	100%	Collector	Completed 6/17	Revisit process
Cedar Crest Drive	Clearock Drive	Spicewood Parkway	6	100%	Collector	TB Scheduled	Expand Pub. Input
Loyola Lane	Greensboro Drive	Bridgewater Cove	1	100%	Minor Arterial	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
St. Edwards Drive	Carnarvon	Interstate Highway 35	9	68%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
West Mary Street	South 5th Street	South 7th Street	9	94%	Minor Arterial	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
North Creek Drive	Rundberg Lane	Rock Hollow Lane	4	96%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Beauford Drive	Jester Blvd.	Tree Fern Lane	10	100%	Neighborhood Street	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Cedro Trail	Backtrail Drive	Lodge View	10	100%	Neighborhood Street	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Mesa Drive	First View Drive	Cross Valley Run	10	100%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Riddle Road	Howellwood Way	Allred Drive	5	91%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Yaupon Drive	Fitonia Drive	Spicewood Springs Road	10	100%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Hart Lane	Greystone Drive	Executive Center Drive	10	96%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Southpark Meadows Drive	South 1st Street	West Slaughter Lane	5	96%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Denson Drive	North Lamar Boulevard	Airport Boulevard	4	88%	Minor Arterial	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Old Manchaca Road	Riddle Road	Drew Lane	5	79%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Friedrich Lane	Ponciana Drive	Teri Road	2	88%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Fairfield Drive	Lamar Boulevard	Highway 183	4	89%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input
Old Manchaca Road	Manchaca Road	Marshitahs Way	5	100%	Collector	Funded	Expand Pub. Input

Legacy LATM Construction Projects to be Constructed							
FUNDING	STREET	FROM	TO	DISTRICT	ADT (VPD)	STATUS	ACTION
	Battle Bend Dr.	Suburban Dr	Presidio Road	3	100%	Neighborhood Street	Constr. Cost being developed Schedule for install
	Sendero Hills Parkway	FM 969	Toscana Ave	1	93%	Collector	Constr. Cost being developed Schedule for install
	Felix Avenue	Montopolis Dr	Community Drive	3	100%	Neighborhood Street	Constr. Cost being developed Schedule for install
	Rockwood Lane	Primrose Lane	Steck Ave	7	98%	Collector	Constr. Cost being developed Schedule for install
	Perry Lane	Fairview Drive	Fairview Dr	10	100%	Collector	Constr. Cost being developed Schedule for install
	Lakewood Drive	RM 2222	Bull Creek Bridge	10	100%	Collector	Constr. Cost being developed Schedule for install
	Viewpoint Drive	Nickols Crossing	Apple Orchard Lane	2	100%	Collector	Constr. Cost being developed Schedule for install