

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Staff Presentation Worksheet

Presentation Date: February 2, 2010 Time: 10:00 AM Length: 30 minutes
Presentation Title: Traffic Calming on Collector and Arterial Roadways
Department: Department of Transportation and Development
Presenters: Rick Nys, Cam Gilmour

POLICY QUESTION

Should Clackamas County's Local Streets Traffic Calming and Skinny Streets Program be extended to collector roadways from local and connector roadways?

ISSUE & BACKGROUND

Clackamas County's Local Streets Traffic Calming and Skinny Streets Program traffic calming program began in 1997 and has operated under the condition of being applicable only on local and connector roads since its inception.

Typically, traffic calming requests are based upon speeding complaints or other neighborhood livability issues on local and connector streets. The most common result is the installation of speed humps due to their cost and benefit. Traffic calming is paid for by the residents that benefit from the devices through the formation of a Local Improvement District or through the County's Traffic Calming Construction Permit.

Clackamas County has received several recent requests to allow the installation of traffic calming devices on collector roadways. Recognizing the benefit of flexibly applying several of the devices employed in our traffic calming program on collector and arterial roadways either on resident generated traffic calming projects or County capital projects, County Engineering supports the expansion of our program on a limited basis.

The County's Comprehensive Plan states that traffic calming on local and connector roadways "may be appropriate," but does not authorize traffic calming devices on collector or arterial roadways.

From an engineering perspective, there are many instances where some traffic calming devices may or may not be appropriate on collector and arterial roadways. For example, speed humps are likely not appropriate on collector and arterial roadways, but other devices, such as curb extensions and raised crosswalks or speed tables may be appropriate.

This proposed update to the program will investigate these issues.

The expansion of the program would include public involvement and editing of program parameters. This effort is anticipated to require an effort of approximately 100 hours of staff time over the next year. This effort will also involve a technical and procedural update of the traffic calming program manual entitled "Clackamas County Traffic Calming and Skinny Streets Program." Public involvement will include coordination with public service providers and outreach to the Citizen Planning Organizations. Emergency service providers will likely take a keen interest in this revision, as many traffic calming devices slow emergency service vehicles, sometimes significantly.

At the conclusion of this effort, the Comprehensive Plan would be updated as necessary to allow appropriate traffic calming devices on collector and arterial roadways.

As an alternative, the County will be undergoing a periodic update to the Transportation System Plan (TSP) of the Comprehensive Plan shortly. That effort is expected to be completed in 2011. As part of that effort, staff could investigate the reclassification of some roadways to discern if they may qualify as a connector or local roadway, and thus, qualify for our existing traffic calming program.

As an example of a roadway that would benefit, the residents of Aldercrest Road between Rusk Road and Oatfield Road have been in contact with the County for some time regarding the need for traffic livability improvements. Staff recognizes that this roadway may very well serve as a connector, rather than a collector roadway and reclassification would benefit those residents with the inclusion of their roadway in the traffic calming program.

QUESTION(S) PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Should staff investigate and update Clackamas County's Local Streets Traffic Calming and Skinny Streets Program for collector roadways and arterial roadways from local and connector roadways?

Possible positive outcomes include the ability of the County to flexibly apply, as appropriate, the use of traffic calming devices on collector and arterial roadways both through their inclusion in the traffic calming program and update to the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, many residents would now have the option of pursuing traffic calming on their street when previously they had few options to improve neighborhood livability.

Possible negative outcomes include increased travel times for emergency service providers, possible increase in emissions and travel times for the general public, and possible complaints from public not fond of traffic calming devices, in general.

2. Should staff address reclassification of roadways during the periodic TSP update process for possible reclassification of some roadways to local and connector roadways?

A possible positive outcome includes the continuation of the County's current traffic calming process, thereby saving County staff time and funds.

A possible negative outcome includes an unknown result from the periodic TSP update regarding resulting roadway reclassifications, which may frustrate those hoping for reclassification to allow traffic calming. Additionally, if it is desired that traffic calming be allowed on collectors and arterials, a separate process as described above would still need to be undertaken.

OPTIONS AVAILABLE

1. Direct staff to investigate and update Clackamas County's Local Streets Traffic Calming and Skinny Streets Program for collector roadways and arterial roadways from local and connector roadways.
2. Direct staff to address reclassification of roadways during the periodic TSP update process for possible reclassification of some roadways to local and connector roadways

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Staff recommends the Board direct staff to investigate updating Clackamas County's Local Streets Traffic Calming and Skinny Streets Program for collector roadways and arterial roadways. The inclusion of collectors and arterials into the County's traffic calming program and the Comprehensive Plan affords the County the desired flexibility to use traffic calming devices as appropriate on both resident requested projects as well as capital improvement projects.

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval

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