

TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

**DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT**

DATE: AUGUST 1, 2005

CMR: 344:05

**SUBJECT: SECOND DOWNTOWN NORTH TRIAL TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN
REVISED**

Please note that this is an informational report and no Council action is required.

BACKGROUND

On March 29, 2004, Council directed staff to remove most elements of the First Trial Plan for Downtown North traffic calming that was installed in June 2003, including six of the seven street closures. Council directed staff to implement a Second Trial Plan (Attachment A) including two traffic circles on Everett (at Emerson and at Webster), one traffic circle at Hawthorne (at Cowper), a speed table on Hawthorne (near High), and a speed table on Palo Alto Avenue (between Alma and Emerson). Council also directed staff to implement right turn restrictions between 7 AM to 10 AM from Middlefield onto Hawthorne and Everett and left turn restrictions between both 7 AM to 10 AM and 3 PM to 6 PM from Alma onto Hawthorne and Everett. In addition, Council asked staff to provide informational reports on various aspects of the new plan, as discussed below. The first informational report was provided to Council on August 9, 2004 (CMR:391:04).

DISCUSSION

The Council-adopted Second Trial Plan described above is illustrated in Attachment A. The second trial plan was implemented in two phases. The first phase was completed with installation in April 2004 of turn restriction signs along Alma and Middlefield. The second phase was completed in September 2004 with installation of the three traffic circles, two speed tables, and associated striping and signage. An informal stakeholder input group was convened by the Transportation Division to advise in evaluation of the second trial plan. Roundtable members, who comprise both proponents and opponents of the first Downtown North traffic calming (closures) Trial plan, have met four times since being convened by the Transportation Division. While no voting has taken place during the meetings and consensus was not always reached, discussions have been respectful of differing points of view.

The timeline for the evaluation and review of the second traffic calming trial plan is as follows:

- Trial preliminary evaluation was completed by mid-June 2005
- Preliminary evaluation findings were reviewed by the Downtown North Second Traffic Calming Trial Plan "Roundtable" on June 23, 2005

- A public meeting on preliminary evaluation findings is scheduled for July 21, 2005
- An postcard advisory survey on the Downtown North Second Traffic Calming Trial will be mailed out to residents of Downtown North and environs after the public meeting
- The Planning and Transportation Commission will conduct a public hearing on staff findings and recommendations on Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) public hearing *on September 28, 2005*
- City Council meeting and decision regarding second Downtown North Traffic Calming Trial will take place at a date to be determined after the Planning and Transportation Commission public hearing

Advisory Survey of Residents

The advisory survey of resident opinion on the Second Downtown North Traffic Calming Trial Plan will ask respondents to check “yes” or “no” to the following question: “Should the Second Downtown North Traffic Calming Trial Plan be made permanent.” The advisory survey area will include residences and business addresses on all Downtown North streets bounded by Middlefield, Lytton, Alma, and the San Francisquito Creek; residences and business addresses with at least one side on Middlefield, Lytton, or Alma; and residences and business addresses in the Lytton Neighborhood east of Middlefield, south of the San Francisquito Creek, west of Chaucer, and north of Middlefield; and residences and businesses on both sides of University Avenue from Middlefield to Chaucer. The survey will be in the form of a postcard sent to addresses in the above areas with a pre-printed Transportation Division return address. The Transportation Division has conducted an array of such resident advisory surveys in recent years, including those pertaining to the College Terrace traffic calming plan, the Channing traffic calming plan, the Louis Road traffic calming plan and many others.

RESOURCE IMPACT

There is \$60,000 in the Transportation Division FY 2004/05 operating budget for this project, which may be used if necessary for modification, augmentation, or removal of traffic calming trial elements. One potential modification is filling in the existing traffic circles with decomposed granite similar to the fill used in the now-removed street closures at an estimated cost of \$12,000. The estimated cost for Public Works Operations to maintain the traffic calming measures in the Second Trial Plan, calculated at 2% of project costs annually for fifty years, is approximately \$1,440. This extra maintenance requirement is not funded.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This traffic calming plan is consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies and programs relating to neighborhood streets, including the following:

Policy T-32: “Design and maintain the City street network to provide a variety of alternate routes, so that the traffic loads on any one street are minimized.”

Policy T-33: “Keep all neighborhood streets open unless there is a demonstrated safety or overwhelming through traffic problem and there are no acceptable alternatives, or unless a closure would increase the use of alternative transportation modes.”

Policy T-34: Implement traffic calming measures to slow traffic on local and collector residential streets and prioritize these measures over congestion management. Include traffic circles and other traffic calming devices among these measures.”

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A mitigated negative declaration was approved by the Council for the Modified Mixed Measures Plan, which included plans with similar or less impact, such as the Second Trial Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Downtown North Second Traffic Calming Trial Map

PREPARED BY:

JOSEPH KOTT
Chief Transportation Official

DEPARTMENT HEAD:

STEVE EMLSIE
Director of Planning Community Environment

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL:

EMILY HARRISON
Assistant City Manager

CC: Downtown North Roundtable Members
Palo Alto Bicycle Advisory Committee Members
City of Menlo Park Transportation Division