



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of March 15, 2008**

DATE: February 25, 2008

SUBJECT: Approval of Neighborhood Traffic Calming Projects

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Approve traffic-calming projects as recommended by the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee (NTCC) for the following streets:

- a. North Kensington Street from Lee Highway to 22nd Street North
- b. 15th Street North from North Glebe Road to North Utah Street
- c. North Vacation Lane from Lorcom Lane/North Monroe Street to North Pollard Street

ISSUES: This is a request for funding of three NTC projects, no issues have been identified.

SUMMARY: The Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee (NTCC) has recommended that the County Board approve the next set of traffic-calming projects at an estimated cost of \$241,600. The recommendations of the NTCC are shown in Attachment 1. All projects recommended to move forward for funding have met the adopted criteria for appropriateness and public support.

BACKGROUND: The Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee (NTCC) is charged with making recommendations to the County Board on traffic-calming projects which meet adopted criteria, have gone through a community plan-development process and received substantial community support for implementation. In September 2007, the NTCC and staff identified the next set of neighborhood streets with the most severe traffic problems and began working with residents on solutions to the problems identified.

The NTC Program, adopted by the County Board in March 2000, is a problem-severity-based program for which resources are directed to the neighborhood streets which have the most severe problems in terms of speed, volume and other factors such as reported accidents, and are in close proximity to public and private facilities such as parks, schools and community centers. A speeding problem is defined as when the recorded 85th-percentile speed is five miles per hour (mph) or greater than the posted speed limit. For a street with a posted speed limit of 25 mph, a speeding problem is considered to exist when the 85th-percentile speed is 30 mph, or greater.

County Manager: _____

Staff: Ron C. Hicks, Department of Environmental Services

When requests for traffic-calming assistance are received by staff, traffic data are collected and evaluated, and staff assigns a priority-ranking score to the streets with confirmed problems. Twice a year, the NTCC reviews the list of traffic-calming requests, selects several streets with the highest priority-ranking scores and works with the residents to develop solutions to the identified problems. Based upon the program criteria, the three proposed projects were rated the highest-priority streets for traffic calming. There are currently 78 streets which qualify for traffic calming and are awaiting assistance.

During the past year, four previously-approved NTC Projects have either been completed or are near completion. Initial evaluations of the NTC projects have found them to have a substantial impact on travel speeds, resulting in 85th percentile reductions of five miles per hour, and in some cases, much higher.

DISCUSSION: The NTCC and staff have concluded work on the next set of traffic-calming projects under the NTC Program procedures adopted by the County Board in March 2000, and are recommending to the County Board that these projects move forward for implementation. The most recent NTCC funding session was held on February 19, 2008 and the recommendations of the committee are shown in Attachment 1 and figure 1.

In September 2007, three project streets were selected by the NTCC based upon the problem-severity ranking that had been developed to assess the severity of neighborhood traffic problems. NTCC members and a staff person were assigned to work with residents of each street to clarify the problems, consider possible solutions and achieve consensus within the affected area on solutions to the problems. This has been accomplished for each of the three project streets. The location of each project is shown on Figure 1. A description of each project follows:

a. North Kensington Street from Lee Highway to 22nd Street North:

Residents living on and near North Kensington Street in the Leeway Overlee Civic Association have identified speeding and pedestrian safety as traffic concerns and requested traffic calming assistance from County staff. The traffic volume on North Kensington Street is 686 vehicles per day with an 85th percentile speed of 31 mph. The average speed was measured at 26.22 mph. The number of vehicles speeding on North Kensington Street was 410 or 60%.

Rivendell School is located at Lee Highway and North Kensington Street with no bus service to the school. The NTCC representatives and staff met with North Kensington Street residents and a representative from Rivendell School and formed a working group to develop solutions to address the problems see Figure 2. The working group finalized plans and circulated petitions to the affected area. Eighty percent (80%) of the households in the affected area support the traffic calming plan. The Leeway Overlee Civic Association and Rivendell School also sent letters in support of the proposed North Kensington Street traffic calming plan see Attachments 2A and 2B.

The North Kensington Street traffic calming plan consists of the following components:

- Terra cotta painted crosswalk at North Kensington Street and Lee Highway
- Traffic Circle at North Kensington Street and 24th Street North

- Terra-cotta painted crosswalks at North Kensington Street and 24th Street North
- Nubs at North Kensington Street and 23rd Street North
- Nubs at North Kensington Street and 22nd Street North
- Terra cotta painted crosswalks at North Kensington Street and 22nd Street North

Staff has estimated the cost to construct this project to be \$75,000. The project will be scheduled for construction late this summer or early Fall 2008.

b. 15th Street North from North Glebe Road to North Utah Street:

Residents living on and near 15th Street North in the Waverly Hills neighborhood and civic association have identified speeding and pedestrian safety as traffic concerns and requested traffic-calming assistance from County staff. The traffic data collected indicated that there is a daily volume of 2,280 cars with an 85th-percentile speed of 30.3 mph. The street is not an emergency-response route or a Metrobus route. However, 15th Street North is identified as an Arlington County bike route.

The 15th Street North Working Group was composed of residents, two NTCC members and staff which met over a period of several months to develop an appropriate traffic-calming plan. An “open house” was made available to the community. The affected area is comprised of single-family homes. The result of the petition process is that 42 out of the 63 households (67 percent) supported the plan (See Attachment 3). After much discussion and review of other traffic-calming measures, staff and residents considered the following measures to be best suited to address the problems identified for 15th Street North as shown on Figure 3.

- Nub @ North Wakefield Street At 15th Street North, eastside corner with 15 foot radius
- Terra cotta painted crosswalks at all four legs
- Terra cotta painted crosswalk @ North Vernon Street(on North Vernon Street)
- Terra cotta painted crosswalk @ North Vermont Street(on North Vermont Street)
- Move the no parking sign back 25 feet from 15th Street intersection
(East side) (No parking here to corner)
- Textured gateway treatment/painted to the existing 10 foot walkway at North 15th Street and North Utah Street.
- Painted parking line south side of 15th Street North from Glebe Road to North Wakefield Street
- Painted parking line north side of 15th Street North from North Wakefield Street to North Vermont Street
- Painted parking line both sides of 15th Street North from North Vermont to North Utah Street

Staff has estimated the cost of this project to be \$56,100. Should this project be approved, all elements of the street plan can be constructed this summer.

c. Vacation Lane from Lorcom Lane/North Monroe Street to North Pollard Street:

Residents living on Vacation Lane located in the Cherrydale Citizens Association area, identified pedestrian safety and speeding as major traffic concerns and requested traffic calming assistance from County staff.

The traffic data collected indicated that there are approximately 771 vehicles per day with an 85th-percentile speed of 32 mph using the street. The street is an emergency-response route. Vacation Lane is an official bike route and intersects Lorcom Lane where bike lanes have been installed.

In February 2005, the NTCC selected Vacation Lane to be eligible for the Expedited Speed Hump/Cushion part of the program. An initial meeting was held to discuss the options, and it was explained that speed humps/cushions were the only measure of the program being offered at this time. Residents invited to an Open House were focused on improving pedestrian safety, speeds and vehicular movements at the intersection of Vacation Lane/North Monroe Street at Lorcom Lane. The outcome was that the residents did not support the speed cushions “only” option and opted to go back on the traffic calming severity ranking list, and wait until Vacation Lane was chosen again and offered the full array of measures offered by the NTC Program. Since this time, the Expedited Speed Hump option has been omitted from the NTC program.

In July 2007, the NTCC again selected Vacation Lane this time offering the full program. A meeting was held with residents of Vacation Lane to create goals and objectives for the plan. It became apparent that the redesign of the intersection was a top priority and residents did not want speed cushions. Since this would also affect residents on North Monroe Street located within Maywood Civic Association, all future meetings involved both Vacation Lane and North Monroe Street residents. Several meetings were held over the following months. After much discussion and review of other traffic calming measures such as other redesign options, staff and residents determined the following measures were best suited to address the problems identified (See Figure 4).

Currently Vacation Lane/North Monroe Street at Lorcom Lane intersection is 104 feet wide with two streets intersecting with Lorcom Lane. The plan redesigns the intersection (See Figure 4) to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety as well as better assign vehicular right-of-way. The plan narrows the intersection to 30 feet and creates one intersection (Vacation Lane and Lorcom Lane). This plan also creates a safer school bus stop at the corner of Vacation Lane and North Monroe Street and provides a bus pad for the ART bus; the plan maintains the bike lanes on Lorcom Lane and creates new landscaped areas. This plan also includes two new crosswalks and relocates an existing laddered crosswalk crossing Lorcom Lane.

The result of the petition process is that 34 out of the 36 households (94 percent) supported the plan (See Attachment 4). The project has also received support from the Cherrydale Citizens Association.

The plan consists of the following components:

- Intersection redesign
- Parking edgeline for 100’ at the west end (North Pollard Street) of the project

Staff estimates the cost to construct this project to be \$110,000. The project can be constructed in late 2008.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funding in the amount of \$241,600 is available for these projects in the Neighborhood Traffic Calming (NTC) Program PAYGO budget. (Fund 313 Cost Center 43512 Project NTC)