CITY OF BOULDER
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
AGENDA ITEM

MEETING DATE: October 10, 2016

AGENDA TITLE: Public hearing and consideration of a recommendation regarding Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Program (NTMP) options for City Council consideration as part of the 2017 Budget.

PRESENTERS: Michael Gardner-Sweeney, Director of Public Works for Transportation
Bill Cowern, Transportation Operations Engineer

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Boulder seeks to mitigate speeding traffic on residential streets through the Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Program (NTMP). This program was created in the early 1990's and used a combination of education, enforcement and engineering treatments to mitigate speeding traffic. During the economic downturn of the early 2000's, funding for the program management and engineering treatments in the NTMP were eliminated from the city budget.

Each year the City Council approves a budget for the upcoming year. This year, the City Council asked staff for a recommendation concerning potential 2017 funding for engineering treatments on residential streets. City staff did not recommend reallocating funding to the NTMP in 2017, as this funding would need to come from higher priorities as defined in the City's Transportation Master Plan. This recommendation was discussed during the May 9, 2016 and June 13, 2016 TAB meetings as part of the 2017 – 2022 Transportation Capital Improvements Program (CIP) agenda items. At their June 13, 2016 meeting, the TAB made the recommendation to City Council not to reallocate funds in the 2017 budget to restore previously eliminated engineering treatment NTMP funding.

At the September 13, 2016 City Council budget study session, City Council was provided with the city staff and the TAB recommendations. The City Council asked for staff to return to them at the first reading of the 2017 budget at their October 4, 2016 council meeting with options for restoring the engineering treatments to the NTMP. Staff has developed several potential options, outlined in this memorandum and is requesting TAB's recommendation for City Council consideration at the Second Reading of the 2017 Budget at their October 18, 2016 meeting.

II. BACKGROUND

Traffic calming is a traffic management approach that uses a full range of methods to slow motor vehicles but not necessarily ban them, as they move through residential neighborhoods. Traffic calming is used in communities across the world.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's the City of Boulder's approach to traffic calming was to allow residents to pay for the construction of speed humps on their neighborhood streets. Speed humps were installed on streets like Ash Avenue and Brooklawn Drive using this approach. Projects which were jointly funded by the City and the surrounding neighborhood were also constructed and these included traffic calming on Norwood Avenue and on west Arapahoe Avenue.

In 1994, the City of Boulder began development of a Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Program (NTMP) in response to increasing resident demand for action concerning speeding and other traffic problems on residential streets. A working group made up of residents, city staff, bicyclists, pedestrians and business interests was formed to educate themselves about the many ways to reduce the negative impacts of traffic in neighborhoods and to make recommendations to the community and City Council on the guidelines for the NTMP.

As the NTMP was developed and city staff began to work with neighborhoods with the most severe speeding problems, issues arose including impacts of traffic calming devices on emergency response and concerns from residents that did not want traffic calming on their streets. Additional process, experimentation and evaluation occurred over the next several years. During this time traffic mitigation was constructed on numerous streets including west Arapahoe, north 9th Street and several streets in the Whittier and Balsam/Edgewood neighborhoods. The new guidelines adopted a three stage approach which focused on education first, enforcement second and then engineering treatments if those education and enforcement were unsuccessful at reducing traffic speeds. A flow chart detailing the procedures for implementing NTMP projects is provided as **Attachent A**. The Transportation Advisory Board recommended and the City Council adopted these new program guidelines in 2000.

Implementation of engineering treatements had become very contentious by this time and prior to the Council's adoption of the new NTMP guidelines a citizen's group called "Seconds Count" advanced a ballot initiative which would have banned construction of new traffic calming devices and would require the city to remove all existing traffic calming devices. The premise of this initiative was that the impacts to emergency response from these types of treatments were more harmful to the community than any benefit to be received by reduced speeds on residential streets. The initiative was on the 2000 ballot but was not supported by the voters.

In the years that followed the NTMP guideline adoption and "Seconds Count" ballot initiative, the City of Boulder went through difficult financial times with sales tax revenues which fund much of the Transportation Division's programs decreased significantly. In 2003, the City cut approximately $3.6 M of expense from the Transportation Fund and this included all funding associated with the administration, evaluation and construction of engineering treatments associated with the NTMP. The components of the NTMP that remain are education

(predominantly the deployment of portable speed trailers) and enforcement (photo enforcement as well as traditional officer-based enforcement).

Requests for additional assistance with speeding issues remain in many neighborhoods and in response to this city staff developed a proposal to modify the NTMP guidelines and allow lower cost engineering treatments (like speed humps) to be constructed on streets that the Fire Department did not consider "Critical Emergency Response Routes". 100% of the funding to construct these treatments would come from the residents requesting the mitigation. This proposal was reviewed by the TAB at their December 11, 2006 meeting and they recommended to not modify the NTMP guidelines at that time. TAB's primary concern with the proposal was social equity issues associated with self-funding traffic mitigation.

Traffic calming devices have been installed since 2003 as components of capital projects in the City of Boulder. Several speed humps were installed on Toedtli Drive in south Boulder as part of a Federal Hazard Elimination Program project to reduce crashes on S. Broadway. The speed humps were used to mitigate traffic which was diverted onto Toedtli Drive from the project. Permanent speed displays were also installed on several roadways where traffic was diverted as a result of this project. Permanent speed displays have been installed on several arterial streets such as Table Mesa Drive and north Broadway, as part of capital projects. A median diverter and curb extensions are being constructed on west Baseline in front of the Chautauqua Park as part of the 2A Bond project. These have been the only traffic calming devices installed in the City since the funding for engineering treatments in the NTMP was eliminated in 2003.

III. ANALYSIS

The City Council is reviewing the budget for 2017 and has asked city staff to make a recommendation on the appropriateness of reallocating funding for engineering treatments in the NTMP. City staff and the TAB have both recommended that funding not be reallocated to the NTMP since that funding would come from higher prioritiy areas as articulated in the City's Transportation Master Plan. These recommendations were provided to City Council at the September 13, 2016 City Council study session. At that time City Council asked staff to return with options.

City staff has developed the following four options for City Council's consideration:

<u>No Change</u>: No increase in funding for the NTMP:
In this option, no funding is reallocated to the NTMP for engineering treatments. Tools used to mitigate speeding traffic on residential streets continue to be enforcement and educational tools including portable speed trailers. This option has the following considerations:

- Would not reallocate funding from other priorities;
- Would not provide the opportunity for any engineering treatments to be constructed through the NTMP;
- Would not provide the engineering treatment tool to address the resident concern about speeding traffic currently being heard by policy makers.
- Would not resurrect historic NTMP issues associated with engineering treatments such as emergency response impacts and determining neighborhood support for mitigation.

Option 1: Increased Education and Enforcement:
When funding for engineering treatments and program administration in the NTMP was eliminated in 2003, the associated supporting staff position was also eliminated. In this option this position would be reinstated ½ time (0.5 FTE) to enhance access to education and enforcement elements. The position would help neighborhoods with data collection, education (enhanced speed kit, additional radar sped trailers) and would work with the Police to focus targeted enforcement (photo and traditional) on program streets. This option has the following considerations:

- Would result in a reallocation of approximately $75,000 per year from other priorities;
- Would provide for a better coordinated education and enforcement effort on residential streets;
- Would not provide the opportunity for engineering treatments to be constructed through the NTMP;
- Would not resurrect historic NTMP issues associated with engineering treatments such as emergency response impacts and determining neighborhood support for mitigation.

Option 2: Restore engineering treatment funding using current NTMP guidelines:
In this option, funding would be restored to the program management and development/implementation of engineering treatments associated with the NTMP. This funding would be allocated and mitigation would be implemented using the current NTMP guidelines recommended by TAB and adopted by City Council in 2000. In this option a full-time (1.0 FTE) position would be hired to administer the program. This option has the following considerations:

- Would result in a reallocation of approximately $250,000 per year from other priorities;
- Would provide for relatively fast implementation of engineering treatments on the highest priority streets which meet the NTMP criteria for engineering treatment installation;
- Would not provide the opportunity for any engineering treatments to be constructed on streets which did not meet the NTMP threshold for engineering treatment installation (an 85th Percentile speed of greater than 5 mph over the speed limit). Many residential streets would not meet this criteria and would not be eligible for engineering treatments. Based on speed data recently obtained, this would include streets such as Grape Avenue and Palo Parkway which have recently been active in seeking such treatments;
- Would address concerns about speeding traffic currently being heard by policy makers on the highest priority streets which meet the NTMP criteria.
- Would resurrect historic NTMP issues associatd with engineering treatments such as emergency response impacts and determining neighborhood support for mitigation.

Option 3: Develop an updated NTMP:
Initiate a public engagement process to develop new NTMP guidelines which would include consideration of the appropriate use of engineering treatments. Staff would work with the TAB to engage the public and develop a program which is responsive to the current community. This option would require adding one fixed term full-time position (1 FTE) to coordinate the program development. It is anticipated that the majority of 2017 would be the development of the new program and the beginning of public engagement with high priority neighborhoods. In this option, engineering treatments would be constructed no sooner than 2018. Required associated

support resources would be determined through the program development process and incorporated into the 2018 budget. This option would result in a slower response to existing concerns in the community about speeding on neighborhood streets. It would allow the development of a program which considered issues identified in the prior program such as an appropriate speeding threshold for mitigation; an appropriate balance between speed reduction on neighborhood streets and emergency response impacts on critical emergency response routes; the overall bureaucracy and timeliness of program implementation; and the assessment of neighborhood support for specific mitigation. Cost – One-time - $100,000 personnel expense (PE)(1.0 FTE – fixed term), Ongoing -- $ to be determined (To be determined -- TBD).

Potential Budget Impacts/Tradeoffs:
The potential impacts/tradeoffs of restoring funding for engineering treatments would vary depending on the selected option. Examples of specific projects that would not have been built in 2016 if engineering treatments were funded at the $250,000 level are provided below. Based on the funding priorities articulated in the Transportation Master Plan lower priority project would be reduced.

- 10 Blocks of Street Overlay (Priority 1)
- Three (3) Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge Reconstructed/Decking replaced (Priority 1)
- Frontier Avenue Bridge reconstruction (Priority 1)
- Yarmouth Avenue (16th to 19th Street) sidewalk missing link (Priority 2)
- Boulder Creek/South Boulder Creek Confluence/Gunbarrel multi-use path (Priority 2)

Note: Priority 1 – safety/operation/maintenance, Priority 2 – complete streets/multimodal enhancement

Staff recommends <u>No Change</u>: No increase in funding for NTMP, as it is the only option which would not result in funding being reallocated from higher priority transportation funding needs.

V. PUBLIC PROCESS

Public process to date has included the TAB meetings on May 9, 2016 and June 13, 2016 and the City Council Study Session on September 13, 2016 associated with the 2017 budget. No additional public process concerning this issue has occurred.

VI. BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

The Board is asked to provide a recommendation to City Council concerning which option should be incorporated into the 2017 Budget.

VII. NEXT STEPS

The second reading of the 2017 Budget is scheduled for the October 18, 2016 City Council meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

A. NTMP process flowchart

Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Program Process

You have a neighborhood traffic concern.

The NTMP sends you a "Neighbor to Neighbor Education Kit."

Education/Petition/Data Collection Phase
- Circulate petition for participation in the NTMP, due in April each year.
- Concurrent application of educational tools (yard signs, speed monitoring trailers, neighborhood speed watch, neighborhood speed pledge).
- Speed data collected.
(timeframe - 3 months)

Decision Point
"Problem -- No Problem"
85th percentile speed > 5 mph over speed limit
Yes - transition to Education/Enforcement phase.
No - continue educational efforts.

NO

85th percentile speed <= 5 mph over speed limit
- Continue education efforts for another 3 months.
- Remonitor traffic speeds.

Decision Point
"Revisit Problem -- No Problem"
85th percentile speed > 5 mph over speed limit
Yes - initiate education and enforcement phase.
No - continue educational efforts.

YES

NO

85th percentile speed <= 5 mph over speed limit
- Continue education efforts.

YES

Education/Enforcement Phase
- Continued application of educational tools.
-Application of enforcement tools (photo radar and traditional officer speed-enforcement).
- Additional speed data collected.
(timeframe - 6 months)

Decision Point
"Eligibility for engineering treatments"
85th percentile speed > 5 mph over speed limit
Yes - continue education and enforcement and include project in engineering ranking phase.
No - continue educational and enforcement efforts.

NO

85th percentile speed <= 5 mph over speed limit
- Continue education and enforcement efforts.
- Remonitor traffic speeds as part of next annual process.

YES

Engineering Treatment Ranking Phase
- Neighborhood Needs Assessment Priority Checklist used to rank eligible projects.
The two top priority projects - begin development of engineering treatment proposal.
All other projects - continue educational and enforcement efforts.

All other projects continue education and enforcement efforts.
Projects reranked annually.

All Other Projects.

Two Top Priority Projects (or more as staff and resources allow)

Non-CERR Streets within 6-minute Response Time Zone
Process Summary
- *CEAP typically will not be required.*
- *Neighborhood public involvement process leading to project proposal.*
- *Both delay-inducing and nondelay-inducing devices available.*
- *Neighborhood ballot (residents and property owners) on proposal is final decision.*
(timeframe - 6 months)

CERR Streets and Non-CERR Streets outside 6-minute Response Time Zone
Process Summary
- *Project streets evaluated on a case-by-case basis.*
- *TAB provides recommendation to City Council on the use of delay-inducing devices.*
- *CEAP may be required.*
- *Neighborhood public involvement process leading to project proposal.*
- *Neighborhood ballot (residents and property owners) determine whether CEAP proceeds to City Council*
(timeframe - 6 months)

Final Decision Point
"Project Implementation"
-Neighborhood ballot (residents and property owners)*
>=60% support - install improvements.
<60% support - don't.

NO

- Project not implemented.
- Neighborhood can reapply to the NTMP in 3 Years.
- continue education and enforcement efforts.

YES

Project Implemented.
(timeframe - 3 months)

Decision Point
"Are Delay-inducing Devices Available?"
- TAB recommendation to City Council.
No - initiate non-delay design process.
Yes - initiate full design process.

NO

YES

Non-delay Inducing Design Process
Process Summary
- Neighborhood public involvement process leading to project proposal.
- Neighborhood ballot (residents and homeowners) on proposal is decision-making process.

Delay-inducing Design Process
Process Summary
- Neighborhood public involvement process leading to project proposal.
-Both delay-inducing & nondelay-inducing devices available.
- CEAP required for delay-inducing devices.
- Neighborhood ballot (residents and property owners) on proposal determines whether proposal and associated CEAP proceeds.

Neighborhood Ballot Area -
* Properties on or adjacent to the primary street proposed for an engineering treatment within 400 feet of either side of the proposed device and within 1 block on the side street for intersection treatments (ex. traffic circles). For a cul-de-sac, the neighborhood ballot area expands to include all properties from the treatment to the end of the cul-de-sac.
Neighborhood Ballot Voting Structure -
* One vote per dwelling unit and one vote per property owner.

Decision Point
"Continue Project Consideration?"
Neighborhood ballot (residents and property owners)
>=60% support - continue project consideration.*
<60% support - don't.

NO

- Project not implemented.
- Neighborhood can reapply to the NTMP in 3 Years.
- continue education and enforcement efforts.

YES

Final Decision Point
"Final Project Consideration"
TAB/City Council Consideration of Project CEAP
- With nondelay designs, step is eliminated.

NO

YES

Project Implemented.
(timeframe - 3 months)

Project Evaluation.
(After 1 year.)

Project Reassessment.
(After 3 years.)
>=60% support to remove - Device is removed.