

2025-0001



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COSA - CITY CLERK
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COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST

TO: Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk
FROM: Councilmember Teri Castillo, District 5
COPIES: Erik Walsh, City Manager; Andy Segovia, City Attorney
SUBJECT: Holistic Traffic Calming City Council Request
DATE: Thursday January 16, 2025

Issue for Proposed Consideration

After coordinating this Council Consideration Request (CCR) with the City Manager, I respectfully request for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

Requesting consideration of the Holistic Traffic Calming CCR

Brief Background

Since 2010, pedestrian deaths have increased over 75% across the United States. Traffic related injuries and fatalities reached a 40-year high in 2022, according to the Governors Highway Safety Administration. However, San Antonio *may* be on a different trajectory. According to the 2024 Dangerous by Design report, San Antonio has dropped out of the 20 most dangerous metro areas for pedestrians, but only because other municipalities have become *more* dangerous. Our plateau is commendable. Public Works, Transportation, and Planning all deserve praise for the recent work to lower pedestrian conflicts on our roads. However, many operating procedures still holdover from the previous Transportation and Capital Improvements department that create silos where there should be collaboration when issues of traffic calming are needed. Further, one department should not be responsible for bearing the brunt of solving these problems.

During my tenure in council, I regularly hear from District 5 constituents that we need more traffic calming measures to reduce speeding and protect lives. My staff works with an individual resident or a group of neighbors to canvass a certain length of street, collect signatures, and then submit the request. When this process is followed as well as possible, my constituents receive notice that their street has qualified for traffic calming - usually in the form of speed humps. However, this process takes time, presumes science is leading an investigation, and does not always solve the *feeling* of dangerous drivers on the street.

A more holistic, robust way to measure and analyze traffic calming requests could more easily address resident concerns, restore faith in local government, and reduce long term infrastructure costs while simultaneously improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike. First, upon a traffic study request the Public Works, Transportation, and Planning departments should work in unison to evaluate the roadway, observe driver-



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pedestrian behaviors, and speak with neighbors about solutions that would help to alleviate the many factors causing the concern of the dangerous street. In addition, through Open GIS, these departments can create a public facing interactive webpage that shares the traffic studies, proposed and implemented solutions for the roadway, visuals of Vision Zero solutions so that residents can provide feedback on Vision Zero's progress by Council District. (A model for this may include Jack Turek's 'San Antonio Vision Zero Crash Map Project,') Moreover, to respond to constituents' traffic concerns more quickly, the new inter-departmental work can leverage new quick-build tools as proposed within COSA's recently adopted and updated Complete Streets Policy recommendations. Daylighting a dangerous intersection with bollards may not be a long-term solution to an intersection like Probandt and Cevallos, but this new quick deployable method can give staff the opportunity to gather data on various solutions while still responding to constituent concerns.

These methods will hopefully lead to an increase in requests for traffic calming measures; however, city council offices are already inundated with requests. To an extent, these measures can pay for themselves over a considerable length of time. Streets wear over a life cycle of 15-25 years, and when vehicle use increases, our streets' lifecycles decrease much faster. With inter-departmental work, roadway reconstruction projects should simultaneously measure and propose safety interventions along the same roadway, thereby reducing costs of multiple studies, multiple groundbreaking, and prolonged rounds of construction. Further, exploring the feasibility of "in-house contracting" traffic calming construction units through Ready to Work could help to support union apprenticeships, create a more cohesive feedback loop through street construction, and ease the burden of austerity government spending. Finally, exploring the feasibility of "Slow-Zone Districts" could help to serve as an invitation for intervention for areas seeking solutions. Rather than prioritize the needs for commuting drivers through neighborhoods or along major corridors, a declaration of an area as a Slow-Zone District will prioritize the safety and needs of the residents who live, shop, attend school, and play nearby. Areas with elevated collision rates, or sensitive land uses such as schools or senior centers, should serve as a pilot for such Slow-Zone Districts. Safe Routes to Schools guidance already provide a vision for what these zones may require, but National Association of City Transportation Officials' *City Limits* document also outlines how these areas can be crafted and implemented.




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Request

I ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

- Develop a process where traffic calming requests are evaluated by Public Works, Transportation, and/or Planning Departments to identify holistic solutions for traffic calming.
- Develop process where traffic calming requests are easily traceable for applicants and utilize the City of San Antonio's Open GIS system to provide mapping information to the public.
- Addition of allowable "quick-build" solutions to Neighborhood Traffic Calming Handbook.
 - Examples Include: "Daylighting" intersections, curb extensions, bollard placements, and other changes to street geometries.
- Roadway reconstructions should take account future costs of maintenance, and where feasible, consider design changes to reduce future maintenance costs and promote complete streets.
- Develop multi-agency team to assess roadway conditions when fatalities/injuries occur.
- Public Works shall reevaluate the reasonable and safe maximum speed limit on public streets.
- Explore feasibility of "in-house contracting" units through Ready to Work participants to expedite quick build solutions.
- Explore feasibility of "Slow Zone Districts" in sensitive areas.

Submitted for Council consideration by:


Councilmember Teri Castillo



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Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures (exactly 4)

District

1. John Conner

D9

2. [Signature]

28

3. [Signature]

D8

4. [Signature]

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