

Legislation Text

File #: 19-383, **Version:** 1

Presenter/Contact
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SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider approval of the removal of the speed humps on Hunter Road.

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:

Council District: 4

The Engineering Division received a request in 2018 for the removal of the speed humps on Hunter Road near the intersections with Rapids Road due to noise concerns from vehicles driving over the speed humps. This request was taken to the Transportation and Traffic Advisory Board at their meeting on August 9, 2018, and the board tabled the removal of speed humps so that the intersection of Hunter Road and Rapids Road could be studied for an all-way stop. This study was completed in early 2019 and did not meet warrants for an all-way stop at this time. The all-way stop was brought to the Transportation and Traffic Advisory Board in February 2019 where the board voted (6-1) not to install an all-way stop at this time. City Council voted unanimously to not install the all-way stop at the meeting on March 25, 2019.

The speed humps were requested in 2017 for both Hunter Road and Gruene Road to help alert drivers that they are entering the area of Gruene where the speed limit is reduced from 30 mph to 20 mph and that there may be high volumes of pedestrians. The Gruene Road speed humps were never installed due to a lack of support from adjacent property owners in the proposed locations. The Hunter Road speed humps and signs were installed in April 2018. The required curb extensions have not yet been constructed due to the pending removal request.

Rapids Road and the portion of Hunter Road north of Rapids Road have a posted speed limit of 30 mph. The portion of Hunter Road south of the intersection with Rapids Road has a posted speed limit of 20 mph. Rapids Road is a residential street and Hunter Road is classified and functions as a minor collector. Hunter Road is classified and functions as a minor collector.

The request was evaluated based on petition, operational and geometric requirements established in the City of New Braunfels Speed Hump Policy approved in 1999. These requirements are listed in the attachment to this report.

Traffic count and speed data was collected before the speed humps were installed from Monday, May 1 to Friday, May 5, 2017. After the speed humps were installed traffic count and speed data was collected from Monday, June 4 to Friday, June 8, 2018. The attached table shows the average vehicles per day travelling at different speeds during these times.

The request for speed hump removal on Hunter Road between Rapids Road and New Braunfels Street meets the eligibility requirements of the criteria established in the Speed Hump Policy.

Traffic Calming Options

There are alternative traffic calming measures that may be used on this section of Hunter Road. One option is to install a driver feedback speed limit sign (also known as a radar sign or dynamic speed display) on Hunter Road for traffic travelling into Gruene. These signs are posted with the speed limit sign and provide real time speeds to drivers, alerting them of their speed. Studies have shown that these signs are only effective for short distances, but the installation of a sign may be useful for slowing traffic prior to entering Gruene where there is increased on-street parking and pedestrian activity.

Another option would be to install centerline and edge line pavement markings on Hunter Road. Maintenance was completed on the section of Hunter Road near Rapids Road in August 2017, which covered up the existing centerline pavement markings. Replacing the centerline on Hunter Road from Clearwater Drive to New Braunfels Street and adding edge line between Rapids Road and New Braunfels Street may provide a traffic calming effect. The section of Hunter Road between Rapids Road and New Braunfels Street varies in width from 26 to 31 feet (lane widths varying from 13 to 15.5 feet). Adding centerline and edge line pavement markings to narrow the lanes to 10- foot wide in each direction would reduce the driver's perceived width of the roadway, potentially causing slower travel speeds into Gruene.

Funding

The Speed Hump Policy states that the removal of speed humps will have no City financial participation. However, the curb extensions that are required to be installed with this set of speed humps due to the lack of curbs on Hunter Road has not yet been completed. The cost of the curb extensions is approximately \$1,000. The cost of the city removing the speed humps and associated signs is approximately \$300. The speed humps and signs are relatively new and can be reused elsewhere, if necessary. Because of the cost difference between completing the speed hump installation and removing the speed humps, staff recommends that the city fund the removal of the speed humps on Hunter Road.

Speed Hump Location

Staff followed up with the residential property owner to determine if the speed humps could be relocated to address the specific noise concerns. Speed humps could be relocated 20-40 feet from the current location but would impact a driveway and provide little to no benefit. Other locations or additional speed humps are not an option due to property owner approval.

ADDRESSES A NEED/ISSUE IN A CITY PLAN OR COUNCIL PRIORITY:

Envision New Braunfels Strategy 7: Connect All: Action 7.16: Develop a program and process for consideration of citizen requests for neighborhood traffic calming.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Removal of the speed humps and associated signs by city staff is approximately \$300. Completion of the installation of the curb extensions required for this set of speed humps is approximately \$1,000.

Purchase and installation of a driver feedback speed limit sign is \$5,000.

Adding centerline pavement markings to Hunter Road between Clearwater Drive and New Braunfels Street and edge line pavement markings between Rapids Road and New Braunfels Street is estimated to cost \$1,400.

Sufficient funding is available in the FY18-19 approved streets and drainage budget.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

This request was considered by the Transportation and Traffic Advisory Board at their meeting on April 11, 2019. The Board recommended that the existing speed humps remain in place, the required curbing be constructed to complete the installation and that additional traffic calming devices be installed on a motion that passed unanimously.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the removal of the speed humps on Hunter Road between Rapids Road and New Braunfels Street as it meets the criteria established in the Speed Hump Policy. Staff recommends that if the speed humps are removed, an alternate traffic calming measure be installed on Hunter Road near the intersection with Rapids Road to warn motorists of the pedestrian activity on Hunter Road and in Gruene.