

Legislation Text

File #: 21-325, **Version:** 1

PRESENTER:

Garry Ford, Jr., Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer

SUBJECT:

Discussion on the design and construction of traffic calming measures as a condition of block length waivers.

DEPARTMENT: Public Works/Planning and Development Services

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In some cases, Planning Commission approves block length waivers with the condition that traffic calming measures are included with the street design and construction. Designing traffic calming measures on local streets with standard residential lots is challenging for development engineers and City staff. Guadalupe County does not accept traffic calming measures on new subdivision streets in the extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Traffic calming measures are intended to reduce speed by horizontal or vertical movements on the street. The acceptable traffic calming measures allowed by City Code for a new city street include road narrowing, midblock medians, curb extensions, traffic circles, and roundabouts. The design goal of a traffic calming measure on a new street is not to impact driveway access, parking, and drainage. Speed humps are not allowed on new city streets and stop signs are not a traffic calming measure.

Maximum block length is for street connectivity, area mobility, and neighborhood walkability. Short blocks provide options for motorists and improve pedestrian and bicycle access to adjacent land use. Long blocks may not adequately disperse traffic and will increase the travel distance between streets which may encourage drivers to speed. Long block lengths may also discourage pedestrian and bicycle activity.

Acceptable traffic calming measures for new developments in the city limit should not impact driveway access or restrict parking. Maintaining driveway access and parking for standard residential lots typically requires wider pavement and right-of-way which may impact developable lots. The details may not be accounted for on a master plan or plat but are an issue during construction plan preparation. Oftentimes the development engineer asks City staff if they can install a stop sign or what traffic calming measure to install. Without an acceptable solution, the traffic calming measure is omitted.

The intent of this item is to discuss the challenges of designing traffic calming measures as a condition of a block length waiver with Planning Commission.

ISSUE:

Designing traffic calming measures on local streets with standard residential lots is challenging for development engineers and City staff.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

N/A