

## TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT COMMITTEE

The Transportation & Transit Committee of the City of Raleigh met in regular session on Tuesday, January 24, 2017, at 3:00 p.m. in Conference Room 305 of the Raleigh Municipal Building, 222 West Hargett Street, Avery C. Upchurch Government Complex, Raleigh, North Carolina, with the following present:

### Committee

Chairman Corey Branch, Presiding  
Councilor Mary-Ann Baldwin (arrived late)  
Councilor David Cox

### Staff

Assistant City Manager Tansy Hayward  
Associate City Attorney Brandon Poole  
Transportation Director Mike Rogers  
Senior Transportation Engineer Jed  
Niffenegger  
Transportation Project Engineer Tom  
Fiorello  
Senior Transportation Planner Jason Myers  
Transportation Planning Manager Eric Lamb

These are summary minutes unless otherwise indicated.

Chairman Branch called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and the following item was discussed with action taken as shown:

**Item #15-01 – Neighborhood Traffic Management Program Policy.** This item was previously discussed during the Committee's October 25, 2016 meeting and held over for further discussion.

Assistant City Manager Tansy Hayward gave a brief overview of today's item noting staff's report will include specific recommendations regarding 4-way stop intersections.

### **4-Way Stop Intersections**

Senior Transportation Engineer Jed Niffenegger presented the following information used a PowerPoint presentation to summarize the following information included in the Committee's agenda packet:

### **Background**

At the October 25, 2016 City Council meeting, Councilor Baldwin, Chair of the Transportation and Transit Committee recommended that staff review the current multi-way stop policy. This item and others were heard at the December 13, 2016 Transportation and Transit Committee meeting. At this meeting, staff was instructed to investigate a new multi-way stop policy that put more emphasis on complete street

elements such as pedestrian activity, bicycle traffic, proximity to parks, greenways and transit stops.

**Current Multi-way Stop Control Policy**

The current policy for multi-way stop follows the guidelines in the Council adopted Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The major criteria or warrants in this manual are based on three major items with vehicular volumes and crashes being the two most significant. The volume warrants have minimums that should be met before consideration is given. These minimums are used to ensure a condition is not created where vehicular traffic is impacted by stop control on the major road. Elements such as pedestrian activity and a neighborhood's overall network/ characteristics are considered, but are classified as minor warrants in the MUTCD.

Over the last 5 years, staff has conducted approximately 313 evaluations with only 9 locations meeting the criteria in the MUTCD (2.8%). The reason for approximately 90+% of these intersections failing to meet warrants is due to the minimum vehicular volume requirements.

Year	Multi-way Stop Requests	Multi-way Stop Installations Recommended
2012	55	6
2013	76	3
2014	80	4
2015	47	3
2016	55	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>19</b>

**Proposed Policy**

Many of the engineering publications and manuals were designed and written with a vehicular centric slant. With the adoption of the Complete Streets policy, the City has placed higher importance on other modes of transportation than in the past. Therefore, if a new multi-way stop policy is adopted, it should align with the Complete Streets policy and other components of the City's Strategic Plan.

Per the Committee's direction for staff to investigate a "Raleigh" specific multi-way stop control policy, staff proposes the following:

1. Conduct an engineering evaluation including collection of vehicular volumes, review of crash history, and ensure there are sufficient sight lines. Unlike the MUTCD there will be no minimum volume requirements. At the same time, staff will evaluate potential locations to ensure a multi-way stop would not benefit a very small number of individuals at the detriment of a much larger majority (assuming no other factors listed below).

2. Place a higher importance on context as it pertains to the overall neighborhood network. This is important in denser and older neighborhoods where some multi-way stops may already exist. Older neighborhoods tend to have large amounts of on-street parking as well as mature trees. These factors, combined with smaller turn radii used in older neighborhoods, can make the sight distance feel less than adequate.
3. Place a higher importance on bicycle and pedestrian activity plus trip generators such as nearby schools, parks, greenway trailheads, transit stops, shopping centers, etc.

If adopted, these new criteria will only be applicable for streets that are classified as residential or collector streets. Under the UDO the Street Classification names changed to a new Street Typology. The new equivalents are Neighborhood Local, Neighborhood Street, and Avenue-Two Lane. Since some of the larger street classifications fall on the NCDOT State Highway System, the City would have to follow the NCDOT adopted MUTCD warrants for multi-way stop control. Although this might be a little inconsistent, it will ensure context sensitive engineering is applied since residential-type streets function differently than higher volume roads which are intended to move traffic.

To provide some context, 25 multi-way stops evaluations have been conducted so far this fiscal year. Using the MUTCD criteria/warrants, none of the intersections were recommended for multi-way stops. Staff performed a quick re-evaluation of the same 25 intersections using the new the proposed policy and would recommend approximately 17 (68%) of these intersections receive multi-way stops. It should be noted that some of the requested locations fall on top ranked corridors that may receive traffic calming treatment this upcoming year. Multi-way stops will be discussed at future community design meetings in case the residents prefer that option over a project. This was not factored into the intersection re-evaluations since the exercise was intended to demonstrate the difference between the existing and the proposed policies. Attachments A and B are included in the back of this report to illustrate five requested locations that did not meet warrants under the current policy. Using the proposed policy, three of the five intersections would be recommended for multi-way stop control.

### **Appeals Process**

As with any evaluation, the requestor may not agree with the findings. Currently, there is no appeals process for intersections that fail to meet the MUTCD warrants for multi-way stop control aside from a resident petitioning City Council. As part of this proposed policy revision, staff would suggest a more formal procedure be adopted. This can be handled on a staff level. If an intersection fails to qualify, staff will let the requestor know the results and reasons for the denial. If the requestor has objections, they can appeal the results. The appeal process will be handled by the Director of the Department of Transportation and may take up to a month so background can be provided and a field visit can be made.

If adopted, the new policy will likely result in more multi-way stops. As with anything, there is always a risk in allowing one individual to be the catalysis for change. A change such as a multi-way stop might not align with the desires of the overall community. A possible way to mitigate this is to employ another appeals process. If a resident is unhappy with the installation of a multi-way stop, they can request a removal. As with any change, it takes time for traffic patterns to normalize. Staff would suggest if an appeals process for removal of a multi-way is adopted, the stop signs would need to be in-place for at least a two-year period. This will allow time for traffic patterns to adjust and ensure City resources are not wasted. After that time, if requested, staff would perform an investigation to determine if an unsafe condition would not be created by removing the multi-way stop. If not, staff could mail ballots to properties within 500' of the subject intersection. A successful show of support for removal could match other NTMP criterion, which is 60% of ballots returned with 70% in favor of removal.

### **Staff Recommendations**

Per the Committee's request, staff prepared a more comprehensive multi-way stop control policy that better aligns with the City's Complete Streets policy and Strategic Plan. The proposed policy would only be applicable to lower volume roads, which are predominately residential. The policy would also include an appeals process if the requestor disagreed with staffs' findings. Lastly, the policy could include an appeals process for removal. Staff would suggest a two year time period be required before this would be applicable. Staff would also suggest that a ballot system be used like in other areas of the NTMP for any possible removal.

**Clerk's note:** The report included maps of sample intersections that do not qualify for multi-way stop signs under the current policy; however would qualify under proposed changes to the policy.

### **Councilor Baldwin arrived at 3:30 p.m.**

Mr. Niffenegger noted wherever the MUTCD uses the word "shall", staff cannot deviate from that direction; however, wherever the word "should" is used, staff's decisions are determined by best practices.

Discussion took place regarding how school schedules affect overall traffic counts.

Chairman Branch questioned whether citizens could still petition the City Council if administration denies any request with Mr. Niffenegger responding in the affirmative.

Discussion took place regarding how the proposed policy changes would increase the number of intersections eligible for multi-stop sign installations with Mr. Cox questioning whether staff could use the policy to address safety issues without waiting for citizen requests with Transportation Director Mike Rogers responding in the affirmative.

Ms. Baldwin questioned the length of time between a citizen request submission and staff response with Mr. Niffenegger noting response time may be affected by school schedules and Transportation Project Engineer Tom Fiorello noting the average response time is about 2 to 3 months. Chairman Branch questioned whether there was a backlog of requests with Mr. Fiorello responding the average backlog is about 10 requests; however, due to weather conditions during the winter season, the backlog could be as many as 20 to 25 requests.

### **Neighborhood Traffic Management Program**

Senior Transportation Planner Jason Myers talked about the current Traffic Calming process and presented the following information included in the Committee's agenda packet:

At the December 13, 2016 meeting of the City Council's Transportation and Transit Committee, staff received feedback on the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP). The Committee directed staff to develop NTMP policies and procedures that modify the planning process for Neighborhood Streetscapes and consider using temporary traffic calming treatments as an interim measure.

#### **Installation of Temporary Traffic Calming**

Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) Staff recently met with Chris McGee to discuss the ability of Transportation Field Services (TFS) staff to install temporary traffic calming treatments and manage inventory associated with the program. The conclusion is that TFS can manage a small number of projects (three or less) in the next year by using temporary workers with minimal crews. If program demands increase in the future, additional field forces will be needed. Managing an inventory of temporary treatment materials will be manageable based on available space at our Central Operations facility. OTP staff will meet with Traffic Engineering staff to plan for the procurement of these materials.

#### **Communications**

In the next month, Raleigh Department of Transportation (RDOT) staff will discuss the program with the Communications Department. Recent changes to the NTMP also involve changes to communication strategies. Additional communication tools, particularly internet tools for citizen input, will likely be required to implement the committee's direction.

#### **Conceptual Design Process**

Staff is evaluating means to improve the conceptual design process for Neighborhood Streetscape projects. Past practices led to an engineering design process that couldn't directly build off of the conceptual design. Changes are warranted in order to improve the precision of the plans for each project while streamlining the project delivery timeline.

Staff believes this can be accomplished by developing 25% plans based on available GIS data. Doing so should significantly simplify the ability to complete final plans by Engineering Services staff. A temporary installation using removable materials can utilize these 25% plans provided they are sealed by a licensed professional engineer.

RDOT staff will meet with Engineering Services and Urban Design Center staff in order to define clear roles and responsibilities for delivering Neighborhood Streetscape projects in the coming year. Future roles and responsibilities may depend on the level of resources devoted to this portion of the NTMP program in future capital and operating budgets.

In response to questions, Mr. Myers stated staff could bring back its recommendation in 2 months and noted by that time a new project manager will be hired to oversee the Traffic Calming projects.

Ms. Baldwin commended staff for their work on the Traffic Calming Program.

Assistant City Manager Tansy Hayward suggested the Committee could report out the multi-way stop policy recommendations and retain the remaining portion in Committee.

Chairman Branch questioned whether the 4-way stop policy would affect the budget with Transportation Director Mike Rogers responding in the negative.

Patrick Martin, chairman of the Midtown CAC, questioned how large communities are defined with Mr. Niffenegger responding community sizes are determined on a case-by-case scenario with regard to the neighborhood's size and location as well as road classifications surrounding the neighborhood. Mr. Rogers pointed out there are no hard-and-fast standards to apply and stated the widest possible area would be evaluated.

Karen Solaris indicated she is a North Hills resident and questioned whether the City Council made any decisions with regard to traffic calming measures installed by private developers and went on to suggest that areas outside designated growth centers be targeted for privately-funded traffic calming installations. She talked about recent as well as future development in North Hills and its effect on traffic volumes.

Transportation Planning Manager Eric Lamb talked about development around Cameron Village as well as existing and potential traffic issues with speeding, volume, etc.

Assistant City Manager Hayward suggested the private-funded traffic calming installations would be better discussed as part of the development process or perhaps as a public-private partnership venture.

Ms. Baldwin noted the reason for today's meeting is that the North Hills residents are divided over the traffic calming installations and that the public-private partnership policy is currently under discussion in City Council work session.

Mr. Martin talked about discussions at the previous Midtown CAC meeting regarding 2 rezoning cases and their potential impact in the neighborhood area north of St. Albans Drive. He talked about various potential cut-through routes in the neighborhood as well as speeding issues on Quail Hollow Drive posing a potential danger to pedestrians. He stated when the residents attending the CAC meeting voted to approve the 2 rezoning they imposed a condition that the City conduct a traffic management study for the North Hills area bounded by St. Albans Drive, Wake Forest Road, Millbrook Road, and Six Forks Road with Ms. Baldwin suggesting the CAC make it part of their testimony before the City Council at the zoning hearing.

Dwight Atwell indicated he is a resident of North Hills and expressed support for the recent traffic calming installations. He indicated he also favors temporary installations and urged the City seek additional citizen input in the Traffic Calming project design.

Lubin Prevatt talked about his concerns regarding recent traffic calming installations in the North Hills area and indicated he now favors them once they were installed. He went on to express concern regarding potential traffic issues with proposed commercial development along St. Albans Drive.

Following further discussion, Ms. Baldwin moved to uphold staff's recommendations for amending the multi-way stop policy and retain the remaining items in Committee. Her motion was seconded by Chairman Branch and put to a vote that resulted in all members voting in the affirmative. Chairman Branch ruled the motion adopted on a 3-0 vote.

**Next Transportation & Transit Committee Meeting – March 28, 2017.** In response to questions, Mr. Myers reiterated staff would bring back its recommendation regarding changes to the remaining Traffic Calming policy in 2 months. Following discussion among Committee Members, Chairman Branch indicated the next Transportation and Transit Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 28, at 3:00 p.m. in Conference Room 305.

**Adjournment.** There being no further business, Chairwoman Baldwin declared the meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Ralph L. Puccini  
Assistant Deputy Clerk