



MEETING DATE: 12/15/08
ITEM NO: 8

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: DECEMBER 4, 2008
TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: GREG LARSON, TOWN MANAGER

SUBJECT: MASSOL AVENUE PERMANENT INSTALLATION OF TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES
ACCEPT REPORT ON THE PERMANENT INSTALLATION OF TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES FOR MASSOL AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept report on the permanent installation of traffic calming devices for the Massol Avenue neighborhood.

BACKGROUND:

At the June 18, 2007, Town Council meeting, the Council approved the traffic calming proposal for the Massol Avenue neighborhood. The Massol Avenue neighborhood includes the 100 and 200 blocks of Massol, plus homes that border the ends of the 100 and 200 block of Massol (Massol Court, Bean, and Bachman Avenues). The proposal included temporary installation of a speed hump on the mid-block 100 block of Massol, curb bulb-outs on Massol at the stop sign of Nicholson (north side), and a small center median at the stop sign on Massol at Bachman (south side). The temporary devices were installed in November 2007, with the purpose to slow traffic and increase pedestrian safety. Prior to the installation, vehicle speeds averaged close to 30 MPH.

In June 2008, staff collected new traffic data to evaluate the effectiveness of the temporary traffic calming devices. Data collected indicates vehicle speeds are now below 30 MPH. The last step in the Traffic Calming policy process is to inform residents of the data findings and conduct a

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Director of Parks and Public Works

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Reviewed by: BJS Assistant Town Manager OK Town Attorney _____ Clerk Administrator
se Finance _____ Community Development

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final vote on the devices. A final ballot was sent to residents in September 2008, asking if residents would be in favor of permanent installation of these traffic devices. A total of 89 ballots were mailed originally, however, due to residential vacancies, 13 ballots were returned. Out of the 76 mailed ballots, 20 residents responded. The Traffic Calming policy requires 67% approval rating from the votes returned in order to forward the proposal to Town Council for review. The vote breakdown for permanent installation of these devices was as follows:

Speed hump on mid-100 block of Massol	80% in favor
Curb bulb-outs/islands on 200 block of Massol at Nicholson	85% in favor
Center median island on 200 block of Massol at Bachman	85% in favor

DISCUSSION:

This neighborhood formally requested traffic calming in 2002 by submitting a petition from the 100 block section of Massol Avenue. It was placed on a waiting list while other projects were being processed and is the final project to be processed from that time period. The neighborhood traffic concerns were speeding vehicles and cut-through traffic. An additional petition was received in 2006 from residents of the 200 block section asking to have their block included in this traffic calming project.

To qualify for the Town's Traffic Calming program, the 85th percentile speeds of vehicles traveling in the neighborhood must exceed the posted speed limit by 5 MPH, or the average daily traffic volume must exceed 1500. Town staff conducted a traffic study of the designated section of Massol Avenue and found the daily traffic volumes to be approximately 1500, and the 85th percentile speeds averaged 29.7 MPH. Based on these findings, the Massol Avenue neighborhood qualified for the traffic calming program. Staff analyzed the issue of cut-through traffic and concluded that the high volume of vehicles in the neighborhood is due to the fact that there are a significant number of residences on Massol (including three large multiple units), and the adjacent streets (such as Bayview and Pennsylvania Avenues). The traffic is most likely residential-oriented, not "cut-through" traffic.

Staff held two neighborhood meetings with residents from the 100 and 200 block of Massol Avenue in November 2006 and January 2007. Residents were notified of these meetings by mail and a subsequent e-mail list was also established. About 15 residents attended each meeting, including the Cat's Hill Bicycle Race representatives, who attended to provide input on any impacts to the bicycle race, which runs through the 100 block of Massol Avenue. Residents discussed the various traffic issues, and speeding vehicles and pedestrian safety was the consensus of the attendees.

To slow traffic in the 100 block section of Massol, three options were discussed: either a speed hump, a center median, or two curb-bulb outs, all mid-block. To increase pedestrian safety at the crosswalks, two options were proposed: either curb bulb-outs or small center medians at the stop signs of Massol. The meeting attendees found consensus to poll the neighborhood to test their

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temporary traffic design, consisting of a mid-block speed hump, curb bulb-outs at the Nicholson stop sign, and a small center median at the Bachman stop sign. (Attachment # 1).

A neighborhood vote was conducted in February 2007 to see if residents were in favor of this traffic calming proposal. Ballots were sent to the residences of the 100 and 200 block of Massol, plus homes that border the ends of the 100 and 200 block of Massol (Massol Court, Bean, and Bachman Avenues). The Traffic Calming policy requires the proposal needs to obtain at least 67% support from the returned ballots in order for it to be forwarded to Council for review. The vote breakdown for this traffic proposal was as follows:

Speed hump on mid-100 block of Massol	69% in favor
Curb bulb-outs/islands on 200 block of Massol at Nicholson	81% in favor
Center median island on 200 block of Massol at Bachman	81% in favor

At the June 18, 2007, Town Council meeting, the Town Council approved the proposal. In November 2007, the traffic calming devices were temporarily installed on Massol Avenue. Generally staff collects traffic data approximately three months after the traffic calming devices have been installed to evaluate their effectiveness. Due to limited department resources, however, all traffic calming related projects were placed on hold temporarily.

In June 2008, new traffic data was collected to evaluate the temporary traffic calming devices. The data indicates that vehicle speeds are now below 30 MPH. Staff conducted another neighborhood vote in September 2008, to inform residents of the new data collected and to also solicit input on the permanent installation of the traffic devices. Staff also spoke with the Los Gatos Bicycle Racing Club to confirm the devices have no impact on their annual bike race.

Based on the ballots returned, the Massol Avenue neighborhood residents support the permanent installation of the three traffic calming devices. Residents were mailed the vote outcome in a November letter. (Attachment # 2). Upon council acceptance of this report, staff will schedule the installation of the permanent traffic devices for March 2009.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that Council approve the permanent installation of traffic calming devices and authorize the use of Traffic Calming Program funds up to \$20,000 for this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is a project as defined under CEQA, but is Categorically Exempt (Section 15301c). A Notice of Exemption will not be filed.

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FISCAL IMPACT:

The costs for permanent installation of the three traffic devices will be no more than \$20,000. Sufficient funds are available to pay for this project.

**Massol Avenue Permanent Installation of Traffic Calming Devices
PROJECT 411-812-9910**

<u>FY 2008/09 Fiscal Impact</u>	<u>Available Budget Funding</u>	<u>Proposed Project Expenditures</u>	<u>Available Balance</u>
Project 411-812-9910	\$ 45,403	\$ 20,000	\$ 25,403
TOTALS	\$ 45,403	\$ 20,000	\$ 25,403

TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY:

Staff Labor			
Materials			
Engineering/Design			
Construction		\$ 20,000	
Contingency			
TOTALS		\$ 20,000	

Attachments:

1. Temporary Traffic Calming Proposal
2. November 5, 2008 Neighborhood Vote Outcome Letter



TOWN OF LOS GATOS

PARKS AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

PHONE (408) 399-5770

FAX (408) 354-8529

SERVICE CENTER
41 MILES AVENUE
LOS GATOS, CA 95030

November 5, 2008

TO: Residents of the 100-200 block area of Massol Avenue

RE: Neighborhood Vote Outcome - Permanent Traffic Calming Devices

Dear Resident(s):

In September, residents were sent a ballot asking if the three temporary traffic calming devices currently installed in your neighborhood should become permanent. The devices were installed in an effort to see if they would reduce vehicle speeds and traffic volumes. Traffic data collected after the temporary installation of these devices indicates a reduction in both vehicle speeds and traffic volumes.

Ballot Proposal

The ballot asked residents to vote "YES" or "NO" on having the three traffic devices become permanent. Out of seventy-six (76) ballots sent to residents of the designated voting neighborhood, twenty (20) ballots were returned, indicating a twenty-six (26%) percent return rate.

Outcome

The Traffic Calming Policy requires a 67% approval rating from the votes returned in order to forward the proposal to Town Council for review. The vote breakdown was as follows:

Device A: Center median island on 200 block of Massol at Bachman	80% in favor
Device B: Curb islands (2) on 200 block of Massol at Nicholson	85% in favor
Device C: Speed hump on mid-100 block of Massol	85% in favor

Next Steps

Your neighborhood now has a proposal that is supported by more than the required 67% vote. The next step in the traffic calming review process is to present this proposal to the Town Council for review. Staff will prepare a report and present it tentatively on December 15. If approved by the Town Council, the three devices will be permanently installed in March 2009. The island devices will be made of concrete. The speed hump will remain as asphalt concrete.

If you have any questions, please contact Tim Kawasaki, Administrative Analyst, at (408) 399-5776.

Sincerely,

Todd Capurso
Director of Parks and Public Works

MASSOL TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN

February 5, 2007

