

**CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA  
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: July 5, 2011

Reviewed by: BP

**SUBJECT:** Speed Hump Installation on Carmel Avenue and Ordway Street

**REPORT BY:** Aleida Andrino-Chavez, Transportation Planner  
Ann Chaney, Community Development Director

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**TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

Authorize staff to seek construction bids and enter into a contract for installation of speed humps at the following locations:

- 1) 900 Block of Carmel Avenue – two (2) speed humps
- 2) 950 Block of Ordway Street – two (2) speed humps (see Discussion section)

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Authorize staff to seek construction bids and enter into a contract for the installation of speed humps at the following locations, or refer all or part back to T&S Commission and provide direction for further review:

- 1) 900 Block of Carmel Avenue – two (2) speed humps (petition received)
- 2) 950 Block of Ordway Street – two (2) speed humps (petition received)
- 3) 800 Block of Carmel Avenue – one (1) speed hump (pending new signature petition)

**BACKGROUND**

900 Block of Carmel Avenue

In 2010 residents of the 900 block of Carmel Avenue approached the Traffic and Safety Commission with a request for a speed hump due to speeding on this block. A traffic survey was taken and showed that there is consistent speeding on this segment of Carmel as the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed measured 32 mph. The criterion for a “finding of consistent speed” is based on survey results that show the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds exceed the posted speed limit by five or more miles per hour (i.e., 30 mph or more).

Examination of the physical characteristics, including street length, showed that the 900 block of Carmel was eligible for the installation of two speed humps. On May 26, 2011, the T&S Commission recommended the installation of two speed humps, as suggested by the newly adopted *Speed Hump Policy*. Carmel Avenue residents, whose homes will be adjacent to the new speed humps, have all consented to the locations which were also selected based on the *Speed Hump Policy*.

## 950 Block of Ordway Street and 800 Block of Carmel Avenue

In 2000, the City Council approved the Traffic Management Plan (TMP), which recommended speed treatments (e.g., circles, islands, speed humps) on select residential streets, including the 950 Block of Ordway and the 800 Block of Carmel (see attached). In September 2001, the Council approved Resolution #01-65 establishing prioritization of Neighborhood Traffic Calming Measures (attached). It listed streets, included in the TMP, for which petitions had been received. The resolution also supported acquisition of two portable speed humps, and prioritized the subject blocks as follows:

- #10 Ordway (Marin to Sonoma) speed humps at 956 and 974
- #17 Carmel (Solano to Washington) speed hump

Although funding for implementation was not yet available for permanent improvements, two temporary speed humps were purchased through a grant, and one was placed in the 1000 block of Curtis Street around 2003.

On May 17, 2004, following the passage of Measure F-2002, the T&S Commission recommended that the City Council approve a priority list of projects for Measure F funds, entitled ‘Selection Matrix for City of Albany Street, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Improvements for Priority Consideration under Measure F’ (attached Council staff report and minutes). During that meeting, residents of 800 Carmel spoke about the urgency of having a speed hump, noting several accidents. Andrew Lincoff, T&S Commissioner, urged approval of the prioritization matrix, but stated that two speed surveys had already been done on the 800 block of Carmel that shows relatively low speeds. Thus, consistent speeding conditions shown through surveys conducted in 1998 (30 mph), and recommended for calming measure in the TMP, no longer seemed prevalent in 2004 (27 mph). Several Council members supported a suggestion that the temporary speed hump on Curtis be moved to (800 block) Carmel (as Curtis was scheduled for a permanent hump), and that the second temporary hump be placed on Ordway (950 block). Although no vote was taken, a Council member requested that staff move the temporary speed hump from Curtis to Carmel. To confirm whether there was sufficient Council support for this direction, staff returned to the Council on July 26, 2004 with an Informational Only item entitled “Status report on the placement of temporary speed humps on Ordway and Carmel Avenues, and a permanent speed hump on Curtis Street” (attached). The status report was approved on the Consent Agenda. Council member Ely, who lives in the 800 block of Carmel, was absent from the May 17 meeting, and recused himself at the July 26 meeting. The temporary humps were installed, and it has been determined that traffic was calmer and traffic diversion to other streets did not occur.

In fall of 2010, the temporary humps at the Carmel and Ordway locations were removed in anticipation of exploring the installation of permanent speed humps, as well as due to their deteriorating condition. In the meantime, staff was working on the request from the 900 block of Carmel in an attempt to construct all five speed humps under one contract in order to achieve economies of scale.

On May 26, 2011, the T&S Commission held a meeting to consider the installation of speed humps on the 900 block of Carmel, the 950 block of Ordway, and the 800 block of Carmel, and make a recommendation to Council. Notices were sent to each household within these blocks. The Commission recommended that Council approve the installation of two speed humps in the 900 block of Carmel. However, the Commission found that the 800 block of Carmel Avenue did not meet the current criterion for “a finding of consistent speeding” per the 2008 Traffic Calming Policy. Instead, the Commission recommended that staff conduct another speed survey to verify whether speeds have changed. Attached are draft T&S Commission minutes of May 26, 2011. A letter dated June 16, 2011 from Sonja Ross, Block Representative, of the 800 block of Carmel provides background information and cites speeding issues being experienced on their street. A list of residents requesting reinstatement of the speed humps is included (attached). Ms. Ross is currently collecting signatures on the City’s petition form to verify that at least 67% of the households continue to support speed hump installation.

## **DISCUSSION**

### 900 Block of Carmel Avenue

No further discussion.

### 950 Block of Ordway Street

The T&S Commission favorably discussed but, staff believes, inadvertently failed to take action on recommending the installation of two speed humps in the 950 block of Ordway. Staff believes this was due to the lateness of the hour. The only issues appeared to be whether the physical characteristics of the street allowed for two speed humps (i.e., 6% grade, visibility), as recommended in the new *Speed Hump Policy*, and whether the residents still supported the project. Since the May 26 Commission meeting, a new petition has been received showing at least 67% of the households support the project, and City engineering staff has identified suitable locations for two speed humps. Thus, both issues have been resolved.

The only remaining step for staff is to contact the residents whose homes will be immediately adjacent to the proposed humps to ensure there is no opposition to the planned placement.

### 800 Block of Carmel Avenue

Staff appreciates the T&S Commission’s interest in adhering to newly adopted criteria, and evaluating projects against those standards. Staff also recognizes that recent speed surveys show the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds for this location to be 25 mph. By the same token, equally rigorous studies were conducted in and around 2000 which identified legitimate problems that warranted traffic calming measures at that time. To be more precise:

1. Adopted Traffic Management Plan (2000) found that: “The highest observed 85<sup>th</sup> percentile on Carmel Avenue between Solano and Washington was 5mph over the posted 25mph speed limit.” As such, this segment of Carmel was recommended for “Midblock Speed Treatment for North/South streets.”
2. Speed treatment for 800 Block of Carmel was included in the:
  - a) “Prioritization of Neighborhood Traffic Calming Measures” #17 (2001)
  - b) “Selection Matrix for City of Albany Street, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Improvements for Priority Consideration under Measure F” #60 (2004)
3. City Council authorized temporary speed hump placement for 800 Carmel (2004)
4. Said temporary speed hump was in place until fall 2010 and observed by residents to have a positive effect on calming traffic.

It should be noted that the Meeting Notice for the May 26, 2011 T&S Commission meeting states that two (2) speed humps are proposed for the 800 block of Carmel. This was the result of applying the recent *Speed Hump Policy* guidelines that recommends two speed humps on streets that are at least 450 feet in length. The 800 block of Carmel is such a street. However, current speed survey findings do not warrant any speed treatment. Based on prior City Council action regarding the temporary hump, and the neighborhood’s experience with the single temporary speed hump, Staff recommends the installation of one (1) permanent speed hump to be placed in this block.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT**

Traffic will be kept moving at 25 mph or less on these residential streets. Since the design of the speed humps does not require that vehicles stop in order to surmount the hump (hence, the difference between a hump and bump), it is estimated that some emission reductions would be achieved when compared to speeding traffic, which tends to generate more emissions.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) has allocated \$32,500 for the installation of speed humps from Measure F 2002 funds. It is estimated that this amount would be sufficient to construct the five (5) speed humps, assuming approximately \$5,000 per speed hump, if installed altogether. If bids are low, the remaining funds will be available for one, and possibly two, future locations.

#### **Attachments**

1. May 26, 2011 - Draft Traffic & Safety Commission Minutes
2. September 18, 2001 – City Council Resolution #01-65, ‘Prioritization of Neighborhood Traffic Calming Measures,’ and Minutes
3. May 17, 2004 - City Council Staff Report and Minutes including ‘Selection Matrix for City of Albany Street, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Improvements for Priority Consideration under Measure F’
4. May 27, 2004 – Traffic & Safety Commission Minutes
5. July 26, 2004 – City Council Staff Report and Minutes
6. Letter from Sonja Ross, Block Representative for 800 block of Carmel – June 16, 2011

7. Traffic Calming Policy (2008)
8. Speed Hump Policy (2010)
9. Speed hump plan locations (examples)