

Memorandum

January 27, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor, Members of City Council, and Bob Harrison, City Manager

From: Scott Schafer, Public Works Director
Joe Rosenlund, Streets & Traffic Operations Manager

Subject: Review and evaluation of the Pedestrian Crossing at 40th Ave and Chestnut and a Status Report of potential Traffic-Calming along Chestnut Ave. between 40th to 48th Ave.

At the November 17, 2020 City Council meeting, City Council requested a review of the pedestrian crossing at the intersection of 40th Avenue and Chestnut Street in addition to traffic-calming opportunities for the 40th Ave and Chestnut area.

Chestnut Street Crossing at 40th Avenue

The pedestrian crossing and access restrictions at Chestnut Street on 40th Avenue was installed in 2017 to 1) reduce vehicle collisions and 2) assist pedestrians and cyclists cross 40th Avenue in a safe manner. Input from the Bike/Ped Committee was incorporated into its design.

The modifications have been successful in reducing vehicle collisions from an average of 10 per year to an average of only 2 per year. However, the objective of improving the ability and safety for pedestrians and cyclists in crossing 40th Ave. has been less successful. Driver compliance to stop when the flashing beacons are activated alerting them to the presence of pedestrians and cyclists trying to cross 40th Avenue has been poor. The issue is due to drivers either being unwilling or not knowing to stop for pedestrians/cyclists at the activated beacon.

Recommended short-term improvements include relocating the advance warning signs closer to the pedestrian crossing. The signs are currently located just beyond the recommended distance so the warning may be forgotten prior to the driver seeing the pedestrian crossing. Another revision staff is actively pursuing is to add "Stop When Occupied" signs at the pedestrian crossing locations. This would inform drivers to stop when the beacons are activated and would assist law enforcement with any violators.

A third improvement staff is evaluating is to possibly replace the existing curb median with one that is slightly taller and more securely affixed to the pavement. Vehicles have occasionally brushed up against the existing curbing; causing it to become loose. In addition, staff is exploring on narrowing the area between the edge of the crosswalk and the curb median to discourage vehicles from cutting across the intersection illegally. Bollards or similar obstructions within the actual crosswalk will not be installed as this may pose an increased hazard to the pedestrians and cyclists.

Unfortunately, these short-term improvements would have only a small, marginal benefit on pedestrian safety or ease of use. What is needed is the installation of a HAWK (High-Intensity

Activated crossWalk) signal. A HAWK signal is a pedestrian actuated signal that requires traffic to stop for the pedestrian but allows traffic to flow again once the pedestrian is clear of the traffic lane.



Cost of installation for a HAWK system is approximately \$200,000. Staff will pursue applicable grant funding opportunities.

Chestnut Street Traffic Calming (40th to 48th Ave)

Initial data collection and safety evaluation has been initiated for potential traffic-calming along Chestnut Street between 40th Avenue and 48th Avenue. Chestnut Street is classified as a local street and designated bike route. Within this section, the pavement varies in width between 22 and 28 feet and is in fair condition. There are currently no curb or sidewalks except for approximately 600 feet along the north side, east of 48th Avenue. The area is predominantly residential with 43 parcels abutting the roadway; 29 of which have direct access to Chestnut Street. This section of Chestnut Street is not identified as a school walking route. Street lights are located at each intersection.

There is an average weekday traffic count of 888 vehicles per day traveling on Chestnut Street with a peak hour average of 85 vehicles. There have been no reported accidents in the last four years other than those occurring at the intersection of 40th Avenue and Chestnut Street.

The posted speed on Chestnut Street is 20 miles per hour (mph). The average speed of vehicles on Chestnut Street is 21.8 mph. The average speed of those exceeding the speed limit is 24.7 mph. Data indicates that 6% of the traffic volume exceeds the speed limit by more than 10 mph.

The above data indicates drivers are routinely exceeding the posted speed limit of 20 mph, but generally not by more than 5 mph. Based on the initial review, Chestnut Street does qualify for traffic-calming measures. City staff will be working closely with the Bike/Ped Committee to figure out possible solutions for traffic-calming within this area. Traffic-calming is a lengthy process since it is based on data, not perception. Our Traffic-Calming Policy focuses on

Education, Enforcement and then Engineering. This remains a work in progress and will require staff to report back to City Council at a later date with further results.