

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE:	Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program Update & Petition for Temporary Closure of N 183 rd Street at Dayton Avenue N
DEPARTMENT:	Public Works
PRESENTED BY:	Jill M. Marilley, City Engineer Kristen M. Overleese, Project Engineer

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

The purpose of this report is to (1) provide an update on the success of the City's Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (NTSP), (2) bring forward a community petition for Council's concurrence to install temporary physical devices to close 183rd Street (at Dayton) to improve residential street safety by eliminating cut-through traffic.

Background/Update

The City's Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program became available to the public June, 2001 (the NTSP manual was distributed to Council under separate cover). This two-phased program utilizes education, enforcement, and engineering (physical devices) to improve pedestrian and driver safety on residential streets by reducing vehicle speeds and traffic volumes as well as improving vehicle sight distance and enhancing pedestrian walking area on street shoulders. Since the programs start, 60 residential areas have applied to the program. Of these 60 residential areas, 9 are actively involved in Phase 1 and are implementing their Phase 1 Residential Area Plans. Evanston/183rd Street (Fremont Avenue to Dayton Avenue) has entered Phase II of the program and is the only residential area in Phase II of the program. The remaining 50 residential are in the pre-application process.

Over the past year, during the implementation of Phase 1 Residential Area Plans for 10 residential areas, the following has been completed:

- The police have made over 950 traffic stops during 528 hours of police enforcement (Attachment A)
- 528 traffic citations have been issued
- 11 thermoplastic stop bars and 6 thermoplastic speed limits have been installed
- Over 180 radar trailer placement days
- 9 signs installed/replaced (speed, curve, school bus stop ahead)

Little of this work would have been completed if it weren't for the resources and focus of the NTSP.

Evanston/183rd Street Petition

As mentioned, the Evanston/183rd Street residential area was the first to enter the NTSP. Over the past year they have completed Phase I of the NTSP. This residential area experiences significant cut-through traffic (approximately 62% at the end of Phase I), volumes are approximately 1000 cars per day, and the 85th percentile speed is 30 mph (85% of the cars in this residential area drive at or below 30 miles per hour).

Having met the criteria to enter Phase II of the NTSP, the residential area neighbors discussed five potential physical device alternatives and opted to pursue use of temporary physical devices to close N 183rd Street at Dayton.

As street closures weren't a defined option in the NTSP, City and INCA Engineering staff completed a fatal flaw traffic analysis to ensure no traffic problems would be created on another residential street or impact Level of Service (LOS) of the surrounding arterials. No fatal flaw was found as it was determined traffic won't be pushed to other residential area streets and the LOS of arterials does not change. In addition, this street is not a critical east/west connector between Dayton and Fremont as Richmond Beach Road is one block north.

Per the NTSP, the residential area was petitioned to gauge support for this closure. As 72% of the returned petitions support the temporary closure, staff brings the community's request to Council for support. If Council concurs with the temporary closure, it would be installed by the end of December. Once in place, the residential area would be re-petitioned for permanent installation after 90 days. If the re-petition does not support closure, the closure would be removed.

Should the residential area support a permanent closure (over 70% of returned petitions), this request would be brought to Council for consideration. In this event, the temporary closure could be in place 120-150 days.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The temporary closure using barricades would cost approximately \$3,000 and adequate resources exist within the NTSP to pay for this expense. If Council does not concur with the temporary closure, staff would continue working with the Evanston/183rd residential area to consider other physical devices as part of Phase II of the NTSP. The bulk of additional cost at this time would be for staff resources to continue working with the residential area to create an acceptable Phase II solution.

RECOMMENDATION

No Council action is required at this time. Staff will return to Council on November 25, 2002 requesting Council's authorization for the temporary closure of 183rd Street at Dayton as part of the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program.

Approved By: City Manager  City Attorney, 

INTRODUCTION

The City's Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (NTSP) was created in 1999 and 2000 as a partnership between the City and the community to improve driver and pedestrian safety on residential streets. The NTSP became available to the community in June of 2001. The program has two phases. Phase I utilizes traffic enforcement and education to change driving habits and improve safety on residential streets. Phase II, installation of physical devices (traffic circles, speed bumps, chicanes, curb bump outs), is implemented after Phase I if certain criteria are met.

NTSP Update

The NTSP has been active for sixteen months. The first residential area to enter the program, Evanston/183rd Street, is the first to complete Phase I and is now the only residential area in Phase II.

There have been 60 residential areas that have applied to the NTSP. Of these 60 residential areas, only 10 are actively involved in Phase I or Phase II of the NTSP. The most common reason the 50 residential areas are in the beginning of Phase I and not moving forward is because the residential area contact has chosen not to pursue the elements of the program including: collection of 7 signatures verifying there is a problem on their street and collection of baseline data. Staff has found ways to provide volunteer assistance to help the community perform components of the NTSP. However, the NTSP was developed to make it a successful community building opportunity through their active participation.

Baseline Data

Per the NTSP, baseline volume, vehicle speeds, and cut-through traffic data are collected before and after both phases of the NTSP. Only the Evanston/183rd Street residential area has completed Phase I of the NTSP, and the other residential areas are implementing their Phase I residential area plans.

The baseline volumes for the ten residential areas show that volumes vary between 300 to 3300 cars per day. Most of the volumes are below 1700 cars per day except for Linden Ave N (between 175th and 185th Streets) and NE 168th Street (between 15th and 25th Avenues NE). These volumes are high at 2700 and 3300 cars per day respectively. 85th percentile speeds range from 30 - 37 mph with the highest 85th percentile speed of 37 mph on Linden Ave N (from 175th Street to 185th Street).

NTSP Successes since June 2001

The NTSP provides services that are above pre-2001 service levels. Before the NTSP, police report that they were able to spend a total of one hour per month providing enforcement on residential streets. The NTSP supplements police overtime to target enforcement on NTSP residential streets.

Brush trimming, signage and other street maintenance activities on residential streets also get additional attention and resources through the NTSP. Brush trimming on Ridgefield Road (Innis Arden) as part of the NTSP was one of the more significant tasks in 2002. Homeowners were given a map showing the extent of proposed vegetation

removal on their frontage. Once Public Works crews had completed their vegetation removal work, sight distance around the curve had improved and both sides of the road had a wider shoulder for pedestrians to walk.

During the implementation of Phase 1 Residential Area Plans for the ten areas actively involved in the NTSP, the following has been completed:

- The police have made over 950 traffic stops during 528 hours of police enforcement (Attachment A)
- 528 traffic citations have been issued for speeding and violation of other traffic laws
- 11 thermoplastic stop bars and 6 thermoplastic speed limits have been installed
- Over 180 radar trailer placement days
- 9 regulatory signs have been installed or replaced (speed, curve, school bus stop ahead)
- A significant amount of brush trimming has been accomplished to improve sight distance and pedestrian walkways on street shoulders
- Mailboxes have been moved to make their access safer
- Fog lines have been painted in two of the residential areas

Evanston/183rd Street Petition

History

The Evanston/183rd Street residential area (also known as Happy Valley) was spearheaded by Residential Area Contact Linda Nixon and was the first to enter the NTSP in June of 2001. Both Evanston and N 183rd Street receive a significant amount of cut-through traffic going between Dayton and Fremont Avenues in order to avoid Richmond Beach Road and Aurora Avenue.

During Phase I, the Evanston/183rd Street residential area received 87 hours of police enforcement where 144 traffic violation stops were made and 82 citations were issued. Approximately 90% of the violations were written for stop sign violations. Also as part of Phase I, the area utilized the radar trailers and received brush trimming, fog lines, and new curve signs. Mailboxes at the bottom of the hill were moved to improve safety for pedestrians and the mail carrier. The residential area contact, Linda Nixon, spent many hours communicating the NTSP process and happenings with her neighbors. It is evident that community building has been a success of Phase I for the Evanston/183rd Street residential area.

At the completion of the Phase I implementation, baseline data was taken to complete Phase I of the NTSP. Traffic volumes, speeds and cut-through traffic did not significantly improve during Phase I of the NTSP. The Phase II "Selection and Prioritization Criteria for Phase 2 Program" was utilized to determine if this area was eligible for Phase II of the NTSP (page 12 of the NTSP). Evanston/183rd Street received 11 points: two for cut-through traffic, zero for speed, two for sight distance hazards, 3 for accident history, two for no sidewalks, and two for a school within a half mile.

Phase II

All citizens within the boundary of impacted residents were invited to discuss potential physical devices for Phase II on June 26, 2002. Impacted residents include all those between Fremont and Dayton Avenues N that enter or leave by 182nd or 183rd Street. Five different physical device scenarios were discussed at this meeting:

- Option 1 - Construction of curbing along the centerline of Fremont Avenue N at N 182nd Street to restrict turning onto N 182nd Street
- Option 2 – Create one-way street (eastbound/uphill) on Evanston Avenue N from 183rd Street to Fremont Avenue N
- Option 3 – Close off 183rd Street at Dayton
- Option 4 - Close off Evanston Avenue N at Fremont Avenue N
- Option 5 - Close off 183rd Street at Evanston Avenue N

At the community meeting, the 20 that residents that attended unanimously decided to pursue Option 3 – temporarily close off 183rd Street at Dayton. As street closures weren't a specific option in the NTSP, INCA Engineers evaluated this option to determine if there was a technical traffic "fatal flaw" with this option and evaluated how a closure at 183rd Street would impact regional traffic.

The analysis showed that traffic would not be pushed to another residential street and the level of service (LOS) of the surrounding arterials would not be degraded. Staff then worked with Linda Nixon to petition the residents within the boundary of impacted residents to gauge support for the temporary closure.

Of the 86 petitions mailed out, 53 were returned by the deadline. Home renters and owners were given the opportunity to petition. Of the returned petitions, 72% support the temporary closure. Two petitions were received a day late and both supported the closure. Attachment B shows which residents returned petitions. Staff brings the community's request to temporarily close N 183rd Street (at Dayton Avenue N) to Council for approval.

N 183rd Street Temporary Closure Impacts

Relocating the cut-through traffic (approximately 600 cars per day) to the surrounding arterials will not negatively impact the level of service (LOS) of Dayton Avenue N, Richmond Beach Road, and Fremont Avenue N. The City's police and fire departments as well as the School District were asked about their concerns regarding all five options. The police and fire departments strongly support the closure and believe it will not impact response time. The fire department asked that any closure be emergency response accessible. The school district has bus routes accessing the area by Dayton and would prefer not to reroute busses, but said they would work with the community.

Those not supporting the closure were concerned about emergency and resident access during snow events. It should be noted that residents that came to the Phase I meeting acknowledged they may not be able to get up the Evanston hill on rare occasion when snowy. However, they felt the increase in quality of life from the N 183rd closure would make snow access issues acceptable.

The community at large, especially those that use this residential area as a cut-through, may be angry if N 183rd is closed. Staff has also heard the comment that removing the cut-through traffic in this area will increase air pollution as cars will have to drive longer.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends Council support for installation of the temporary closure of N 183rd Street for the following reasons:

- The closure will improve the quality of life and safety for the Evanston/183rd residential area by removing cut-through traffic. This result meets the intent of the NTSP.
- The closure would be emergency response accessible.
- The City's police and fire strongly support the closure. Of the five options listed, they believe this has the least impact on emergency response time. The temporary closure would be emergency response accessible.
- The N 183rd Street/Evanston cut-through route is not a critical traffic moving component of our infrastructure. The area is surrounded by arterials and Richmond Beach Road, another east/west route, is only three blocks north.
- The additional vehicle pollution resulting from the closure is not significant enough to warrant further review.
- The temporary closure would be pedestrian and bicycle accessible.

Next Steps

If Council authorizes the temporary closure of N 183rd Street (at Dayton) as part of the NTSP, staff would notify and educate the community through the City's website, the Enterprise, the government channel, and educational signage. Service providers including Waste Management and the United States Postal service would receive direct correspondence giving several weeks notice. The temporary closure would be installed by the end of December.

After 90 days, the same residents would be petitioned for a permanent closure. If the petition for permanent closure is not supported, the closure would be removed. If 70% of the returned petitions support closure, the request for permanent closure would be brought to Council. In this case, the temporary closure would be in place 120-150 days.

Temporary closure is anticipated to cost less than \$3,000 and funds exist within the NTSP budget. If Council does not concur with temporary closure of N 183rd Street at Dayton, staff would work with the community to re-evaluate alternative physical devices.

RECOMMENDATION

No Council action is required at this time. Staff will return to Council on November 25, 2002 requesting Council's authorization for the temporary closure of 183rd Street at Dayton as part of the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Police Enforcement Statistics

Attachment B: Map of Residents That Returned Petitions