

# Washington Street Traffic Calming Demonstration

Informing the Comprehensive Street Program

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Council Transportation Committee Briefing  
December 16, 2020

# Port Townsend Values

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## Did the traffic circles accomplish Port Townsend values?

### **Traffic Calming**

Traffic conditions on neighborhood streets can affect the livability and quality of life in the neighborhood. Streets not only serve the needs of motorists, but also provide for social interaction, walking, and bicycling. The application of specific traffic calming strategies to individual streets can increase the safety and attractiveness of the street; however, implementation measures must be carefully considered to ensure that the desired effect is achieved.

**Goal 6:** Provide safe streets for neighborhoods.

Policy 6.1: Pursue strategies to discourage nonlocal through traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Policy 6.2: Develop a program for neighborhood traffic calming and traffic control based on the fundamentals of education, enforcement, and engineering. Apply a hierarchy of responses based on the severity of the traffic problem.

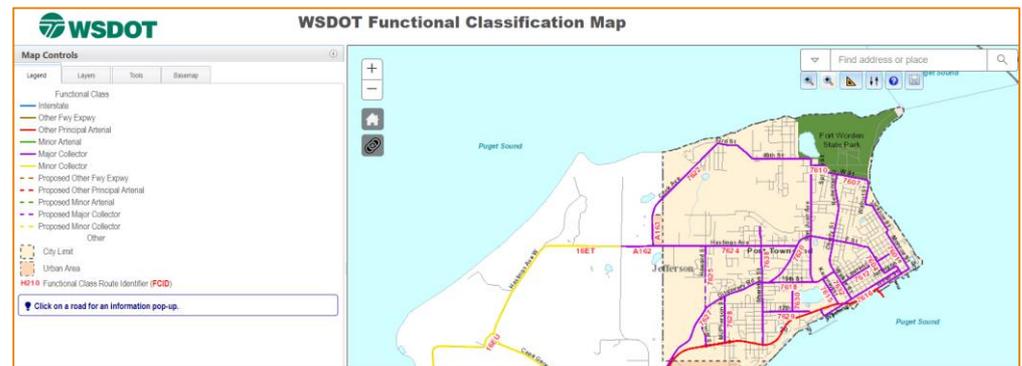
Policy 6.3: Maintain standards for traffic calming strategies and evaluate their effectiveness.

Policy 6.4: New developments should be designed to allow local traffic movement while discouraging nonlocal through traffic.

# Recap: Two Foundational Principles

1. Street function must be evaluated for impacts – City responsibility in terms of managing the transportation network. This principle includes evaluating unintended consequences. Traffic calming does not equate to lowering volumes of arterial streets.
2. Lower vehicle speeds and improve safety. This principle is the root reason for traffic calming.

The City arterial streets are part of the State and National Transportation System



# Recap:

## Applying Best Available Science

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Large open roads with wide shoulders encourage higher speeds. Based on 1950's design principles for moving high volumes of traffic quickly.



Typical Rural Arterial – Not well suited for urban environment

# Recap:

## Applying Best Available Science

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Studies have shown traffic calming is best achieved by changing the driver's experience such that the driver desires to travel slower for safety. Effective traffic calming results in reduced speed without additional enforcement of speed limits.



Narrowing lanes, creating constrictions and the feeling of constriction naturally slows traffic. Water Street is a great example with parked cars. Street trees also create the perception of closed in road.

# Summary of Comments

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Public Comments: 58 recorded comments from individuals. Comment themes as follows.

- Roundabouts not necessary
- Difficult to make left turns
- Concern over creating hazard for motorists
- Pedestrian/bicycle/wheelchair hazard – Need sidewalk
- Use speed bumps instead
- Concern over emergency vehicle access
- Worry over diversion to other streets
- Better use of funds
- Issue speeding tickets
- Request to install on Lawrence Street
- Neighborhood support
- They have made a difference.

# Pedestrian Areas Expanded

Permanent mini-circles will require paving of shoulders



Pedestrian areas expanded: Final installation would include paving of shoulders to create 5' pedestrian area

Test Installation for 60-day Trial Period

# Design Revisions

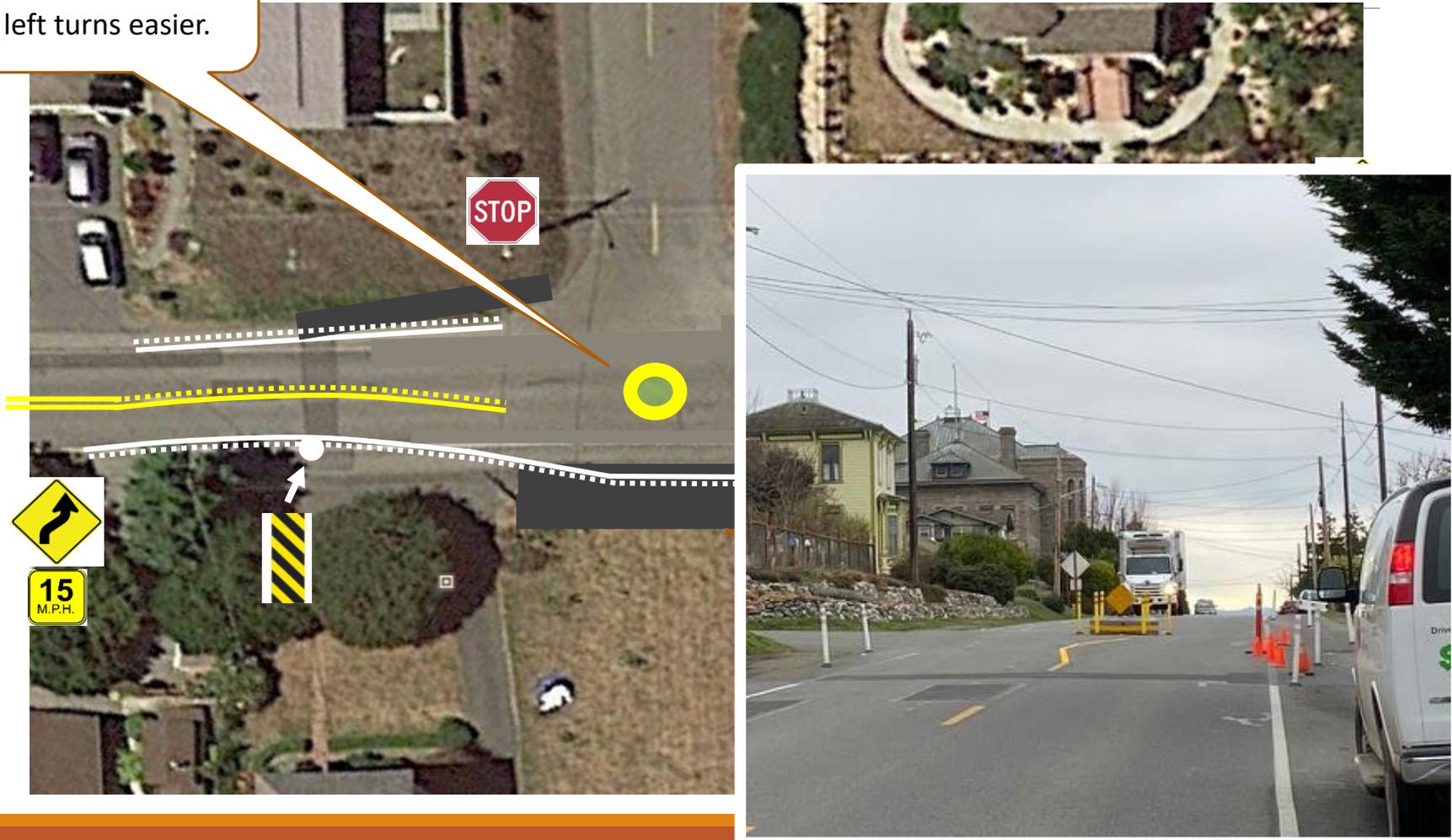
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The following design revisions would be made for final installation:

1. Paving of shoulders for 5' pedestrian area.
2. Painting of center islands and white edge lines along with reflectors.
3. Install more prominent landscaping.
4. Narrow lanes a little more with paint with a slightly larger circle.
5. Install more prominent edge barriers/markers bollards just outside the paint.
6. Evaluation of elimination of center stripes along all or a portion of Washington St.
7. Education concerning mini-circles needs to be developed
8. Change warning signs

# Design Rev. Schematic Tested for 1 hr.

Move circle toward  
side street to make  
left turns easier.



# How did the test go?

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Did the traffic circles accomplish Port Townsend values?

1. Slowed Traffic: Yes, but revised design needed to achieve better results.
2. Appropriate installation: Yes, for Washington Street. Medians would be better, but don't leave room for future road projects and cost considerably more.
3. Cost effective: Yes. Utilizes Space
4. Aesthetics: Temporary, not great. Permanent will be more aesthetically pleasing.
5. Pedestrian and bike accommodation: Gravel shoulders not great. Permanent installation need paved shoulders will be better and safer for peds and bikes.
6. Street function maintained: Yes
7. Neighborhood participation: Yes, both coordination and financially.

# Recommended Next Steps

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1. Continue test with revised design installed.
2. Incorporate what we learned into the Comprehensive Street Plan to allow investments to be weighed against all other street needs.



# Comprehensive Streets Program

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## Recommended Points to include in Comprehensive Street Program

1. Include the following options for traffic calming. (Costs are typical)
  - NH Traffic Circles - \$5,000 to \$10,000
  - Medians - \$20,000 to \$40,000
  - Speed tables - \$25,000
  - Asphalt Speed humps - \$5,000 to \$10,000
  - Radar Boards (last resort) - \$10,000
2. Selection of traffic calming approach depends on:
  - Street function and traffic type le arterial vs. residential
  - Traffic type. le trucks vs. cars
  - Street connectivity. Is there a grid?
  - Street right of way
  - Ped and Bike safety
  - Future street improvements
  - Documented safety problems

# Comprehensive Streets Program

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## Recommended Points to include in Comprehensive Street Program

4. Traffic calming is best achieved by working with neighborhoods and creating partnerships.
5. Develop neighborhood grant program to help install traffic circles where neighborhoods may not be able to afford them. Recommended minimum funding of \$10,000 - \$20,000 per year to make progress across City.
6. Encourage neighborhood participation in terms of funding and labor when appropriate to leverage City program investments.

# Questions/Discussion

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