




AUSTIN TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

CC: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Gina Fiandaca, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Robert Spillar, P.E., Director 
Austin Transportation Department

DATE: February 6, 2020

SUBJECT: Speed Management Program Development Update

This memo serves as an update to our [September 18, 2019 memo on the new draft framework for a Speed Management Program](#). The Austin Transportation Department (ATD) continues progress on developing this program which aligns with the policy goals of prioritizing our transportation network as stated in the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP).

Progress on New Speed Management Program

ATD staff have developed a methodology which utilizes crash history and street characteristics to identify streets which may have speeding issues. ATD staff have applied this methodology to all Level 1 and 2 streets (residential neighborhood and collector streets, respectively) as classified in the ASMP. This approach has identified the top tier of locations to perform speed studies and then select streets which will be included in the new program. This data-driven approach will ultimately lead to identifying the areas of highest need across the city.

This prioritization process was developed based on input and feedback ATD staff received from open houses, public meetings, and an online survey conducted throughout the 2019 summer. Key takeaways from this engagement included the following:

- Prioritization measures should include equity considerations, proximity to entertainment districts and community uses, and the presence of people walking, biking, or on any form of mobility device.
- When ranking which categories of factors to use, crash history received the highest weighted score for importance, followed by risk characteristics, and then speed profile.

Progress on Speed Limit Analysis

Last fall, ATD staff brought a first package of speed limit reductions for City Council's approval, which included street segments on our key corridors as well as streets included on the High-Injury Network. Staff have continued this effort for Level 3 and 4 streets (major and minor arterial streets, respectively) as classified in the ASMP by collecting speed and volume

data on the next group of streets with speeding and injury concerns. This analysis will provide insight for upcoming discussions related to speed limit reductions with City Council.

Since ATD's last update memo on the program, Council approved ATD's Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Budget, which includes resources needed to implement the new program: a program manager, operating funds to implement the various strategies within the program (recognizing that the number of projects that can be implemented – particularly with engineering solutions - will be dependent on available budget), and funding to perform speed studies as needed.

Next Steps

ATD staff are developing the final Speed Management Program details, including the measures and weighting to be used, so that the program can be launched upon hiring a program manager. In the meantime, staff continue to finalize the initial analysis for the citywide program, applying the program measures and collecting speed data on potential project locations based on residents' input over the last couple of years as well as from the new methodology. As engagement occurs with residents in the chosen project areas, cost estimates will be developed and finalized for the strategies selected. ATD's goal is to have a preliminary list of potential project streets ready to begin this spring.

ATD staff are also completing speed evaluations for selected Level 3 and 4 streets to recommend possible speed limit modifications where appropriate based on context and operating characteristics of these streets. ATD's goal is to have a list of streets for proposed speed limit modifications this spring. ATD staff will continue to work with our partners in the Austin Police Department to add enforcement to our engineering and education efforts associated with these possible speed limit modifications.

If you have any questions about this program, please do not hesitate to contact Eric Bollich, Transportation Engineering Division Manager, at Eric.Bollich@austintexas.gov.