



CITY OF HARRISONBURG  
**PUBLIC  
WORKS**

320 EAST MOSBY ROAD, HARRISONBURG, VA 22801

OFFICE (540) 434-5928 • FAX (540) 434-2695

To: Ande Banks, Interim City Manager  
From: Thomas Hartman, PE, PMP, LEED AP, Director of Public Works  
Date: June 14, 2022  
Re: Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program: Portland East neighborhood

**Summary:**

Consider authorizing City staff to install and enforce ‘No Thru Traffic’ signs in the Portland East Neighborhood.

**Background:**

The Portland East neighborhood was formally enrolled in the City’s Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program (NTCP) in June 2018, after completing a number of prerequisite steps for enrollment. A Traffic Calming Plan was then created to identify measures to be implemented in response to citizen concerns in the Portland East neighborhood about the high volume of cut-through traffic using neighborhood streets between Port Republic Road and Reservoir Street. City Council adopted the Traffic Calming Plan for the neighborhood in November 2018, and it is provided as an attachment.

Harrisonburg Public Works staff, in coordination with the Harrisonburg Police Department and neighborhood residents have installed all the measures included in the Portland East Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan. Traffic data was collected before and after implementation of the measures, and it is provided as an attachment. The data shows that the measures led to reduced speed of vehicles driving through the neighborhood. However, traffic volumes were shown to be increasing, likely due to construction of nearby developments. In particular, the amount of traffic at late-night hours has been a concern to residents and was observed in the traffic data.

After significant communication between Public Works, HPD, VDOT staff, and neighborhood residents, installation of ‘No Thru Traffic’ signs on Portland Dr at Port Republic Rd and on Fieldale Place at Reservoir St has been identified as the action that achieves the traffic calming goals most directly. The Harrisonburg Police Department will enforce the restriction if drivers are observed traveling through the neighborhood, in either direction, between Port Republic Rd and Reservoir St. Public Works staff will communicate the change to Waze and Google Maps, anticipating that it will lead them to no longer direct traffic through the neighborhood. The restriction will not impact access for those who live in the neighborhood between Reservoir St and Port Republic Rd, including both City and County residents. Once fully implemented, Public Works staff will collect traffic data to identify the impact of this change.

Staff consider the context of this neighborhood, and the surrounding road network, to be different from other locations in the city. Given this, staff do not currently anticipate additional implementation of restrictions on through traffic in the City. However, given the traffic calming measures taken in the neighborhood and the lack of impact on traffic volumes, staff requests that Council approve installation of the “No Thru Traffic” restriction.

**Key Issues:**

N/A

**Environmental Impact:**

N/A

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

**Prior Actions:**

In April of 2018, Council approved the traffic study request for the neighborhood. In November of 2018, Council approved the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan for the neighborhood.

**Alternatives:**

Continue to evaluate additional traffic calming measures in the neighborhood

**Community Engagement:**

Staff has held numerous meetings and had other discussions with neighborhood residents, facilitated through the Neighborhood Representatives.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that Council approve installation of the “No Thru Traffic” restriction.

**Attachments:**

1. Presentation
2. Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan, adopted in 2018
3. Traffic volume and speed data collected

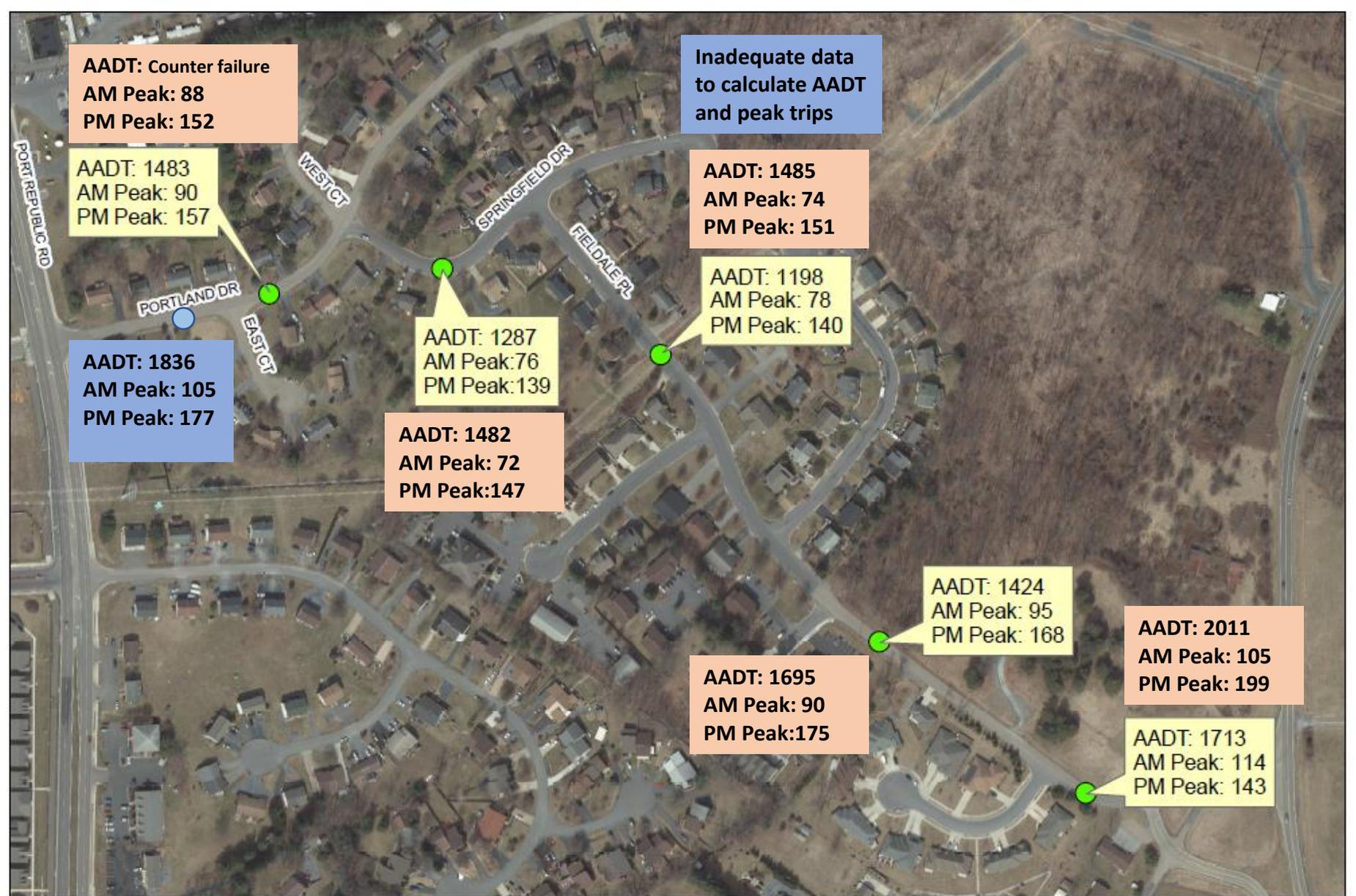
**Review:**

# Volume Data

AA DT: Average Daily Traffic, based on data collected over 1 week

Comparison of  
2018 (yellow boxes)  
2020 (orange boxes)  
2021 (blue boxes)

Approximately 20-25% increase in number of trips from 2018 to 2021

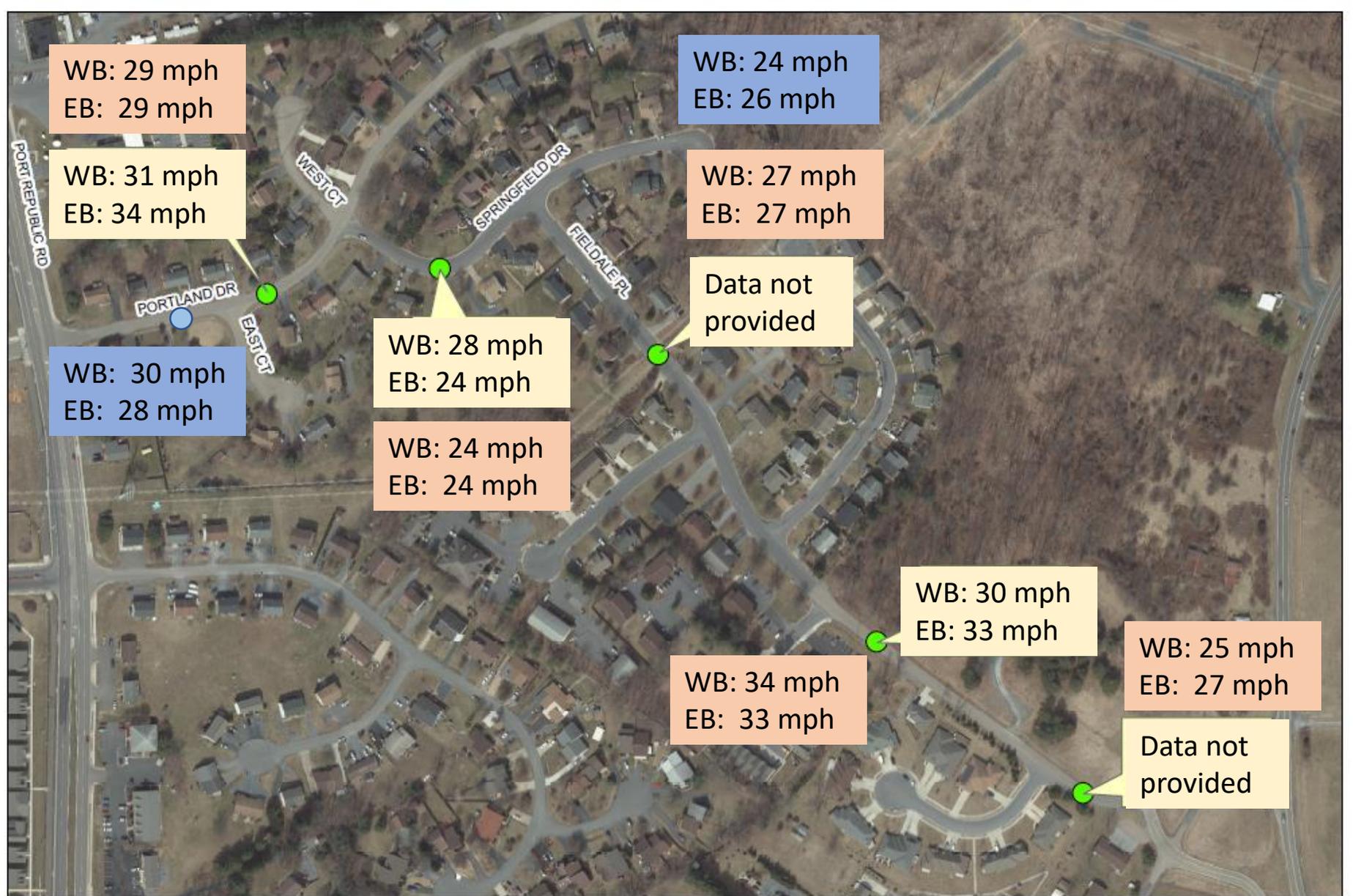


# Speed Data

85<sup>th</sup> Percentile: 85% of vehicles are traveling below the speed shown

Comparison of  
2018 (yellow boxes)  
2020 (orange boxes)  
2021 (blue boxes)

All locations in City show decrease in speed following implementation of measures in 2019



Portland Dr Neighborhood  
Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program  
Neighborhood Boundary



# NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM: PORTLAND EAST NEIGHBORHOOD

June 14, 2022

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# Background

- December 2017 – Increased enforcement, Team Up to Slow Down
- April 2018 – Neighborhood meeting, Council-approved traffic study
- May 2018 – Study completed, neighborhood petition completed
- June 2018 – City Council enrolled neighborhood in program
- August 2018 – Neighborhood representatives meeting
- October 2018 – Open house meeting to present Traffic Calming Plan
- November 2018 – City Council adopted Traffic Calming Plan
- 2019-2020 – All Traffic Calming Plan measures implemented
- 2020-2021 – Traffic studies completed
- 2021-2022 – Staff meetings with VDOT and neighborhood representatives regarding data, concerns and additional steps

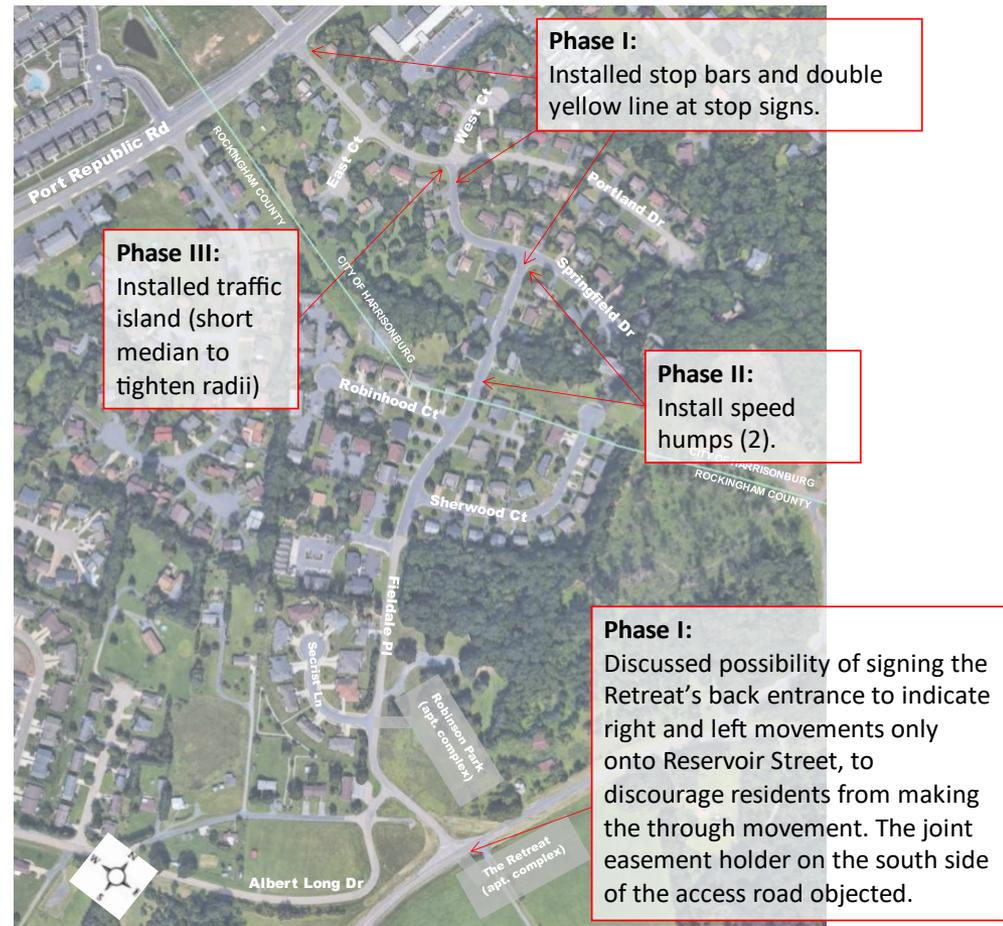
# Traffic Calming Plan Completed

All Phases Completed

Concerns Addressed:

- Speed of vehicles
- Intersection turning movements - islands
- 'No Thru Trucks' posted
- 'No Outlet' posted on dead-end road segments

Additionally: recent signal retiming of Reservoir St corridor



# Traffic Study results

- Installation of speed humps and intersection measures reduced vehicle speeds in the neighborhood.
- Traffic volumes showed an approximately 20-25% increase between 2018 and 2021
  - Likely due to nearby development
  - Indicates that current traffic calming measures have not notably discouraged cut-through traffic
- Late-night traffic volumes have been identified as a concern

# Proposed Action

- Install “No Thru Traffic” signs on Portland Dr at Port Republic Rd and on Fieldale Pl at Reservoir St
- The necessary coordination with VDOT has been completed
- Restriction does not impact access for City or County residents who live between Port Republic Rd and Reservoir St
- Enforcement of the restriction by HPD
  - When drivers are observed traveling through the neighborhood, in either direction, between Port Republic Rd and Reservoir St
  - Enforcement at all times of day
- Public Works staff will communicate the change to Waze and Google Maps

# Next Steps

- Summer 2022 – Implement “No Thru Traffic” restriction, communicate restriction to Google Maps and Waze, and begin enforcement
- Fall 2022 – Ensure adequate enforcement and education to discourage university students from using this route
- Fall 2022 – Conduct traffic study and evaluate results

Council Member Jones asked if people with varying physical abilities be able to have access to the concert. Ms. Dono stated yes, they will work with the city's Special Events Committee to plan out the event to accommodate everyone. Council Member Jones suggested they look into musicians coming from Greensboro, NC as they usually head north and can stop here. He stated this fits the Council's vision as to a city for all and music is the easiest way to bring people together.

Council Member Dent stated she is curious as to how this interacts with the longer term plan for the Build Our Park. Ms. Dono stated they are not sure where Build Our Park stands at this time, substantial funding is still needed for that project, and she doesn't think that could happen over the next three years. Council Member Dent stated this matches what was discussed at the Build Our Park Board meeting, start small and build the momentum so that people might be more amenable to a larger scale park, this might work well as we build towards a longer term plan. Ms. Dono stated she feels this would work really well for the advocacy of the park.

Vice Mayor Romero stated he really likes the vision and the goal of the grant, to bring the community together and diversify the options and opportunities and he is excited to see this happen. He stated he highly encourages HDR to reach out to everyone in the city and reach groups such as the many refugees in the city etc.

**A motion was made by Council Member Jones, seconded by Vice Mayor Romero, to approve the request as presented. The motion carried with a recorded vote as follows**

**Yes:** 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice Mayor Romero, Council Member Jones, Council Member Dent and Council Member Baugh

**No:** 0

**7.b.** Consider authorizing City staff to install and enforce "No Thru Traffic" signs in the Portland East Neighborhood due to the Traffic Calming Program study

Tom Hartman, director of Public Works, presented requested proposed changes and actions in the Portland East neighborhood's traffic calming. He reviewed the timeline on the Traffic Calming Plan for this area and noted all phases have been completed and noted that the traffic calming measures have not notably discouraged cut-through traffic. He reviewed the proposed actions which include the installation of "No Thru Traffic" signs, enforcement and communication on Waze and Google maps to show this change. He reviewed the next steps which include the following:

- Summer 2022 - Implement "No Thru Traffic" restriction, communicate restriction to Google Maps and Waze, and begin enforcement
- Fall 2022 - Ensure adequate enforcement and education to discourage university students from using this route
- Fall 2022 - Conduct traffic study and evaluate results

Vice Mayor Romero stated if this measure doesn't make the improvements needed what could be done next.

Council Member Jones stated if this doesn't work then we can put a barrier up. Further discussion took place regarding the current traffic and remedies.

**A motion was made by Council Member Jones seconded by Council Member Dent, to approve the request as presented. The motion carried with a recorded vote as follows:**

**Yes:** 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice Mayor Romero, Council Member Jones, Council Member Dent and Council Member Baugh

**No:** 0

**7.c.** Consider adopting an amendment to the Environmental Action Plan - Focus Area 4 Sustainable Transportation

Andrew Payton, chair of the Environmental Performance Standards and Advisory Committee, stated the targets that are going to be presented represent an acceleration towards Municipal vehicle electrification and bike/ped infrastructure in the city, which is a necessary direction. He stated there was concern in EPSAC that these targets alone are not enough to decarbonize transportation in the city at the pace we know is necessary, and according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, if we mitigate the worst of the climate induced disasters and disruption we need to reduce greenhouse gases by 45% from 2010 levels by the year 2030, which is a lot, and globally in the US and in Virginia we are not on target yet. He thanked staff to put these targets together and for the sustainability efforts that we see throughout the city and encourages everyone to continue to pursue whatever possible to advance climate resiliency and lesson our impact as a city on this crisis.

Tom Hartman, director of Public Works, presented a first amendment to the Environmental Action Plan (EAP) that was originally adopted January 2021. He stated in regard to Sustainable Transportation, Focus Area Four, there are six goals, and he reviewed each goal, and the strategies, metrics, and target for each goal.

Council Member Dent thanked everyone for all the work towards establishing these transportation targets and she appreciates Mr. Payton's comments because we have this perpetual tension between what is reasonably feasible to do and what we must do. She was disappointed to see only 20% reduction in goal one so let's hope we can find other ways and build momentum more towards what we must do. She stated the other shortcoming of this approach is that it sets only municipal targets, she understands that that is all we have control over, but municipal greenhouse gas emissions are only 3% of the total, so how do we marshal the resources of the community to meet the goals for the overall emissions for the other 97%. She stated that taps into EPSAC's combined role of community outreach and education also for things like the public use EV chargers to help give people the confidence they will be able to charge their EV's which in turn promotes purchases. She stated even if we can't set targets for the private usage, she thinks we should track the trends to enlist participation. She asked how we enlist the businesses and industrial uses that may be harder to crack because they are so based in fossil fuel, it is a complex problem, and she appreciates all the effort that goes into helping to address it.