

**VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE**  
**REPORT FOR THE VILLAGE COUNCIL WORKSHOP**  
**NOVEMBER 10, 2009 AGENDA**

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
Permanent Traffic Calming Improvements: Blodgett Avenue, from Maple Avenue to 55 <sup>th</sup> Street	Resolution Ordinance ✓ Motion Discussion Only	Naneil R. Newlon, P.E. Director of Public Works

**SYNOPSIS**

A motion is requested to note receipt of the Transportation and Parking (TaP) Commission recommendation regarding the installation of permanent traffic calming devices on Blodgett Avenue, between Maple Avenue and 55<sup>th</sup> Street.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT**

The Five Year Plan and Goals for 2008-2013 identified *Exceptional Municipal Organization*. A supporting objective of this goal is *Top Quality Core Services Responsive to Current and Future Community and Citizen Needs*.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

N/A.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Village Council note receipt of the TaP recommendation and take no action at this time due to lack of funding.

**BACKGROUND**

A neighborhood petition was submitted in June, 2008 by residents on Blodgett Avenue between Maple and 55<sup>th</sup> Street requesting the Village address speeding and traffic volume along Blodgett, particularly before and after school hours. In accordance with the Village's traffic calming policy, a study was completed and temporary speed cushions were deployed to assess their effectiveness. Prior to the installation of the temporary speed humps the average daily traffic count along this half-mile section of Blodgett Avenue was 1,040 vehicles at an average speed of 33.3 miles/hour. After installation the average daily traffic counts were 705 vehicles at an average speed of 24.4 miles/hour. The temporary speed humps diverted traffic to alternate routes and also significantly reduced vehicle speeds. Staff prepared preliminary plans for permanent speed humps at Blodgett Avenue.

TaP considered the petition at the August 12 and September 9, 2009 meetings and unanimously recommended approval the design and construction of five permanent speed humps along Blodgett Avenue when funding is available. They also requested that staff include a traffic circle at the Blodgett/Randall/Elmwood intersection as a possible future project.

The FY09 budget includes \$100,000 in the Capital Improvement Fund for traffic calming projects. The Claremont Drive traffic calming project, completed in 2009, was the Village's first significant traffic calming project and cost approximately \$68,000. It is estimated that a comparable project on this half-mile section of Blodgett Avenue would cost approximately the same amount. Funding is currently not included in FY10 for traffic calming projects, thus staff recommends no further action be taken regarding this item at this time.

Staff will continue to work with the residents along Blodgett Avenue to address concerns about speeding. This street has been identified as a high priority location for installation of temporary radar, driver feedback signs. If these signs are found to be effective, staff will review the possibility of installing these on a longer term basis as well as other, less costly traffic calming measures.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Meeting Minutes - August 12 & September 9, 2009 TaP Commission

Traffic Volume - Exhibit

Proposed Permanent Speed Humps Locations - Exhibit

# TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION

## August 12, 2009

### EXCERPTED

**File #13-09 Blodgett - Maple Avenue 55<sup>th</sup> Street - Traffic Calming Review** - Mr. Fera reported this matter was a continuation from last year and many of the temporary traffic calming devices were installed during May with the purpose to collect field data and then report back. The devices were removed within the last couple of weeks. Speed counts were taken while the cushions were in place and afterwards. Staff found that the data collected was very similar to other locations in town and vehicles were speeding less. A few residential calls were discussed. No action was being requested at this time. However, staff was pleased with the effectiveness of the speed humps and stated that further action could be taken, if so directed by the commission.

Co-chairman Gress opened up the meeting to public comment.

**Mr. Ron Koreles**, 5255 Blodgett Ave., Downers Grove, stated that since the humps have been removed, the speeders have returned and he would like some type of enforcement.

**Mr. Tom Nybo**, 5253 Blodgett Ave., Downers Grove, believed the speed humps worked and asked what the next steps were, suggesting stop signs and enforcement.

**Mr. Kevin Campbell**, 5404 Blodgett Ave., Downers Grove, agreed that the speed humps worked. He recommended law enforcement and stop signs. He agreed the majority of the problem was that the street was used as a cut-through. Vehicle counts per day were misleading because school traffic was not considered.

**Mr. Roger Reed**, 1530 Bolson Drive, Downers Grove, also believed the speed humps worked and much of the traffic was cut-through. He discussed some of the steps he personally takes to slow down traffic. He voiced his overall dissatisfaction on how things were being handled by the village.

**Mr. Rory McGinty**, 5205 Blodgett Avenue, Downers Grove, voiced concern about children's safety since he lived closely to the school. He agreed the speed humps slowed down traffic and hoped the speed humps would return.

**Mr. Paul Simms**, 5210 Blodgett, Downers Grove, reviewed the timeline for this application, noting that he contacted staff back in 1998. He discussed the fact that he has never seen tickets issued by the police for the speeders. He also hoped the humps would return in a reasonable timeline. He thanked Mr. Fera for his assistance in this matter.

**Ms. Terri Williams**, 5230 Blodgett, Downers Grove, said that when the speed humps were in, they actually calmed the residents. She encouraged staff to make a recommendation rather than wait until spring to install the humps.

**Mr. Kirt Harper**, 5204 Elmwood, Downers Grove, discussed the difficulty he encounters at the Y-intersection at Elmwood and Blodgett as he pulls out of his driveway. He questioned staff's vehicle data on Blodgett, Elmwood, and Hill Streets.

**Mr. John Miller**, 5405 Blodgett, Downers Grove, reiterated the speed humps helped. He asked if there were records on how many police citations were issued. Police staff did not have that information available. He discussed the overall cut-through traffic that travels there but did not want to relocate the problem. He also noted that stop signs should not be used to slow down traffic. He asked if the traffic circle for Elmwood, Blodgett, and Randall is still being considered.

Mr. Millette indicated it was a place holder for traffic calming and would be something for the residents to consider.

**Mr. Roger Reed**, 1530 Bolson Drive, Downers Grove, inquired as to who was funding the speed humps, wherein Co-chairman Gress stated the money comes from the Village's budget; however, funding was also being cut in certain areas.

**Mr. Mark Bussman**, 5344 Blodgett, Downers Grove, questioned where the police action was occurring. He commented on how the humps will eventually move traffic over to other areas. He confirmed the speed humps were being used by kids as skateboard ramps.

Discussion was raised about the remaining funds in the budget to which Mr. Millette explained would depend upon the final installations on Claremont. He estimated about \$6,000. Questions followed on whether the speed humps qualified for AARA funds, wherein Mr. Millette was not aware if there were restrictions on them. Mr. Fera also noted that Triple AAA had a safety program that he forwarded onto the village's grants coordinator. Other traffic calming devices were discussed, noting that staff has considered other options. Mr. Fera agreed better communication to the residents would be key.

Per Co-chairman Gress's question about in-house projects being identified and where the money comes from, Mr. Millette stated last year the traffic calming program money was used for some of the studies and to purchase the cushions. Staff relies on the availability of in-house labor. This year, he expected the permanent installation costs will come from the traffic calming funding but pulling money from both budgets made sense. Asked if staff had the ability to reinstall the humps as permanent, Mr. Millette stated it did, but they had to remove them due to the snowplows. He did not foresee any problems with permanent speed humps being installed.

Co-chairman Gress asked that Mr. Millette return with a recommendation of the feasibility for permanent humps installation and to have more police presence in the area.

Co-chairman Wendt, after hearing all the comments, recommended the speed humps. Dialog also followed that other traffic calming measures could also be considered even though the speed humps were installed. The timing of the speed hump installation followed. Ms. Van Ann voiced concern about rushing the item and suggested that staff return in a month with a recommendation. It was also pointed out that no one objected to the speed humps as present.

Mr. Fera felt it would be appropriate for staff to have some sort of final design plan to show the residents what was being planned for the installation and to receive a concurrence before the final installation begins.

**Ms. Terri Williams**, 5230 Blodgett, Downers Grove, stated that her street is the only street that does not have stops signs between 55<sup>th</sup> and Maple and to push the traffic out, and it cannot dilute the traffic to other streets.

**MR. SCHILLER MADE A MOTION THAT STAFF RETURN IN SEPTEMBER 2009 WITH A PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING SPEED CUSHIONS DESIGN TO BE INSTALLED IN THE**

**SAME LOCATIONS AS THE TEMPORARY CUSHION AND TO BE CONSTRUCTED IN 2009, SUBJECT TO BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS AND THE AVAILABILITY OF ASPHALT PLANTS. COPIES OF THE DESIGN AND LOCATION OF THE HUMPS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE RESIDENTS PRIOR TO NEXT MONTH'S MEETING. POLICE ENFORCEMENT TO BE INCREASED AND ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS TO BE PROVIDED AT EACH MEETING WHILE THE INSTALLATION IS TAKING PLACE. ALL THE ABOVE SHALL BE FORWARDED TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION.**

**SECONDED BY MR. CRONIN. MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE OF 8-0.**

**Mr. Paul Simms, 5210 Blodgett, voiced his disappointment on postponing the above matter.**

## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION September 9, 2009

### EXCERPTED

**1. File #13-09 Blodgett Avenue - Maple Avenue to 55<sup>th</sup> Street - Permanent Traffic Calming Devices** - Mr. Millette recalled that the commissioners directed staff to look at different types of traffic calming devices that it could recommend for use on Blodgett Avenue within an expedited timeframe. Staff reviewed the entire corridor with a future improvement to be considered. Mr. Fera discussed that staff was now presenting and after consideration of public comment, a design with five speed humps as shown in staff's exhibit. Steps for placement of the humps were explained.

Mr. Fera referenced a few communications he received from residents and their perceptions of speed in the area. He explained that staff felt justified in the pursuit of such calming devices and planned on implementing them as soon as possible.

Questions directed to the police department followed, specifically as to how many speeding tickets were issued once the temporary humps were removed from Blodgett. In response, Police Sgt. Harrison explained that the agency's recordkeeping for ticket writing was not specific to the incident location but rather a "grid", of which the area included three grids. He could not provide a detailed location for the tickets nor the number of tickets specific to Blodgett. However, he explained how his staff is spread out to cover specific areas for speeding.

Removal costs of the humps were briefly discussed with Mr. Millette stating that installation was approximately \$7000 per hump and the removal cost would run about \$5,000 per hump.

Co-Chairman Wendt opened up the meeting to public comment.

**Mr. Tom Nybo**, 5253 Blodgett, discussed that stop signs could be used to slow down traffic and were more cost-effective or use left turns off of 55<sup>th</sup> Street. Co-Chairman Wendt noted that the stop signs were not warranted but he could consider the left turns off of 55<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Fera, however, confirmed that DuPage County DOT concurrence would be necessary for that.

**Mr. Ron Koteles**, 5255 Blodgett Avenue, asked for police enforcement for an hour before school and an hour after school since that was when the speeding occurred.

**Mr. Paul Simms**, 5210 Blodgett Avenue, voiced concern about yet another delay in the process but conversely, he stated the temporary humps did do their job by slowing down traffic. He thanked Mr. Fera and Mr. Dominguez for their assistance. Mr. Simms commented about the cut-through traffic in general and the difficulty of police enforcement. He asked that the removed speed hump be returned and that a speed hump be installed in the "V" area near the park.

**Mr. Curt Harper**, 5204 Elmwood Avenue, asked whether the locations of the humps take into account the topography of the area versus the distance between each hump, wherein Mr. Millette stated it has been taken into consideration. Per Mr. Harper's question about the speed bump material, Mr. Fera explained that the material used for the speed humps will be asphalt and will be of a curved, smooth surface and blended into the pavement with a reduced noise factor Co-Chairman Wendt suggested Mr. Harper visit the Downers Grove South access road.

**Mr. Harper** inquired whether there has been consideration to install a Yield sign on southbound Elmwood at the Y intersection, wherein Mr. Fera discussed the proposed traffic circle under consideration and its positive effect on traffic control versus a yield sign. Regarding the No Turn

sign from westbound 55<sup>th</sup> onto northbound Blodgett, Mr. Harper believed it would push the traffic onto another street. As to Hump Location No. 4, he hoped it would not interfere with the intersection of Summit. Lastly, he inquired as to the requirements for a stop sign.

**Ms. Dorothy Bauer**, 5125 Blodgett, believed there was no speeding issue at the north end of the area under discussion. She supported the traffic circle versus the speed humps. She commented on the speed humps that were installed in her condominium building at one point, only to have some of them removed because they were a nuisance. She also believed there was a parking issue at the south end towards 55<sup>th</sup> Street, especially in the evenings and weekends.

**Ms. Michelle Hansen**, 5209 Blodgett, commented on the previous-mentioned enforcement of the area for one hour prior to school starting and one hour after school ending, noting that speeding occurs until 7:00 p.m. She saw the speed humps work effectively in the area and supported their installation.

**Mr. John Miller**, 5405 Blodgett, supported the traffic circle over the speed humps, since he saw more kids playing on the speed humps. He suggested saving the money and installing the traffic circle. He discussed that other areas were experiencing the same issues and that many of the humps eventually get removed. On behalf of his neighbors at 5411, 5408, 5404 and 5535 Blodgett Avenue, he stated they did not support the humps.

**Ms. Laura Cozza**, 5309 Blodgett, stated for the first time she was able to get out of her driveway easily. She questioned how the traffic data was collected and believed the data should have included the traffic from the school.

**Mr. Dan Cozza**, 5309 Blodgett, added that a speed hump or a stop sign at Location No. 4 would be preferable. He stated that when the speed humps were removed, the speeders increased.

Asked if the police have any authority to write a ticket if a resident witnessed a speeding car, the sergeant explained it would not likely go to a conviction, but there were cases when police followed up with offenders outside the village or did a follow-up call to a speeder. As to reviewing the installation of a stop sign at Elmwood as part of the process, **Mr. Fera** stated it would be easier to install a speed hump at Elmwood but when the revised traffic circle comes into play, the hump would be removed.

**Mr. Millette** explained how stop signs are not used to control speed and talked about his own research on unwarranted stop signs and the liability it poses to municipalities. He clarified that traffic circles are intended to utilize stop signs.

As part of the recommendation for tonight, the chair questioned whether the No Left Turn signage could be included in a motion, wherein **Mr. Fera** stated it could but, according to DuPage County DOT, it would require a written resolution. **Mr. Millette** offered to contact the Village of Westmont and see what steps were taken to receive their No Right Turns installed with the county's support. **Mr. Fera** also believed the proposal (speed humps with turning restrictions) being discussed was a simple design to traffic calming as a first step. Questions followed on whether the proposal would meet this year's construction season, to which **Mr. Millette** felt it would not, due to the work being done on Claremont and the estimated \$35,000 cost for the five speed humps. His timeframe estimate was more in line with May 2010 and depends at what level the program is funded.

Dialog followed that the left-turn restrictions at 55<sup>th</sup> St and Blodgett Ave could come sooner.

**Ms. Michelle Hansen**, 5209 Blodgett, discussed her concerns that installing No-Left turn signs from Main to Fairview presented an issue with Fairview and would create back-ups during the peak times, as well as on Hill Avenue.

**Mr. Paul Simms**, 5210 Blodgett, stated the humps were the only effective calming measure that he has seen work.

**Co-Chairman Wendt** entertained a recommendation.

**MR. SARICKS MADE A MOTION THAT THE PROPOSAL TO INSTALL PERMANENT SPEED HUMPS BE APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION WITH THE POSSIBLE ADDITION OF LOOKING AT RESTRICTIONS FOR NO LEFT TURNS FROM EASTBOUND 55<sup>TH</sup> TO NORTHBOUND BLODGETT, EARLIER, IF POSSIBLE.**

**SECONDED BY MR. CRONIN. ROLL CALL:**

**AYE: MR. SCHILLER, MR. STUEBNER, MR. SARICKS, MR. CRONIN, MR. BARRY**

**NAY: MR. GRESS, MR. WENDT**

**MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 5-2.**

**Co-chairman Wendt** stated he voted nay because he was not convinced it was the best solution to the Blodgett matter given the financial cost and the possibility there could be changes in the spring.

**Co-chairman Gress** supported the speed humps but did not support the left turn off of 55<sup>th</sup> onto Blodgett Avenue.

**Commissioner Schiller** commented that he hoped the Village Council would consider the matter and the work would get completed this year since the matter initially began back in 1999.

**MR. CRONIN MADE A SECOND MOTION TO PLACE AS MANY SPEED HUMPS AS FINANCIALLY FEASIBLE TO INSTALL ON BLODGETT AND AS CLOSE TO WHITTIER SCHOOL AS POSSIBLE.**

**SECONDED BY MR. SARICKS. ROLL CALL:**

**AYE: MR. GRESS, MR. WENDT, MR. SCHILLER, MR. STUEBNER, MR. SARICKS, MR. CRONIN, MR. BARRY**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 7-0**

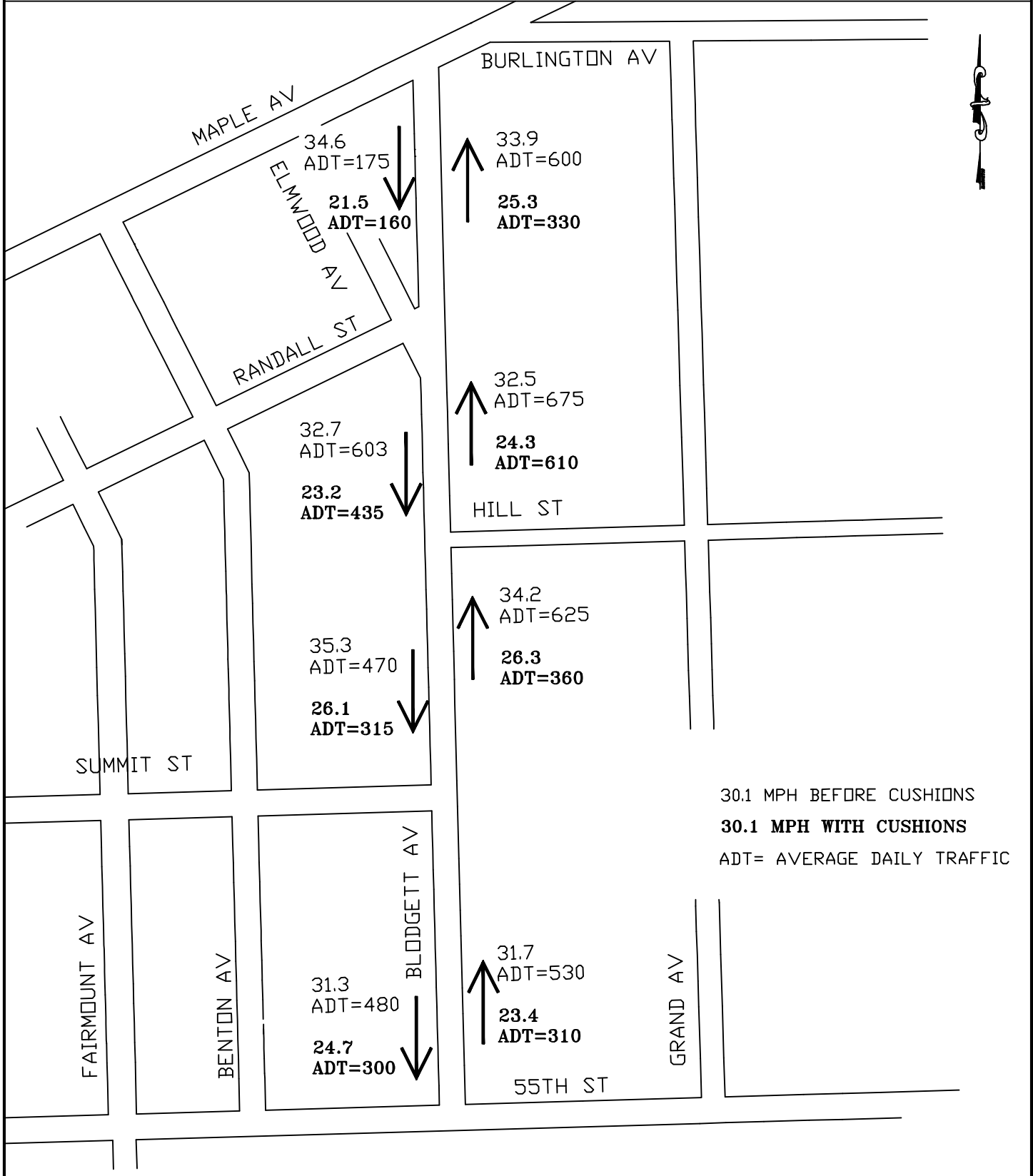


TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION  
 BLODGETT AVENUE- MAPLE AV TO 55TH ST  
 TRAFFIC CALMING PERFORMANCE REVIEW  
 TAP COMMISSION FILE #13-09

EXHIBIT 1



r.w.b.  
07/31/09



**LOCATION # 1**

**LOCATION # 2**

**LOCATION # 3**

**LOCATION # 4**

**LOCATION # 5**



MAPLE AVE

ELMWOOD AVE

BENTON AVE

RANDALL ST

HILL ST

BLODGETT AVE

SUMMIT ST

FAIRMOUNT AVE

GRAND AVE

55TH ST

FILE #13-09  
PROPOSED PERMANENT TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES  
BLODGETT AVE - MAPLE AVE TO 55TH ST  
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