



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Edward D. Reiskin
City Administrator

FROM: Fred Kelley
Director, Oakland
Department of
Transportation

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL – Report with
Recommendations on Traffic Calming

DATE: November 10, 2022

City Administrator Approval 

Date: Dec 1, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive A Report With Recommendations For Improving And Expediting Traffic Calming Installations Throughout Needed Locations In Oakland, Including Completion Of Installation Of Approved Speed Bumps, And Recommended Budget Adjustments To Provide For Ongoing Capacity To Ensure Traffic Safety And Pedestrian Safety Improvements Are Completed Timely Throughout Oakland, Including Status Of Implementing Traffic Calming Funding From The Current Budget.

REASON FOR SUPPLEMENTAL

At the October 18, 2022 City Council meeting, Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) staff was asked to provide a supplemental report addressing the following items for the December 6, 2022 City Council Meeting:

- An action item to allocate \$1.3 million of Measure BB funds for International Boulevard
- Information on preventing illegal U-turns
- An update on the implementation of k-rails or other barricades as a mechanism for business owners to utilize the City of Oakland right-of-way to deter vehicle-based robberies that involve deliberately crashing into storefronts

This report also includes updates on:

- Foothill & 35th traffic calming measures
- The use of StarChase by the Oakland Police Department (OPD)

The following updates are [supplemental to previous reports](#) provided on April 19th, May 17th, June 21st, and October 18th, 2022.

Please note: A separate report to Council is being prepared regarding the action item to allocate \$1.3 million of Measure BB funds for International Boulevard.

City Council
December 6, 2022

Item 1. Expediting k-rails or other barricades as needed in situations where those are warranted - specifically as a mechanism for business owners to utilize the City of Oakland right-of-way to deter vehicle-based robberies that involve deliberately crashing into storefronts.

OakDOT's mission is to assure safe, equitable, and sustainable access and mobility for residents, businesses, and visitors. OakDOT is partnering with the City Administrator's Office to recommend environmental design interventions—including vehicle barriers—to deter vehicle-based robberies that involve deliberately crashing into storefronts. OakDOT has developed a permit mechanism to allow business and/or property owners to install vehicle barriers in the right-of-way. Before approving an obstruction permit for vehicle barriers in the right-of-way, OakDOT and the City Administrator's Office work with applicants to conduct a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) analysis that identifies recommendations for improving safety and deterring crime.

OakDOT is currently working with two cannabis dispensaries to deter vehicle-based robberies: Ivy Hill Cannabis and Rose Mary Jane Oakland Cannabis Dispensary. Ivy Hill Cannabis has conducted a CPTED analysis, which recommended vehicle barriers, but, as of early November, Ivy Hill Cannabis management has not yet determined whether they support installing vehicle barriers in the right-of-way. Rose Mary Jane Oakland Cannabis Dispensary is currently pursuing a CPTED analysis.

Item 2. Measures to Prevent Illegal U-Turns

A U-turn is when a driver turns their vehicle around in the street to go back the way they came. The legality of this maneuver is defined by the California Vehicle Code and is dependent on the context in which the maneuver is made. For more information on where a U-turn may or may not be allowed, please refer to the California DMV Handbook:

<https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/handbook/california-driver-handbook/turns/>.

In some cases where U-turns would typically be allowed under state law, OakDOT may further restrict U-turns by installing traffic signs or other preventative measures. OakDOT makes decisions about U-turns, i.e., whether they should be prohibited or enhanced by engineering treatment, on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration safety concerns, benefits and unintended consequences. U-turn restrictions at intersections are typically accomplished by signs. For mid-block restrictions, signs and/or raised vertical elements like traffic posts are typically used.

In the commercial section of Lakeshore Avenue between Lake Park Avenue and Mandana Boulevard, vehicles are currently restricted from making U-turns mid-block by a combination of California Vehicle Code section 22102, which restricts U-turns in a business district, and the existing traffic signs that restrict U-turns. OakDOT understands that some drivers are turning across the yellow center line to access parking spaces in the opposite direction. This is in violation of California Vehicle Code section 22102. Lakeshore Avenue is part of the city's high injury network, which Oakland Police Department (OPD) prioritizes for traffic enforcement of dangerous driving behaviors as part of the Safe Oakland Streets initiative. November 2022 traffic enforcement operations will include that corridor and the placement of a message trailer.

Addressing U-turns with engineering and/or enforcement measures overall ranks relatively low compared to other pressing city priorities for OakDOT and OPD resources to address community violence, severe and fatal traffic crashes, and equity.

Item 3. Updates on the Foothill & 35th Traffic Calming Measures

Foothill & 35th Traffic Calming: In response to recent crashes involving motorists losing control and crossing over lanes or running onto the sidewalk on Foothill just northwest of 35th Avenue, between October 24-November 2, 2022 a travel lane was removed in order to realign the westbound approach to reduce the horizontal curvature of the vehicle path for the westbound direction on Foothill Blvd approaching 35th Avenue. This approach of Foothill Blvd. had curved left sharply, so drivers continuing along the road had to veer hard left as they drove through the intersection. The reduction and realignment of traffic lane provides a smoother movement through the intersection. Additionally, "CURVE AHEAD" stencils were installed upstream from the intersection at the same time to increase driver awareness of the curve which was previously enhanced by curve warning signs. These improvements were installed with paint, and will be upgraded to be made more permanent with thermoplastic in coordination with paving maintenance in Summer/Fall 2023.

Item 4. StarChase Status Update from the Oakland Police Department

StarChase provides public safety global positioning service (GPS) technology to OPD. The vendor outfitted several OPD vehicles with the platform which includes a launcher on the front of the vehicle, a control pad inside the vehicle, and two tags that are used to track other vehicles, and OPD entered into training the use of the platform.

To date there has been one attempt at tagging a vehicle that met the OPD Pursuit Policy as well as the StarChase Policy guidelines. The launch of that tracker was unsuccessful; it missed the vehicle and was recovered from the roadway. Recently OPD has also recovered outside agency tags from vehicles in OPD's impound, an indication that other agencies are having issues as well. OPD is in the process of reaching out to other agencies to understand issues they have encountered while using the system and how they are working to overcome them.

OPD challenges with StarChase implementation to date include:

- The StarChase equipment must be fully functional to be effective. OPD has had some malfunctions with the StarChase equipment and is currently working with the vendor to remedy those malfunctions.
- The units installed have had numerous repairs needed calling into question the reliability of the units. The original units are now out of the original manufacturer's warranty and are requiring costly repairs. Each unit has the tracking units or "tags" which are also expiring, and new units will be needed. OPD is also working to get cost estimates for that item.
- The launchers need routine maintenance to clean the launching unit on the vehicle and if not performed the unit may not deploy and malfunction. OPD would need to assign maintenance personnel to maintain and repair the units.

- OPD would need to equip more vehicles with the launching unit to ensure that the police vehicle pursuing the suspect vehicle was equipped (which is costly to include the launching unit, the yearly subscription and repair costs when out of warranty). Only a subset of OPD vehicles were originally equipped with StarChase, so it is very rare to have a vehicle equipped as the lead police vehicle in the pursuit (which is required to get a tag affixed).
- During pursuits the unit has a heating/warming period where it heats the glue of the tag and cannot launch until heated. Depending on ambient temperature this may take as long as 45 seconds or so. Many times, pursuits have been cancelled by then for various risk factors and or the pursued vehicle has gained significant distance on the pursuing police vehicle.
- At least one police vehicle involved in the pursuit must be equipped with StarChase. If a secondary police pursuit vehicle was equipped and involved in the chase, attempting to switch positions in a vehicle pursuit to allow a StarChase equipped vehicle to exchange places with the lead police car successfully would be difficult and exceedingly risky and unsafe.
- There has to be close proximity between the StarChase equipped police vehicle, and the vehicle being pursued to effectively deploy. If the distance is too great, officers are not allowed to engage in excessive speed to “catch up” to the vehicle being pursued to deploy StarChase.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Megan Wier, Assistant Director, at mwier@oaklandca.gov.

Respectfully submitted,


Fred Kelley (Nov 30, 2022 13:47 PST)

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