TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CITY MANAGER
DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT
DATE: SEPTEMBER 11, 2006
CMR: 344:06
SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT ON LANDSCAPING OF DOWNTOWN NORTH TRAFFIC CIRCLES

RECOMMENDATION
This is an information report. No Council action is requested at this time.

BACKGROUND
On November 14, 2005, the City Council conducted a public hearing on the permanent retention of the second Downtown North traffic calming trial project. The trial traffic calming project consisted of three traffic circles and two speed tables within the neighborhood, a street closure on Palo Alto Avenue, and morning and afternoon commute period turn restrictions from Alma and Middlefield onto Hawthorne and Everett Streets (see Attachment A).

The Council voted to make the installations permanent and directed staff to return to Council with (1) options for the installation of landscaping in the traffic circles, and (2) a feasibility study for non-vertical measures to increase vehicular and pedestrian safety around Johnson Park. During the Council discussion of landscaping of the traffic circles, Council members requested that staff discuss the issue of landscaping, including potential participation by the neighborhood, with neighborhood representatives before returning to Council. (Refer to Attachment B, Council meeting minutes).

This report responds to the Council assignment with regard to landscaping of the traffic circles; Transportation Division staff will return with a separate report on the safety measures around Johnson Park.

DISCUSSION
During the spring, Community Services staff held discussions with representatives of the Downtown North Neighborhood Association (DTNNA) regarding maintenance of the traffic circles. DTNNA agreed to take responsibility for maintenance of the any planted landscaping in the traffic circles once the landscaping and irrigation were installed by the City.

Subsequent to these preliminary discussions with the neighborhood, Public Works Engineering staff prepared a cost estimate for the irrigation, landscaping and construction of the three permanent traffic circles. The 2007 cost estimate to complete the project is $250,000. This includes the following elements:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction (@ $65,000 per circle)</td>
<td>$195,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency @ 15%</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing/inspection @ 3%</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. Expenses @ 1%</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escalation to mid-2007 @ 7%</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Construction Cost</strong></td>
<td><strong>$247,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This estimate exceeds the remaining balance of $57,000 in the Downtown North project budget. There is no identified funding source for the $190,000 of additional funds that would be required to complete the landscaping of the permanent traffic circles. Staff believes that the available funding will be sufficient for the installation of river-rock/hardscape infill of the traffic circles. Given the magnitude of the cost, staff did not consult further with the DTNNA about having the neighborhood fund the project. Staff intends to proceed with the hardscape installation unless directed otherwise by the City Council.

**POLICY IMPLICATION**

The Downtown North traffic calming plan is consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies and programs related to neighborhood streets, including Policy -33: Keep all neighborhood streets open unless there is a demonstrated safety or overwhelming through traffic problem and there are no acceptable alternatives, or unless a closure would increase the use of alternative transportation modes.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

On March 22, 2004, the City Council approved Resolution No. 8415 adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Modified Mixed Measure Plan, which included the three traffic circles components of the Second Trial Downtown North neighborhood traffic calming plan. The adopted MND covers the retention of the second trial project and the additional project elements including hardscape for the traffic circles. No further environmental review is needed at this time.

PREPARED BY:  

Gayle Likens, Transportation Manager

APPROVED BY:  

Mike Sartor, Assistant Director, Public Works
CITY MANAGER APPROVAL: ________________________
Emily Harrison, Assistant City Manager

ATTACHMENTS
A. Map of Second Downtown North Traffic Calming Plan
B. Minutes from the City Council meeting of November 14, 2005

COURTESY COPIES
Dan Lorimer
LaNell Mimmack
Mike Liveright
Joshua Mogal