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DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

*Date: December 4, 2013*

*To: Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee*

*From: Nicole Losch, Transportation Planner*

*Subject: Hyde Street traffic calming & request for street closure*

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### ***Background***

Traffic calming & neighborhood enhancements are neighborhood-driven efforts. After a petition is received by the city, traffic data is collected to provide a baseline for assessing perceived vs. measurable traffic issues. This helps to refine the most appropriate traffic calming measures, selected from a suite of solutions approved for Burlington. Neighborhood meetings are scheduled to identify common issues and to narrow down potential improvements. The preferred concepts can then be further designed and discussed in more detail at another neighborhood meeting; solutions should not send the traffic problem onto adjacent streets. The final step includes a “negative poll” that is mailed to residents and solicits 1/3 opposition (or 2/3 support) for the proposal. With 1/3 opposition, a project will not be pursued and traffic calming will not be revisited for 2 years, while staff works on traffic calming projects in other neighborhoods.

### ***Hyde Street Traffic Calming History***

In 2006 a request for traffic calming was submitted by residents of Hyde Street. The petition was signed by residents between #7 – 140 Hyde Street. A neighborhood meeting was scheduled but was sparsely attended and included only residents south of Archibald.

Following the neighborhood meeting in 2006, the city’s traffic calming was halted to reassess the neighborhood “voting” procedures and residents were asked to recruit more neighborhood participation. A conceptual plan for several bumpouts was drafted but was not heavily discussed or considered by the neighborhood. Since that time, there was some turnover in Hyde Street residents and interest was renewed from residents on the northern block.

In summer 2011, concepts for closing Hyde Street at Willard Street were distributed by a Hyde Street resident. Feedback indicated that residents on the northern block were supportive of the street closure concept, and several follow-up meetings have occurred.

### ***Pilot Project Results***

The concept for Hyde Street closure was well received by neighbors and the city. The Department of Public Works (DPW) speculated that closing the northernmost section of Hyde Street would also help calm traffic on southern Hyde Street and would create an opportunity for a “green street” treatment to capture stormwater runoff on site.

To more accurately gauge neighborhood feedback, assess traffic impacts to adjacent streets and southern Hyde Street, and provide an opportunity for the Fire Department to assess their access during a street closure, a 30-day pilot closure was initiated in the fall of 2012. From the DPW perspective, the pilot project was a success: feedback was 100% supportive and traffic impacts were better than expected (southern Hyde Street traffic volumes dropped substantially, while traffic volumes on Willard Street increased). On-site meetings with the Fire Department revealed there would be no impact to their service as a result of closing northern Hyde Street. Existing limitations (fire hydrant locations and overhead wires) guide their current access to the area, and no additional impacts were expected from this street closure.

Following the pilot project and adjustments to the conceptual design to address access concerns, the neighborhood poll was distributed and received 100% support.

### ***Requested Action and Next Steps***

The final design is being developed and will be approved by the City Engineer (with review by the Fire Department). The plan will include stormwater infiltration, a cut-through for bicycles, and a sidewalk. Construction is planned for 2014.

The DPW recommends that Hyde Street be altered to restrict motor vehicle access at its northernmost intersection (at Willard Street). Title VI Article 78 Section 234 of the City Charter authorizes City Council with the power to alter streets. Therefore, we are recommending that the TEUC authorize the alteration of Hyde Street at its northernmost section to restrict motor vehicle access and work with the DPW to bring this recommendation to the City Council for review and approval.