

From: [Transportation Commission](#)
To: [Jennifer Warner](#)
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] 6-B Neighborhood Greenways
Date: Wednesday, August 28, 2024 4:39:57 PM

6-B

From: Drew Dara-Abrams [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2024 3:19 PM
To: Transportation Commission <tc@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6-B Neighborhood Greenways

[oops, I had this in drafts folder and didn't press send this morning :]

Dear city staff and fellow commissioners,

Regarding the specific decision presented to the TC, I agree with Bike Walk Alameda's letter submitted to the TC arguing that the current A-frame barricades should be retained until each Slow Street is transitioned to a Neighborhood Greenway (Option 1).

More broadly speaking, this program is either under-budgeted, over-laden with requirements, or both.

Neighborhood Greenways can be thought of as the city's way to enable a majority of middle school students to get to and from school without a parent driving them in a car. Of course, the network will benefit a much wider range of ages, abilities, and goals — but I mention this age and goal as I think it's a "use case" that makes clear what we're trying to accomplish: turning a lot of car trips and GHG emissions into bike trips. Under the current plans, the network will not be complete until 2030 (or after). So by my math, it's this year's class of kindergarteners who will be able to use the Neighborhood Greenway network to reach their middle schools by foot or bike. That's a long time to wait!

One aspect of the Slow Streets program that worked so well is that a single "treatment" was selected and efficiently applied to all of the locations where it was relevant. In contrast, this currently proposed approach to Neighborhood Greenways is to plan bespoke designs for each NG corridor. While this approach may feel more comfortable to City Hall in terms of hypothetically lowering the odds of certain forms of public complaint, it draws out the timeline — and means that many legs of the network will see no change until later in this decade.

If I may suggest an Option 4: "Bespoke Planning/Engagement Process + Network-wide Spot Quick Build"

- Keep barricades in place, per existing Council direction (as in Option 1)
- Have the consultant team select a single quick build treatment such as "mini neighborhood roundabouts" or "speed humps" that will have relevance to many

locations across the entire network (even if it is not a perfect, complete, or permanent solution; note that this has to be a treatment that actually affects driver speeds, as opposed to the flexpost paddles in Option 3)

- Put together a budget estimate for deploying that treatment to all relevant locations across the entire network, and spread this budget estimate over 1 - 3 years (not longer)
- In the next fiscal year (or sooner if funds can be secured), begin to *broadly* install the one single treatment wherever appropriate across the entire network, at the same time as the bespoke planning/engagement/design process *narrowly* focuses on select corridors (to provide additional treatments that are site-specific, more complete, and given more public airing)
- Perhaps this process of deploying the chosen "spot" quick-build treatment could be handled fully by Public Works engineers and operational staff, rather than led by PBT planners, to balance out responsibilities and timelines.

In any case, for the NG program to succeed for today's kindergartners (and ideally be ready for some more kids and everyone else of all ages in the meantime), the City Manager and PW and PBT department directors need to allocate this project more budget, reduce the overhead of process requirements, and direct the staffs of both departments to work together to build out this entire network.

Best,

Drew Dara-Abrams

(TC member who will not be present for this agenda item)