

Date: March 9, 2022

To: Mayor and Members of City Council  
From: John P. Curp, Interim City Manager  
Subject: CURB EXTENSION OPTIONS

202200597

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### Reference Document # 202200117

The Council at its session on February 2, 2022, referred the following item for review and report.

MOTION, dated 1/12/22, submitted by Councilmembers Jeffreys and Owens, WE MOVE that, the Administration provide a report within thirty (30) days on the cost, design, and feasibility of alternative designs for curb extensions (bump-outs) based on inspiration from other cities. The Administration shall take into consideration a variety of tools and materials including, but not limited to concrete barriers, bollards, planters, and reflective paint.

#### **BACKGROUND**

A curb extension is an area of sidewalk that “bumps out” six to eight feet into the street, typically at a crosswalk or the beginning or end of a block. Curb extensions visually and physically narrow the roadway, calming traffic and creating shorter crossings for pedestrians. Curb extensions also make pedestrians waiting to cross the street more visible to drivers.

#### **APPLICATION**

The Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTE) has installed curb extensions in several neighborhood business districts. To date, these curb extensions have been constructed out of concrete. Construction costs have increased exponentially over the last five years; the current cost is \$80,000 - \$100,000 for a pair of concrete curb extensions (one on each side of the street).

#### **ALTERNATIVE DESIGNS**

In 2021, DOTE piloted a new type of curb extension constructed of plastic paddles. The main benefit of the plastic paddles is cost. Plastic paddle curb extensions are significantly more affordable than concrete at an approximate cost of \$10,000 for a pair. Plastic paddle curb extensions offer an efficient design process, since no drainage modifications are needed. The disadvantage we foresee in using plastic paddles is longevity. It is unlikely that the plastic paddles will have the durability and longevity of concrete. The pilot project implemented in Northside last year will provide DOTE with data on durability and longevity of the plastic paddles.

DOTE is very interested in piloting additional types of curb extensions. Ideas include using readily available pre-cast concrete block, self-watering planters, landscape boulders, and pre-cast architectural concrete. All items will require some type of reflective tape or paint to ensure visibility for drivers in the dark. The design time for these pilot curb extensions will be less than concrete

curb extensions; however, the purchasing requirements will not change, so the implementation schedule will still be several months long. The table below summarizes the different types of curb extensions and the associated approximate costs. These costs do not include contractor mobilization or maintenance of traffic, which can be several thousand dollars on major streets.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost for two curb extensions</b>
Pre-cast concrete block	2'x2'x6' concrete block with rebar on top	\$600
Self-watering planters	4'x21", plastic	\$7,000
Plastic paddles and curb	3' plastic paddles	\$10,000
Landscape boulders	Varies, approximately 3'x3'	\$11,000
Pre-cast architectural concrete	Varies (bollard, sphere etc)	\$12,000
Cast in place concrete	Typical concrete curb extension	\$80,000 - \$100,000

**SUMMARY**

DOTe is very excited and eager to utilize creative strategies and best practices to explore additional types of curb extensions. DOTe intends to install alternative curb extensions this year and will keep City Council updated on locations and timing.

cc: John S. Brazina, Director, Transportation and Engineering