



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Date: 2/18/2019

In Control: Transportation Committee

DEPARTMENT: Transportation & Capital Improvements

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Razi Hosseini, P.E., R.P.L.S, Interim Director/City Engineer

COUNCIL DISTRICT IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Rainbow-Themed Crosswalk Pilot Update & Policy Framework

SUMMARY:

Transportation & Capital Improvements (TCI) will provide a briefing on the six-month pilot program results for the installation of a rainbow-themed crosswalk at the intersection of N. Main Avenue and E. Evergreen Street, located in Council District 1, and staff presentation of a policy framework for a Community Crosswalks Program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On June 16, 2017, Councilmember Roberto Trevino issued a Council Consideration Request (CCR) for the creation and installation of a Pride crosswalk (rainbow-themed) on N. Main Avenue at E. Evergreen Street. According to the CCR, the Main Street “Strip” has been the center of the LGBT community in San Antonio for several years and has been the site of the annual Pride Parade. The CCR also stated the reason for a rainbow-themed crosswalk is to promote a message of inclusion and tolerance while providing pedestrian safety. On August 2, 2017, the City Council Governance Committee approved a pilot program for the installation of a rainbow-themed crosswalk at N. Main Avenue and E. Evergreen Street as recommended by the City Manager’s Office. No other artistic crosswalks were to be considered or included in the pilot program. The pilot results were to be taken to the City Council Transportation Committee for future policy direction.

On June 7, 2018, the City Council approved a donation agreement accepting \$19,832.24 from Pride San Antonio. The existing crosswalks at the N. Main Avenue and E. Evergreen Street intersection were past their

functional service life and needed to be replaced. Therefore, the City of San Antonio provided the replacement cost of a standard crosswalk (four total for the intersection) towards the installation of a rainbow-themed crosswalk. The privately raised funds from Pride San Antonio were used to fund added installation expenses from a greater striped area and the costs associated with color used in a rainbow-themed crosswalk (Table 1). The rainbow-themed crosswalks were installed June 27, 2018. The detailed breakdown of the crosswalk installation costs are shown below and included the use of preformed thermoplastic pavement markings.

<u>Crosswalk Type</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Rainbow-Themed (Qty: 4)	\$32,501.04
City of San Antonio Standard (Qty: 4)	\$12,668.80
Difference Funded by Pride San Antonio	\$19,832.24

ISSUE:

As part of the pilot program, TCI monitored the crosswalk installation for a six month period to gather information for future policy discussion. The initial pilot period was July 2018 through December 2018. The following metrics were established to monitor the program.

- Pedestrian Behavior - Monitor pedestrian behavior during the first 30 days and review activity for distracted behavior (posing for pictures, near misses, etc.). Conduct additional recordings and review at 90 days and 180 days. Monitoring was performed prior to the rainbow-themed crosswalk installation to serve as a baseline for comparison.
- Community Response - Monitor 311, social media, etc. for positive and negative feedback on the rainbow-themed crosswalk.
- Vandalism - Document any vandalism to the rainbow-themed crosswalk.
- Maintenance Requests - Document any maintenance requests for the rainbow-themed crosswalk.
- Crash Review - During and after the pilot period, review any crashes for contributing causes and compare to adjacent signalized intersections as well as prior to rainbow-themed crosswalk installation.

Pedestrian Behavior:

Through the use of a traffic monitoring camera, TCI monitored pedestrian behavior during the first 30 days and captured instances of unsafe behaviors such as posing for pictures, selfies, and sitting in the crosswalk. There were very high occurrences of unsafe behaviors during the first 30 days; however, they significantly tapered as time progressed. No unsafe behaviors were identified during the additional reviews at 90 days and 180 days.

Data was also recorded for several days prior to the start of construction of the crosswalk. No picture taking, selfies, or sitting behavior was recorded at the intersection prior to the installation of the crosswalk. There does not appear to be any significant changes in behavior in regards to obeying the pedestrian crossing signals or walking within the marked crosswalk since the rainbow crosswalk was installed.

Community Response:

Social media was monitored for the first 30 days after the rainbow-themed crosswalk was installed. As expected, there were both positive and negative comments. Many comments supported the message of inclusion and others felt it was a waste of money. In addition to community responses, TCI also used social

media to remind residents and visitors that while they are enjoying the crosswalk, they should do so in a safe manner.

Vandalism:

To date, there has been no documented vandalism.

Maintenance Requests:

As agreed, to date TCI has not performed any maintenance to the rainbow-themed crosswalk other than pre- and post-cleaning associated with the June 30, 2018 Pride Parade. However, according to *OutInSA* a group has been formed to help maintain the crosswalk, known as “Guardians of the Crosswalk”. According to *OutInSA*, the crosswalk was cleaned on September 26, 2018 and will be cleaned every two weeks. TCI has not verified if the cleaning regularly occurs. The integrity of the pavement marking material appears to still be in good condition.

Crash Review:

Over the last three years, the intersection of the N. Main Avenue and E. Evergreen Street averages approximately two crashes per year as shown in the table below.

<u>Table 2</u>		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Crash Type</u>
2016	1	1 Vehicle/Vehicle
2017	3	2 Vehicle/Vehicle & 1 Pedestrian/Vehicle
2018	5*	4 Vehicle/Vehicle & 1 Pedestrian/Vehicle

*There have been two vehicle/vehicle crashes and one pedestrian/vehicle crash since the installation of the rainbow-themed crosswalks. The SAPD crash reports did not cite the crosswalks as a contributing factor.

Policy Framework:

In June 2018, City Council requested for TCI to develop guidelines for future community-based crosswalks (Community Crosswalks) as part of a pilot program initiated by the installation of the rainbow-themed crosswalk. The following policy framework outlines the City of San Antonio’s Community Crosswalk Program requirements.

- Community Crosswalk Program Sponsor - Community Crosswalks may be sponsored by individuals or organizations that have a connection with the community where the proposed crosswalk is to be located. The program sponsor will be responsible for funding all or a portion of the proposed crosswalk and ongoing maintenance of the Community Crosswalk. If the crosswalk is scheduled and budgeted for replacement, the City’s share can be used towards the total cost.
- Community Outreach and Support - The program sponsor will be responsible to conduct outreach and obtain consensus from the community regarding the Community Crosswalk project including signatures of support from adjacent property owners as well as a letter of support from the City Councilmember(s) representing the district(s) in which the Community Crosswalk is located. The message cannot be inconsistent with the values of the broader community as determined by the City Council.
- Locations Eligible for Crosswalk Consideration - Community Crosswalk location shall be considered only at an intersection, designated pedestrian crossing, or existing crosswalk where the crosswalk is controlled by a stop sign, traffic signal, or pedestrian hybrid beacon. It is recommended that the pavement be in good condition, allowing the materials to bond well and prolong the life of the crosswalk. Designated school crosswalks are not eligible for the Community Crosswalk Program. The

decorative element could detract the driver's attention away from the school children.

- Community Crosswalk Designs - The decorative element of the proposed design shall be incorporated within the standard white crosswalk markings and shall not attempt to communicate through words or images or any type of traffic control message.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council Transportation Committee could choose not to authorize the creation of a "Community Crosswalk Program". As an alternative, infrastructure located beyond the limits of traffic travel lanes could be themed, such as sidewalks, traffic signal cabinets, banners, and murals.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is a briefing only.

RECOMMENDATION:

In accordance with past City Council direction, TCI recommends the creation of a "Community Crosswalk Program" and will incorporate feedback from the City Council Transportation Committee on the policy framework to develop guidelines for the program. Final policy recommendations will be presented to the City Council Transportation Committee.