



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Christopher,

Thank you for taking the time to gather signatures and submit a traffic calming petition to the City of Somerville. The following letter is in response to your petition for Trull Street, which includes a summary of our findings and an explanation of next steps. We will also publish this letter to the City website at www.somervillema.gov/trafficcalming.

Traffic Calming Program Background

Somerville is a [Vision Zero](#) city that is committed to improving safety on our streets. One way that the City makes progress toward this goal is by identifying locations where vehicle speeding is a concern, and then building speed humps to reduce speeds. However, we receive more reports of speeding concerns than we can address each year and must prioritize which streets will receive speed humps.

There are many factors that influence which streets are selected each year, including but not limited to community feedback collected through outreach, 311 service requests, city staff recommendations, city councilor input, larger-scale street reconstruction projects and more. The traffic calming petition that you have submitted is one of the factors that influences this process, while also providing an opportunity for community members to share their advocacy and support for traffic calming on a particular street. All of these inputs are then accounted for in a data-driven process that helps us determine which locations are the highest priorities and ensures that traffic calming interventions are equitably distributed.

Status of Your Petition

The traffic calming petition process involves several steps, including:

- Acceptance and certification of petition
- Collection of data for your street
- Evaluation of that data

Following these steps, the City determines if traffic calming installations are warranted and what traffic calming tools are most appropriate.

The initial investigation and data collection for Trull Street has been completed. The next section of this letter will summarize the results.

Traffic Calming Assessment

To assess a street or street segment for traffic calming, we start by collecting and evaluating vehicle speeds and vehicle volumes. We then review additional characteristics of the street such as width and nearby land use, prioritizing streets that are near schools, parks, civic spaces, affordable housing developments, faith institutions and community path crossings. We also check to see if the street has been identified for any street pavement and sidewalk work, or prioritized in City plans such as the [Somerville Bicycle Network Plan](#) and [Vision Zero Action Plan](#). Below are details regarding this assessment.

Neighborhood Context and Adjacent Land Uses



Trull Street is a residential street in Ward 5, situated between Medford Street and Vernon Street. It measures about 26 feet from sidewalk curb to sidewalk curb, and is designated as a [Safety Zone](#) with a 20mph speed limit.

Speed Data

The City collects data on motor vehicle speeds and volumes using Automatic Traffic Recorder equipment placed on a street for two weekdays. These data help us to prioritize traffic calming on streets where we see significant speeding. In response to your petition, the City collected speed and volume data in spring 2024.

Figure 1 shows a percentage breakdown of speeds for vehicles recorded in our data collection. The average speed of vehicles on Trull Street was measured to be 19 mph. Most cars on the street are traveling between 1 and 14 miles per hour.

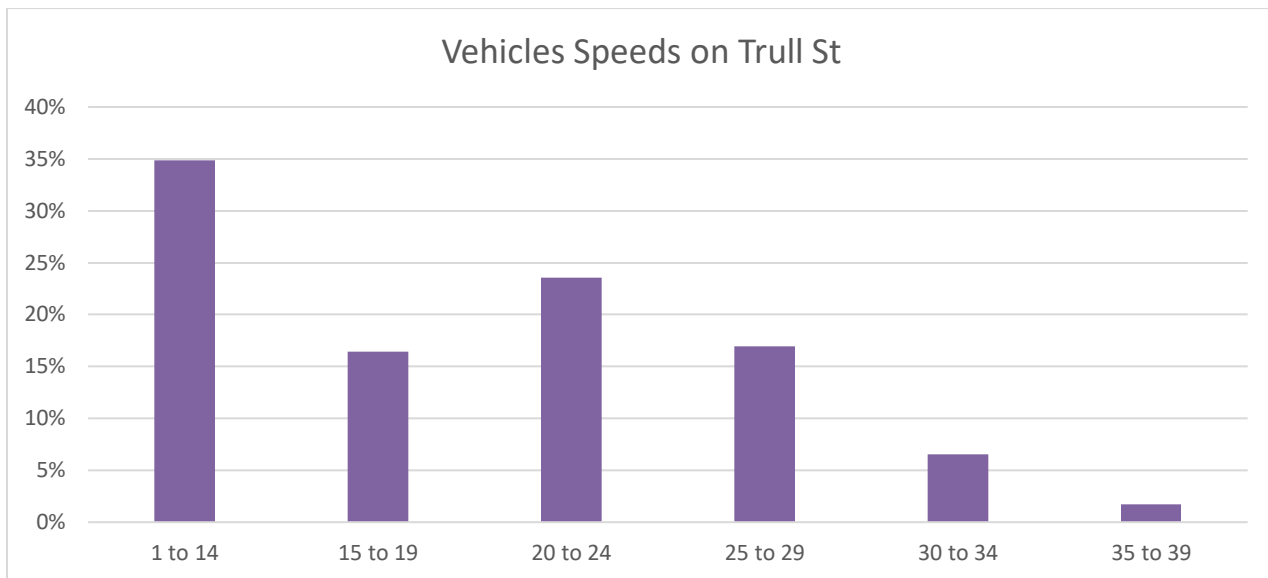


Figure 1. This chart shows the breakdown of vehicle speeds on Trull Street over the course of two days.

Figure 2 shows how the average speed on Trull Street compares to the other streets in Somerville where traffic data was collected in spring 2024.

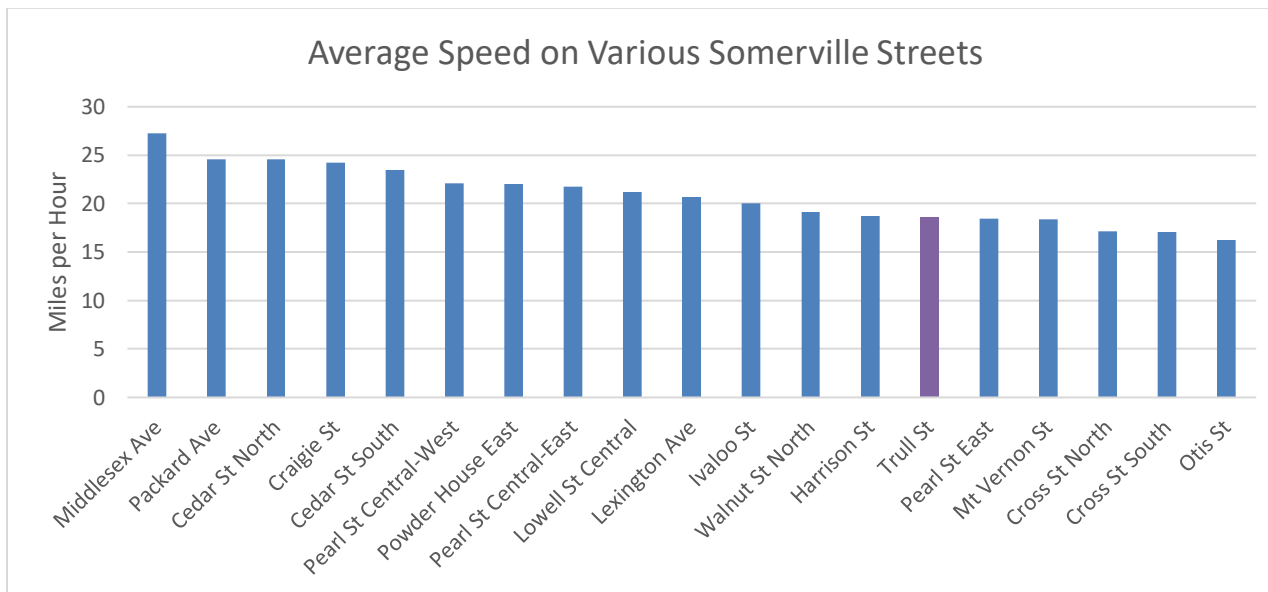


Figure 2. This chart shows the average measured motor vehicle speed for all streets where traffic data was collected in spring 2024. The average speed across these streets is 21 mph.

We are most concerned when we see average speeds exceeding 25 mph, but still consider traffic calming on streets where we see average speeds over 20 mph.

Volume Data

In prioritizing residential streets for traffic calming, we often look for streets with higher-than-average volumes. Lower volumes do not preclude a street from receiving traffic calming, but we

may be less likely to prioritize installing speed humps on it in the near future unless the street meets other priority considerations.

For Trull Street, our Automatic Traffic Recorder data indicate an average daily volume of 682 vehicles on a typical weekday, and an average of 74 vehicles in the evening peak hour. This means that if you were watching traffic during the evening rush hour, you could expect to see approximately one vehicle every minute.

Figure 3 shows how the average daily volume on Trull Street compares to the other streets in Somerville where traffic data was collected in spring 2024.

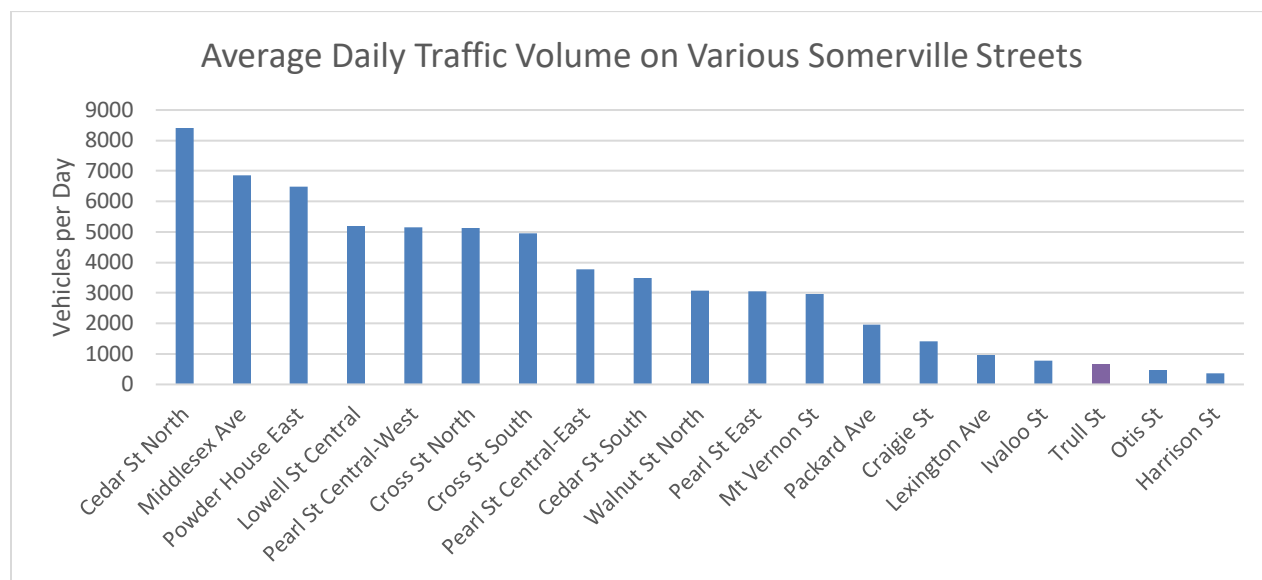


Figure 3. This chart shows the average measured weekday motor vehicle volume for all streets where traffic data was collected in spring 2024. The average volume across these streets is 3,400 vehicles/day.

While speed data and volume data on their own are helpful, we find that combining the two is important to determine where the most people are driving the fastest. The traffic data that we collect includes a metric that measures how many vehicles were measured going over a certain speed, in this case 25 mph. Figure 4 shows how many vehicles were measured going over 25 mph as an average of the two weekdays during which data was collected. For Trull Street, there were approximately 139 vehicles traveling over 25 mph.

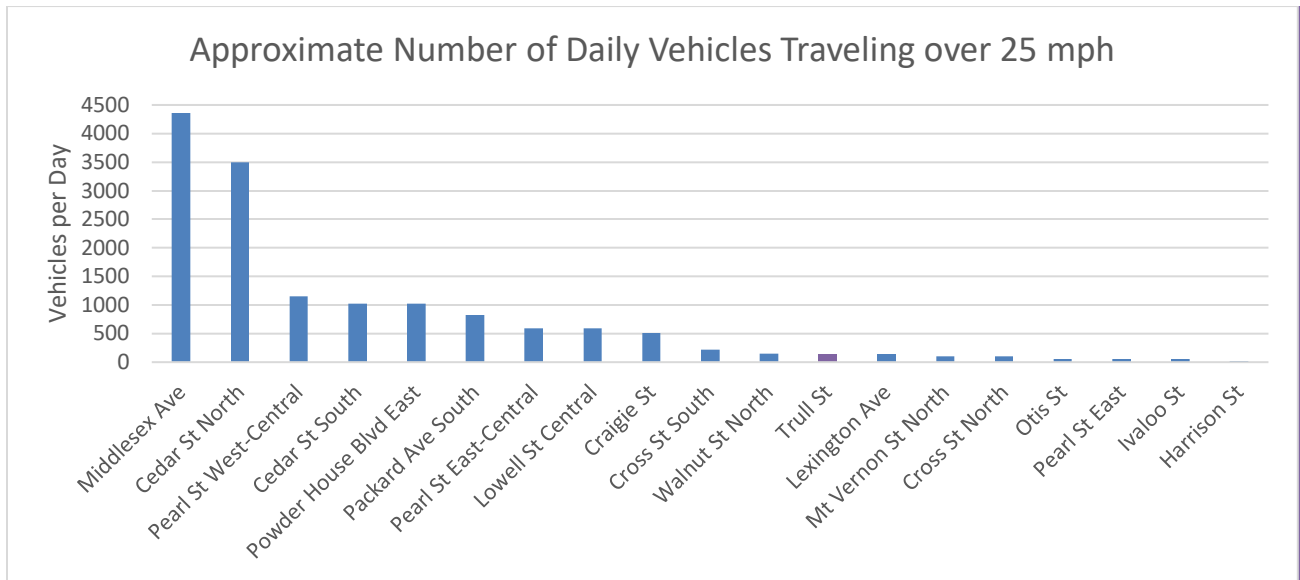


Figure 4. This chart shows the approximate number of motor vehicles that were measured traveling over 25 mph for all streets where traffic data was collected in spring 2024. The average across these streets is 770 vehicles/day.

Next steps

We aim to prioritize speed hump installation on streets that are found to have the most serious safety concerns, such as streets with the highest speeds and volumes, and in the closest proximity to areas or facilities with a high rate of foot traffic, such as areas near schools or parks. Based on our evaluation, Trull Street does not meet any of these priority considerations.

At this time, City cannot recommend using limited resources to prioritize physical traffic calming on Trull Street. It will, however, remain part of our evaluation database, which is reviewed and updated annually.

We anticipate announcing our next batch of streets prioritized for speed hump construction in the [Mobility Newsletter](#) and update our [Traffic Calming map](#) on our [Traffic Calming webpage](#) in January, 2025. Please consider subscribing to stay in the loop on a variety of Somerville transportation and traffic calming updates.

The City takes our Vision Zero commitment very seriously, and resident advocacy for safer streets is a critical element of our success in recent years. Thank you for being a part of that mission.

Sincerely,

Brad Rawson
Director, Mobility Division