

DATE: April 15, 2021
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Jeff Bauman, City Traffic Engineer
SUBJECT: Woody Way Gate Between Boulder Pointe and Presidio – Gate Removed 4/13/2020

When Boulder Pointe was designed, platted and constructed, there was a short road connection called Woody Way built off the western end of the development for future access to the adjacent property. The adjacent property developed as Presidio in the Pines. In the early 2000's the Presidio's City Council approved development agreement with the original developer and based on neighborhood input specified that the gate across Woody Way would be removed at a specified time after project construction began. The main reason for the gate was to prevent heavy construction traffic from going through the Boulder Pointe neighborhood. Since the development activity stopped due to the Great Recession, the original developer filed bankruptcy and no longer exists, all of this made the original development agreement timing no longer applicable. When the project was resurrected by the current developer, the City agreed to leave the gate in place until after 90% of the homes in Presidio had been occupied. The total number of parcels in Presidio is 515. As of October of 2019, 488 building permits had been issued, making Presidio roughly 95% built out.

The Transportation Commission began developing a gate opening plan in December 2019. The Homeowners Associations of both Presidio and Boulder Pointe were both notified in February 2020 of the February Transportation Commission agenda item – Boulder Pointe – Presidio Gate. As a result of that discussion the Transportation Engineering Section committed to performing before and after traffic volume and speed studies to determine if there are any adverse impacts that warrant traffic calming as a result of the gate opening.

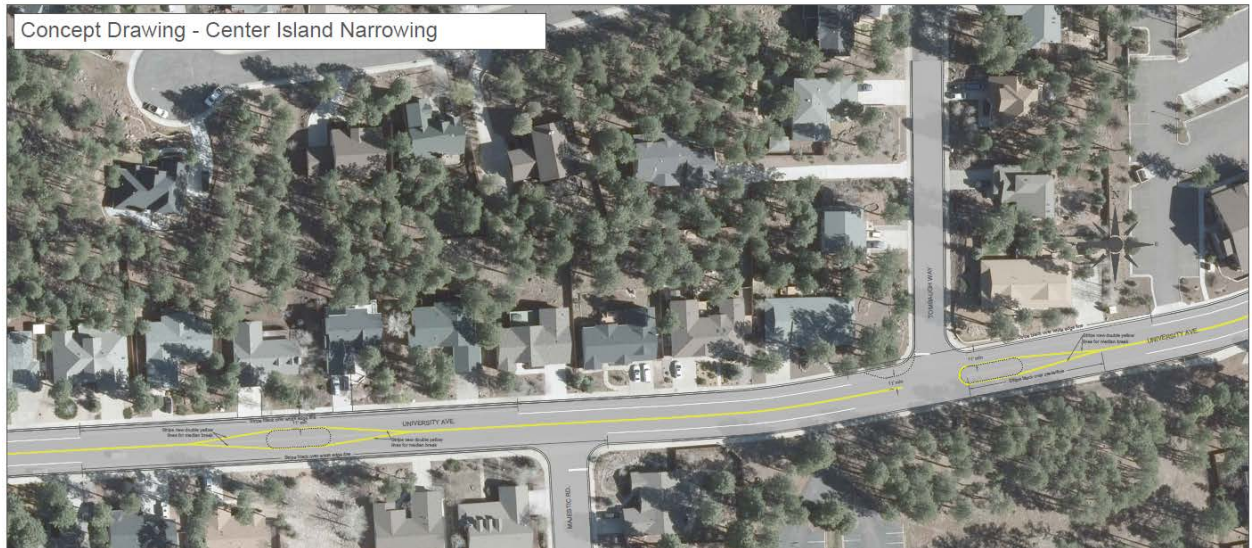
The City has an adopted method for determining if a residential neighborhood meets minimum requirements for consideration of traffic calming measures due to high speeds or volumes. The City, with Transportation Commission's concurrence, will move forward with the methods defined in the City of Flagstaff's Guidebook for Residential Traffic Management (GRTM) to determine if traffic calming is needed.

Traffic counts before the gate was removed were conducted in Fall 2019 and the City has comprehensive historical counts from Fall 2018.

The gate was removed on April 13, 2020 just after COVID-19 related shutdowns were becoming very widespread. The original plan was to conduct follow-up studies of speeds and volumes to identify significant changes as a result of the gate opening in Fall of 2020. During the Summer of 2020 a resident on University Avenue contacted the City claiming that speeds and volumes on University Avenue had doubled as a result of the gate opening. Summer 2020 is not considered a 'normal' traffic condition due to NAU and public schools being closed, in addition to our concerns of the unknown magnitude of pandemic impacts. But given the public concern the City went ahead and counted vehicles along University Avenue, the results were that traffic volumes had increased by approximately 10% and speeds were unchanged.

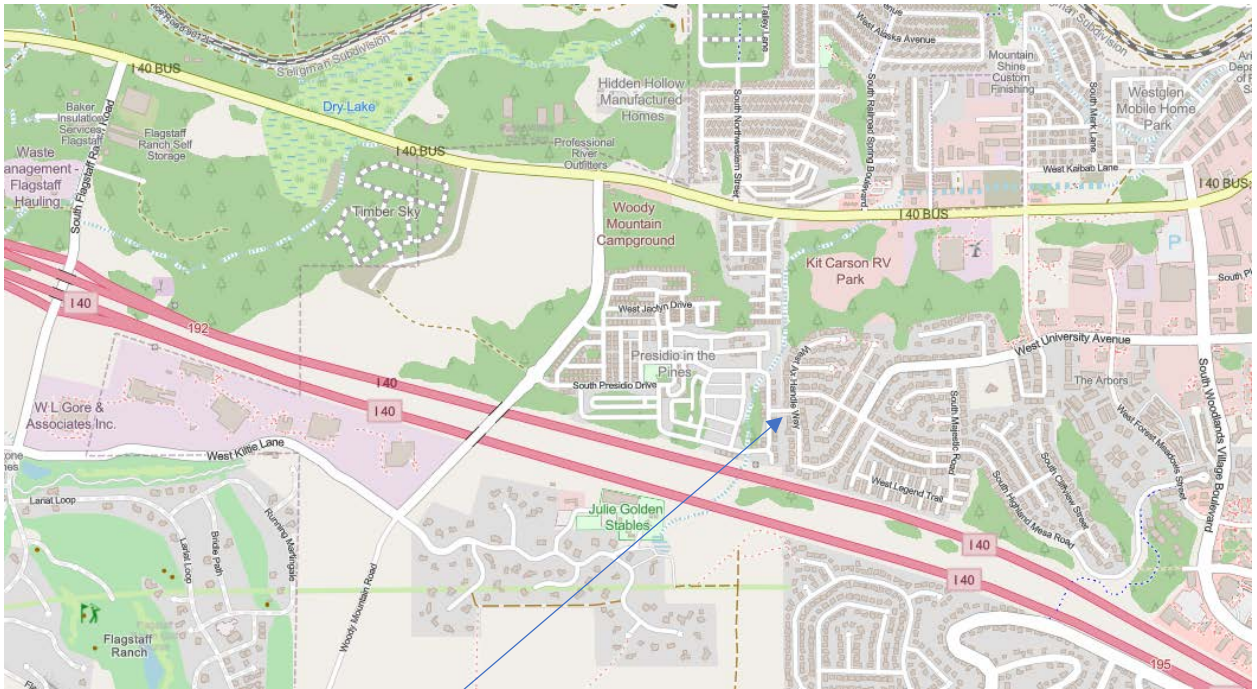
Staff presented this information to the Transportation Commission in September 2020 and the TC decided to separate the issues of (existing) speeding with potential cut-through traffic volumes related to the gate opening.

In December 2020 the Transportation Commission invited members of both Presidio and Boulder Pointe to discuss speed mitigation measures that could be implemented in the Spring of 2021 on a trial basis. Those temporary measures have been ordered and designed and will be installed with the warming weather in late April / early May. See the image below of the center island narrowing, not shown are Radar Speed Feedback signs.



Follow-up studies to determine their effectiveness of the temporary installations prior to final design and implementation of permanent calming devices will be conducted in Summer/Fall 2021.

The issue of changed traffic volumes is still somewhat uncertain given the open/closed status of government, business, and school facilities in the community. As conditions move to a more normal status Transportation Engineering will conduct follow up studies and conduct further discussions with the neighborhoods and the Transportation Commission. We anticipate this will be possible in Fall 2021.



Woody Way