

NWACA Traffic Survey Results June 6, 2017

During the month of May, 2017, NWACA conducted a survey of the neighborhood concerning traffic issues. The impetus for the survey was a proposal from a neighbor that they would help pay to engage a Travis County Constable part-time to enforce traffic laws in order to see if this would reduce problems with speeding and other traffic violations. The survey was not in response to the speed bumps on Far West, which were installed because of a 2013 request by residents along Far West, and after the proposal here was already under discussion. The proposal arose after learning about how the work of a constable in another neighborhood area was showing good results.

The survey was available online via Survey Monkey, and a paper copy was sent to NWACA members who are not internet-enabled. There were 371 responses, 8 by paper copy.

From the survey responses, it appears that a large segment of the neighborhood sees traffic issues at about a dozen intersections and on 9 primary streets. There is also agreement that speeding is the primary issue, with running stop signs, texting, and various types of careless driving also cited as problems. Among the suggestions is that we have the Austin Police Department (APD) deploy more officers to patrol our area. That request has been made repeatedly in the last several years, and APD tells us they cannot do so, given their level of staffing and the higher priority crimes and issues they need to address.

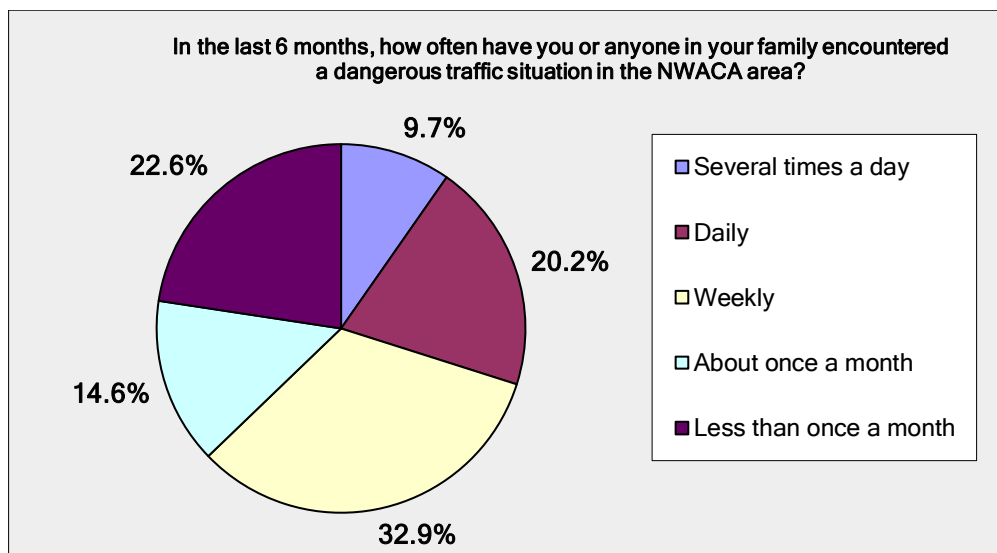
A segment of survey respondents doesn't think traffic is a problem – they don't see streets with speeding issues; no intersections represent dangerous situations; there are no problems with or for cyclists; there is no interest in employing a Constable.

A slim majority is in favor of running a 6-month pilot; but paying for it over the long term is an open question, with about a third willing to do so, a third not willing, and a third wanting to wait and see.

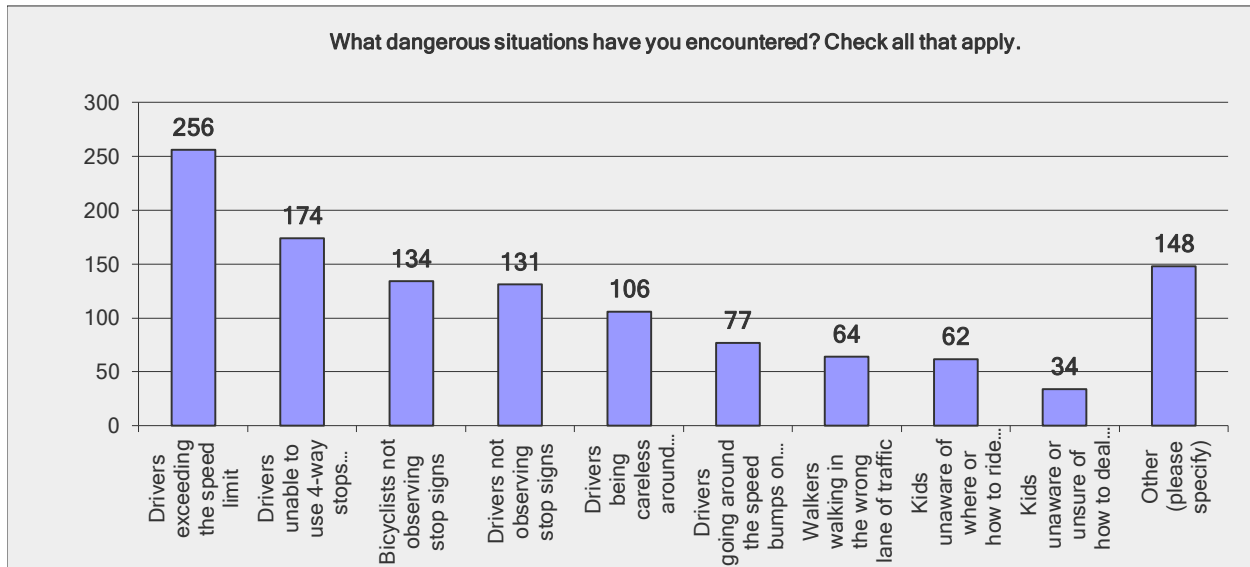
Here are results of the survey.

The first question asked for a street address, which is not summarized here. Most respondents were from the NWACA area; some were from the area just north of Spicewood Springs Road.

Q2: In the last 6 months, how often have you or anyone in your family encountered a dangerous traffic situation in the NWACA area? (371 responses)



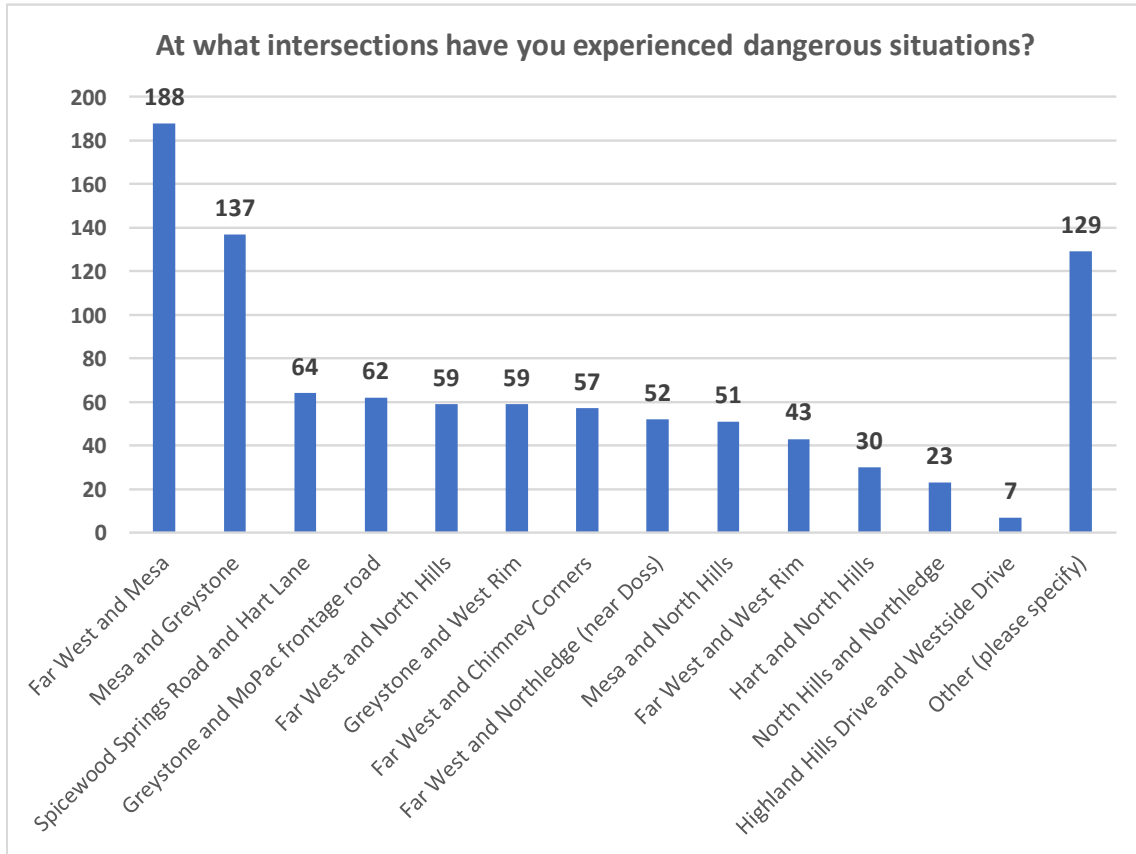
Q3: What dangerous situations have you encountered? Check all that apply. (349 responses)



Among the **Other** responses, these were the most prevalent (many respondents cited several items):

- 19 – careless driving (many different items)
- 18 – texting or other use of cell phones
- 16 – none (was not an option)
- 11 – stop sign or crosswalk violations
- 11 – parking constrains traffic (in bike lane, at Doss pickup, ...)
- 10 – speeding on (specific) neighborhood streets
- 8 – speed bumps on Far West
- 8 – poor street design (dangerous turns, missing 4-way stops, ...)
- 8 – drivers careless near cyclists
- 8 – blind intersections
- 7 – walkers on wrong side of street, not on sidewalks, not visible at night
- 7 – drivers not yielding to pedestrians
- 7 – bicyclists not observing rules
- 6 – distracted driving/inattention
- 4 – tailgating
- 4 – school zone speeding
- 4 – kids on skateboards or golf carts
- 3 – running red light
- 3 – road work barriers
- 3 – deer

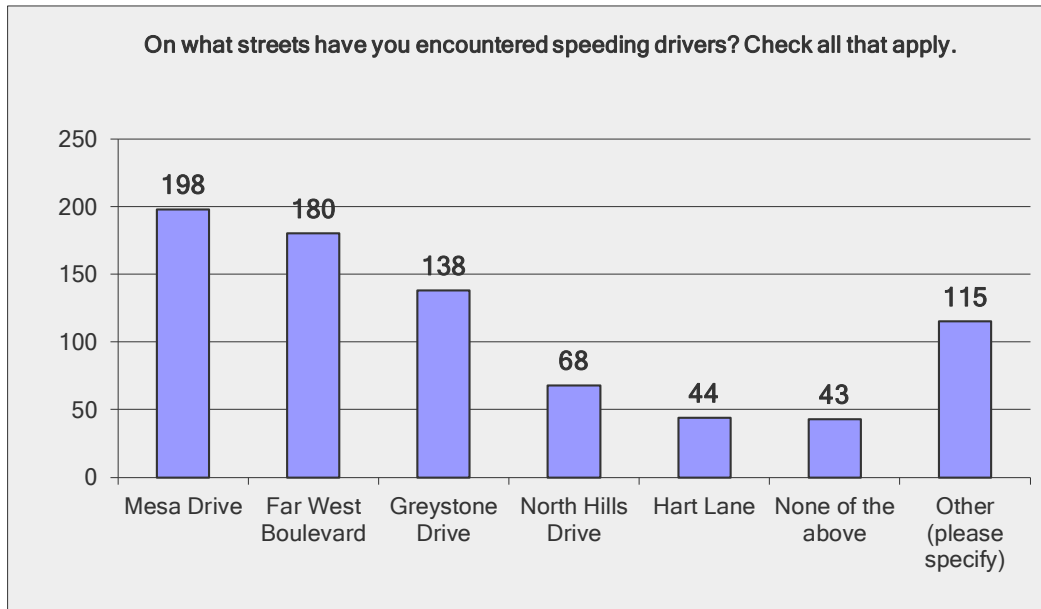
Q4: At what intersections have you experienced dangerous situations? Check all that apply.
 (325 responses)



Among the 129 **Other** responses, these were the most prevalent (several cited more than one item):

- 17 – Greystone and Chimney Corners
- 11 – Greystone and Hart Lane
- 10 – Spicewood Springs Road and Mesa Drive
- 5 – Mesa and Cat Mountain Drive (3-way stop)
- 4 – Far West and Wood Hollow
- 4 – Mountainclimb Drive and Dry Creek Drive
- 3 – Backtrail and Ladera Norte
- 3 – Greystone and Valburn Drive
- 3 – Greystone and Wood Hollow

Q5: On what streets have you encountered speeding drivers? Check all that apply. (341 responses)



Of the 115 **Other** responses, these were the most prevalent:

- 21 – Spicewood Springs Road
- 14 – Valburn Drive
- 12 – Burney Drive
- 9 – West Rim Drive
- 5 – Cedro Trail
- 5 – Highland Hills Drive
- 5 – Knollwood Drive
- 5 – Ladera Norte
- 5 – Mountainclimb Drive
- 5 – Sprucewood Drive
- 4 – Backtrail Drive
- 4 – Chimney Corners
- 4 – Lakewood Drive
- 4 – Sierra Drive
- 3 – Cat Mountain Drive

Q6: If you have seen bicyclists using dangerous practices, please describe what and where that occurred. (172 responses)

Several respondents chided us for the tone of this question. Our apologies; we were not suggesting that cyclists are the primary causes of problems, just trying to understand what problems are prevalent. As respondents pointed out, many times issues arise from behavior of car drivers, rather than the cyclists.

Answers fell into these categories:

- 78 – ignoring stop signs and/or stop lights
- 32 – riding several abreast across the street
- 29 – cyclists are not a problem (or “none” as an answer)
- 20 – riding outside the bike lane, sometimes in the middle of the street
- 6 – riding in wrong direction, against traffic
- 5 – car drivers are the problem, not cyclists
- 5 – speeding, often down hills
- 4 – failing to signal
- 4 – lane splitting
- 4 – no night light and/or reflector and/or reflective clothing
- 15 – other items, with one or two citations

Streets and intersections most often cited were these:

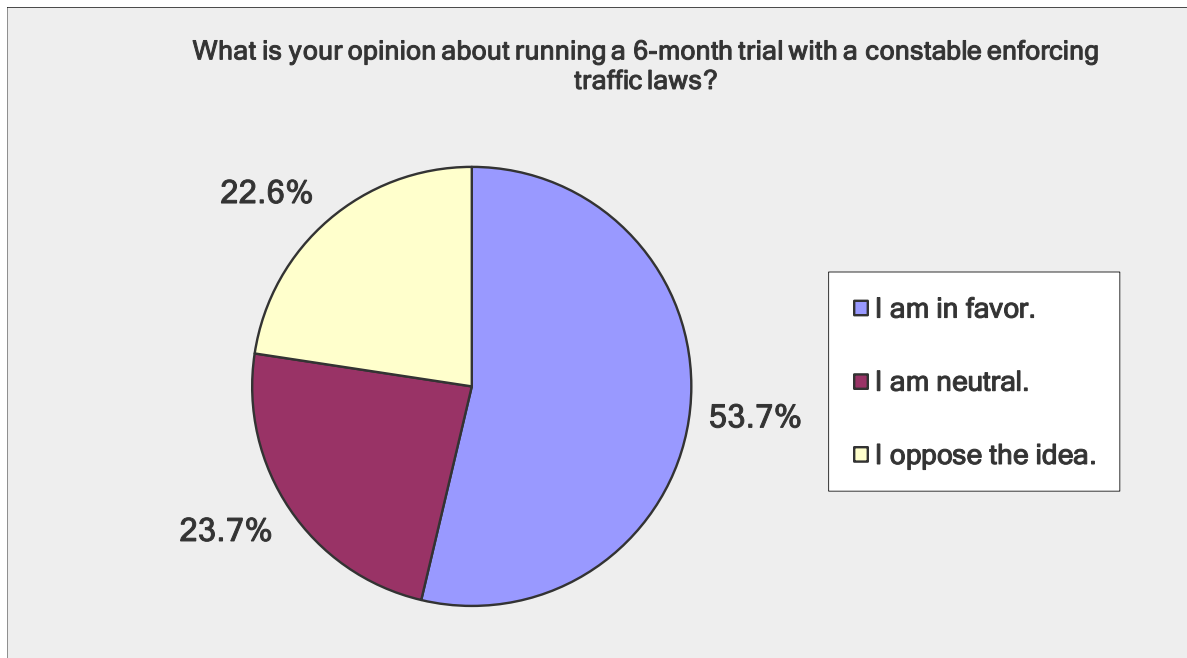
- 12 – Mesa
- 9 – Far West
- 9 – Far West and Mesa
- 7 – Greystone and Mesa
- 4 – Greystone
- 3 – Spicewood Spring Road
- 11 – others with one or two citations

Q7: What other traffic issues would you also like to have addressed by a constable who can issue warnings or citations? (141 responses)

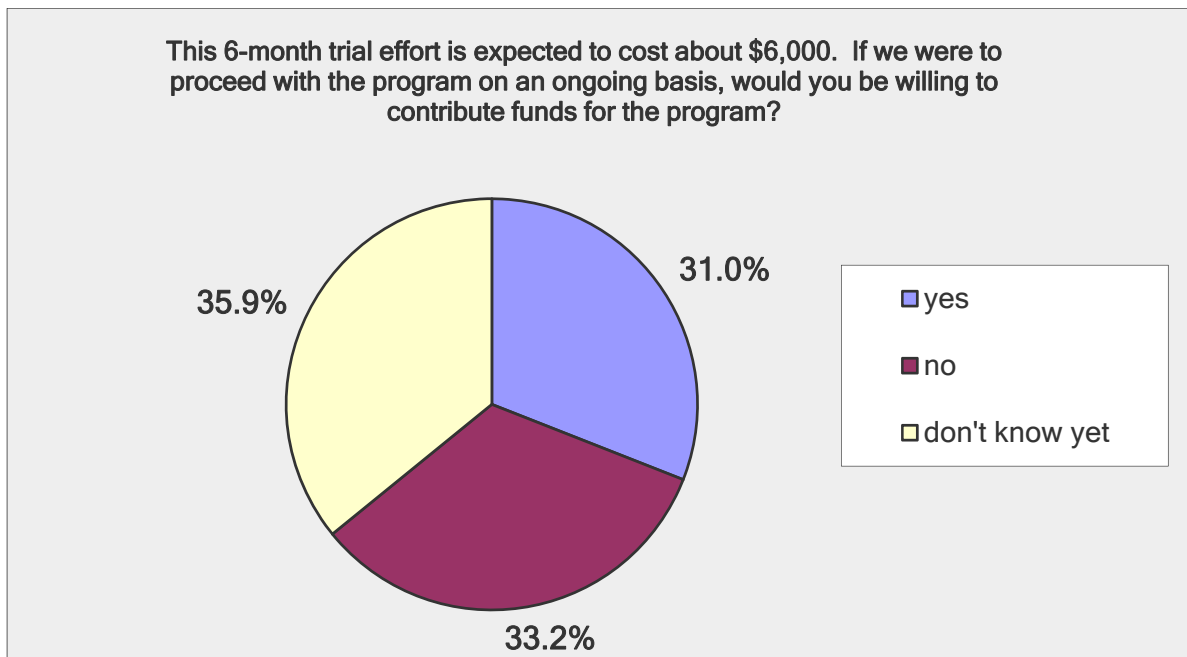
Responses fell into these categories:

- 29 – Speeding; enforce posted speed limits
- 22 – None, or Don’t want a constable
- 18 – Running or rolling through stop signs
- 12 – Texting while driving
- 8 – Not stopping at crosswalks
- 7 – Suggestions (single ideas like stop sign at base of Far West and Ladera Norte, more sidewalks, lower speed limit in Highland Hills, add speed bumps, remove speed bumps)
- 6 – Parking in bike lanes
- 5 – Enforce laws about cyclists (for cars and bicycles)
- 4 – Education on 4-way stops, lanes to turn from with bike lanes, walkers going wrong way)
- 4 – Lack of use of turn signals
- 3 – Drivers not yielding to pedestrians or cyclists
- 3 – Drivers passing left-turning cars on their right, often swinging into bike lanes
- 3 – Ticket very slow drivers
- 37 – other (one or two responses for items such as tailgating, blocking the box, jaywalking, U-turns on Far West, home break-ins, trash cans in street, etc.)

Q8: What is your opinion about running a 6-month trial with a constable enforcing traffic laws?
(367 respondents)



Q9: This 6-month trial effort is expected to cost about \$6,000. If we were to proceed with the program on an ongoing basis, would you be willing to contribute funds for the program?
(368 responses)



Q10: Other comments about traffic control (191 responses)

Responses were about these topics:

- 30 – speed bumps on Far West are bad – get rid of them
- 25 – question or suggestion (single items such as improvements for crosswalks; potholes need fixing; decriminalize bike stops as yields, as other cities have; educate parents, principals, students riding bikes; have county pay for it out of fines, etc.)
- 23 – other (unhappy with survey, don't want "big brother" patrol, etc.)
- 17 – specific speeding problem (citing specific streets or intersections)
- 16 – Not seeing a problem
- 14 – repainted intersections (Mesa and Greystone, Mesa and Far West) are not working well; revert
- 12 – need more or better speed bumps
- 11 – Ask APD to handle traffic citations and issues
- 6 – traffic is growing here, like all the rest of Austin
- 5 – Let's do it – get the program started
- 5 – Put up some speed monitoring signs
- 5 – speed bumps on Far West are helpful
- 4 – Bike lanes impede car traffic and parking
- 4 – Drivers, not cyclists or pedestrians, are the problem
- 4 – Put a traffic light at Mesa and Far West
- 4 – texting is a big danger
- 3 – Stop signs are being missed
- 2 – Need sidewalks on every street
- 2 – No more speed bumps