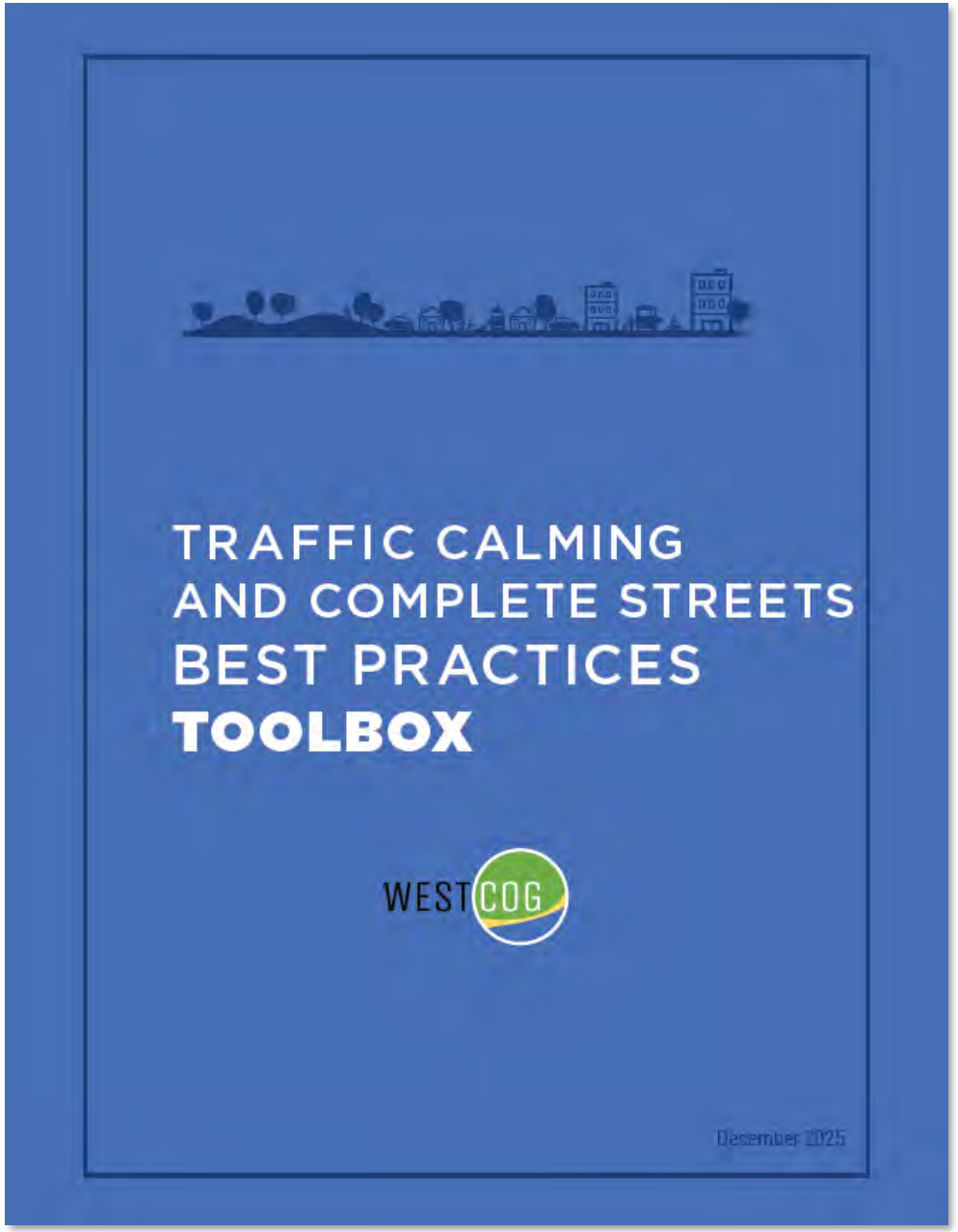
WESTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Traffic Calming and Complete Streets Best Practices Toolbox

Project Advisory Committee Meeting

December 4, 2025



Agenda

1. Welcome!
2. Project Update / Refresher
3. Draft Toolbox: Discussion Prompts
4. Next Steps

Reminder: Toolbox Purpose

The Traffic Calming and Complete Streets Best Practices Toolbox provides planning precepts and design principles for local and residential roads.

How we got here:

- Review local documents, plans, and policies
- Hosted focus group with local leaders (emergency response, transit, fire, schools…)
- Researched best practices
- Developed planning precepts
- Created a (draft) Toolbox

PROJECT PURPOSE

Developing Complete Streets and traffic calming guidance for WestCOG requires a shared understanding of the successes and challenges of the current state of practice. In order to successfully implement traffic calming strategies in WestCOG municipalities, best practices were thoroughly researched nationally and regionally to help shape local recommendations.

Grounded in the principles of context-sensitive design, the Toolbox emphasizes that the selection and application of traffic calming measures must respond to the unique character and functional role of each street and WestCOG municipality. It supports the expansion and connection of the WestCOG region's active transportation network by prioritizing safe, multimodal access to key destinations such as schools. The Toolbox also highlights the importance of well-designed transition zones that communicate shifts in roadway context and reduce speed. It explores opportunities for shared spaces that balance mobility and placemaking, creating people-oriented environments where walking, bicycling, and social activity can co-exist. Finally, the Toolbox encourages a systemic solutions approach rather than spot treatments in a reactive way, focusing on identifying and addressing risk factors, bundling improvements when possible, and advancing proactive, data-driven strategies for implementation.

RESEARCH PROCESS

The research process for this project involved three phases to gather an understanding of the local context, to identify best practices, and to apply these precepts to the WestCOG context in order to create a practical Toolbox. These steps are outlined below.

+ **REGIONAL STATUS QUO:** The project team conducted a preliminary review of local guidance and plans used in the WestCOG region. These documents reflect and respond to a range of contexts and helped the project team to identify shared concerns and opportunities related to improving traffic safety.
+ **FOCUS GROUPS:** Two focus groups were hosted by the project team to engage the local emergency services and responder community, as well as other transportation providers and operators. These discussions helped surface insights incorporated into the toolbox, such as specific operational needs.
+ **BEST PRACTICES REVIEW:** A review of best practices and case studies from around the world was conducted to identify concepts and designs suitable for WestCOG streets.

Reminder: Role of the PAC

- Meet up to 4 times over the course of the project
- Provide on-the-ground insight and expertise
- Review and provide feedback on draft materials
- Be available for consultation with the project team

TOOLE DESIGN

The Toolbox

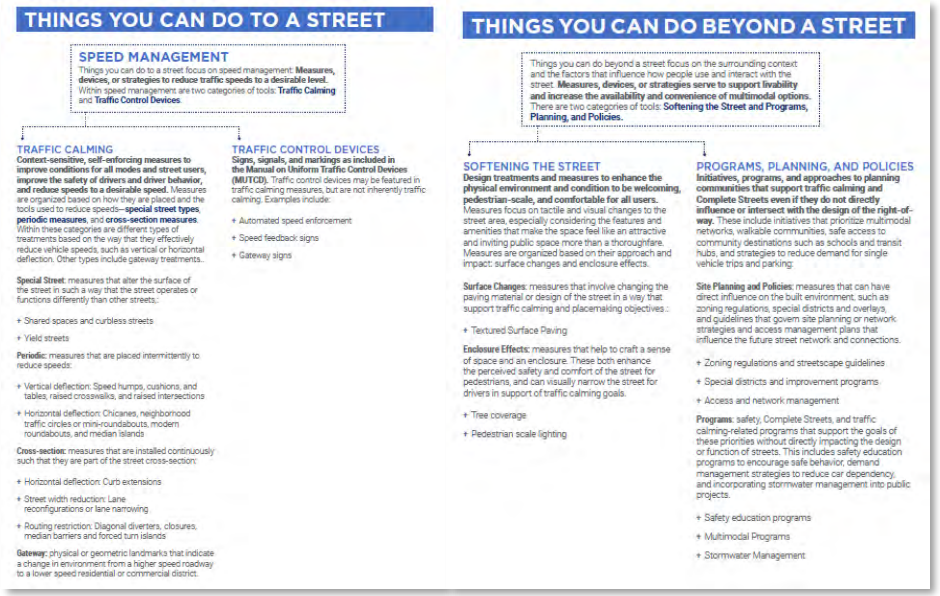
Overview

- **Introduction**
  - **Regional Efforts and Themes** from the Regional Status Quo
  - Introduction to **key definitions** (Traffic Calming, Complete Streets), including **Speed Management** as an objective

TOOLE DESIGN

Overview

- **How to Use the Toolbox**
  - Review considerations and categories that shape the Toolbox (how measures are presented)
  - Review measures and associated purpose or objective



THINGS YOU CAN DO TO A STREET

SPEED MANAGEMENT

Things you can do to a street focus on speed management: **Measures, devices, or strategies to reduce traffic speeds to a desirable level.** Within speed management are two categories of tools: **Traffic Calming** and **Traffic Control Devices**.

TRAFFIC CALMING

Context-sensitive, self-enforcing measures to improve conditions for all modes and street users, improve the safety of drivers and driver behavior, and reduce speeds to a desirable speed. Measures are organized based on how they are placed and the tools used to reduce speeds—**special street types**, **periodic measures**, and **cross-section measures**. Within these categories are different types of treatments based on the way that they effectively reduce vehicle speeds, such as vertical or horizontal deflection. Other types include gateway treatments.

Special Street: measures that alter the surface of the street in such a way that the street operates or functions differently than other streets.:

+ Shared spaces and curbless streets
+ Yield streets

Periodic: measures that are placed intermittently to reduce speeds:

+ Vertical deflection: Speed humps, cushions, and tables, raised crosswalks, and raised intersections
+ Horizontal deflection: Chicanes, neighborhood traffic circles or mini-roundabouts, modern roundabouts, and median islands

Cross-section: measures that are installed continuously such that they are part of the street cross-section:

+ Horizontal deflection: Curb extensions
+ Street width reduction: Lane reconfigurations or lane narrowing
+ Routing restriction: Diagonal diverters, closures, median barriers and forced turn islands

Gateway: physical or geometric landmarks that indicate a change in environment from a higher speed roadway to a lower speed residential or commercial district.

TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

Signs, signals, and markings as included in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Traffic control devices may be featured in traffic calming measures, but are not inherently traffic calming. Examples include:

+ Automated speed enforcement
+ Speed feedback signs
+ Gateway signs

THINGS YOU CAN DO BEYOND A STREET

Things you can do beyond a street focus on the surrounding context and the factors that influence how people use and interact with the street. **Measures, devices, or strategies serve to support livability and increase the availability and convenience of multimodal options.** There are two categories of tools: **Softening the Street and Programs, Planning, and Policies.**

SOFTENING THE STREET

Design treatments and measures to enhance the physical environment and condition to be welcoming, pedestrian-scale, and comfortable for all users. Measures focus on tactile and visual changes to the street area, especially considering the features and amenities that make the space feel like an attractive and inviting public space more than a thoroughfare. Measures are organized based on their approach and impact: surface changes and enclosure effects.

Surface Changes: measures that involve changing the paving material or design of the street in a way that support traffic calming and placemaking objectives.:

+ Textured Surface Paving

Enclosure Effects: measures that help to craft a sense of space and an enclosure. These both enhance the perceived safety and comfort of the street for pedestrians, and can visually narrow the street for drivers in support of traffic calming goals.

+ Tree coverage
+ Pedestrian scale lighting

PROGRAMS, PLANNING, AND POLICIES

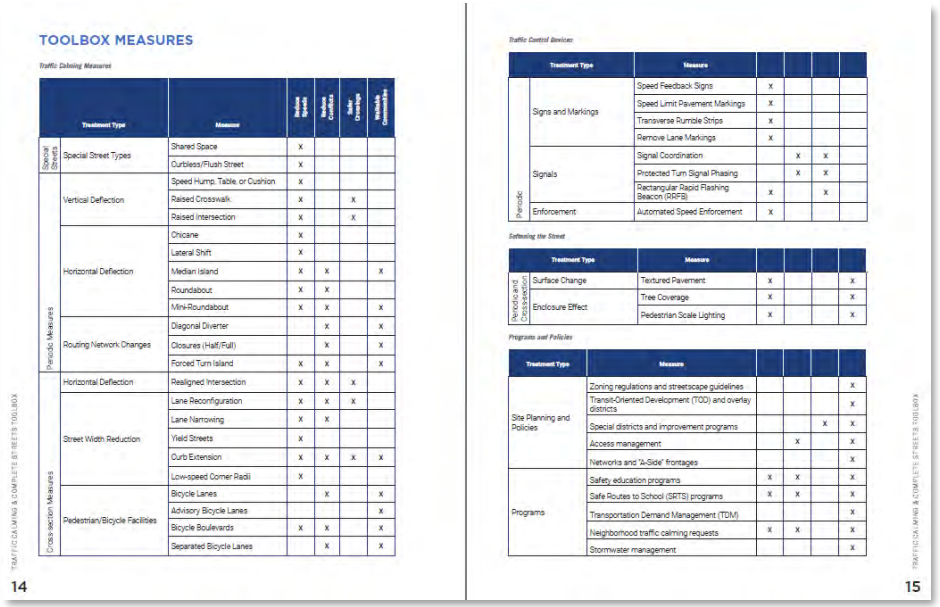
Initiatives, programs, and approaches to planning communities that support traffic calming and Complete Streets even if they do not directly influence or intersect with the design of the right-of-way. These include initiatives that prioritize multimodal networks, walkable communities, safe access to community destinations such as schools and transit hubs, and strategies to reduce demand for single vehicle trips and parking.

Site Planning and Policies: measures that can have direct influence on the built environment, such as zoning regulations, special districts and overlays, and guidelines that govern site planning or network strategies and access management plans that influence the future street network and connections.

+ Zoning regulations and streetscape guidelines
+ Special districts and improvement programs
+ Access and network management

Programs: safety, Complete Streets, and traffic calming-related programs that support the goals of these priorities without directly impacting the design or function of streets. This includes safety education programs to encourage safe behavior, demand management strategies to reduce car dependency, and incorporating stormwater management into public projects.

+ Safety education programs
+ Multimodal Programs
+ Stormwater Management



TOOLBOX MEASURES

Traffic Calming Measures

	Treatment Type	Measure	Reduce Speeds	Reduce Conflicts	Ease Crossings	Walkable Communities
Special Streets	Special Street Types	Shared Space	x			
		Curbless/Flush Street	x			
Periodic Measures	Vertical Deflection	Speed Hump, Table, or Cushion	x			
		Raised Crosswalk	x		x	
		Raised Intersection	x		x	
	Horizontal Deflection	Chicane	x			
		Lateral Shift	x			
		Median Island	x	x		x
		Roundabout	x	x		
		Mini-Roundabout	x	x		x
	Routing Network Changes	Diagonal Diverter		x		x
		Closures (Half/Full)		x		x
		Forced Turn Island	x	x		x
Cross-section Measures	Horizontal Deflection	Realigned Intersection	x	x	x	
	Street Width Reduction	Lane Reconfiguration	x	x	x	
		Lane Narrowing	x	x		
		Yield Streets	x			
		Curb Extension	x	x	x	x
		Low-speed Corner Radii	x			
	Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities	Bicycle Lanes		x		x
		Advisory Bicycle Lanes				x
		Bicycle Boulevards	x	x		x
		Separated Bicycle Lanes		x		x

Traffic Control Devices

	Treatment Type	Measure				
Periodic	Signs and Markings	Speed Feedback Signs	x			
		Speed Limit Pavement Markings	x			
		Transverse Rumble Strips	x			
		Remove Lane Markings	x			
	Signals	Signal Coordination		x	x	
		Protected Turn Signal Phasing		x	x	
		Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)	x		x	
	Enforcement	Automated Speed Enforcement	x			

Softening the Street

	Treatment Type	Measure				
Periodic and Cross-section	Surface Change	Textured Pavement	x			x
	Enclosure Effect	Tree Coverage	x			x
		Pedestrian Scale Lighting	x			x

Programs and Policies

Treatment Type	Measure				
Site Planning and Policies	Zoning regulations and streetscape guidelines				x
	Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and overlay districts				x
	Special districts and improvement programs			x	x
	Access management		x		x
	Networks and "A-Side" frontages				x
Programs	Safety education programs	x	x		x
	Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs	x	x		x
	Transportation Demand Management (TDM)				x
	Neighborhood traffic calming requests	x	x		x
	Stormwater management				x

TRAFFIC CALMING & COMPLETE STREETS TOOLBOX

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TRAFFIC CALMING & COMPLETE STREETS TOOLBOX

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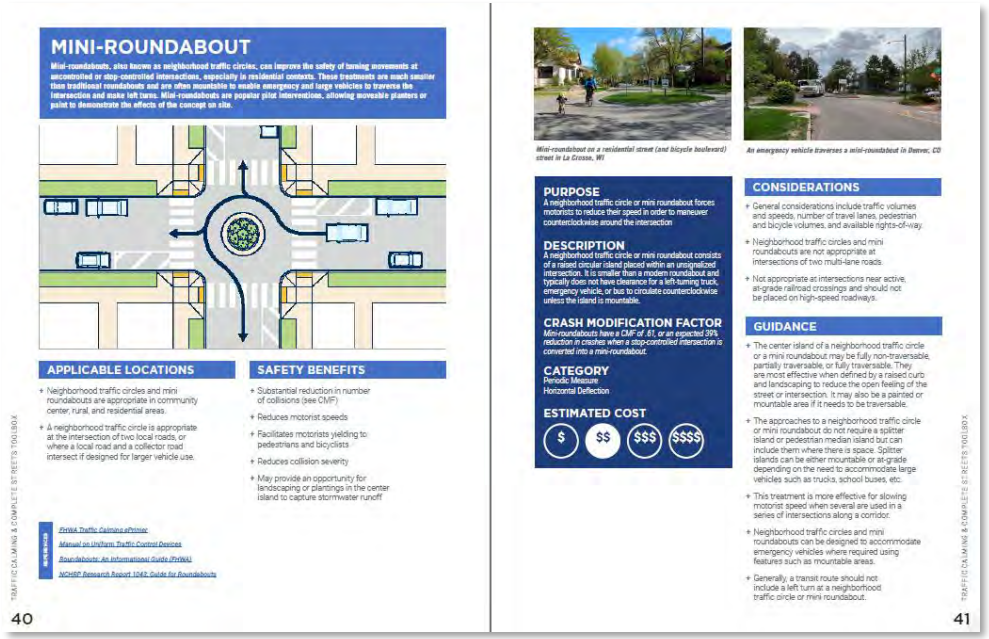
TOOLE DESIGN

Overview

- **The Toolbox**
  - Special Street Types
  - Periodic Measures
  - Cross-section Changes
  - Traffic Control Devices
  - Softening the Street
  - Programs and Planning



TOOLE DESIGN

Example

- **Maple Street** | Linden Avenue (Darien, CT)
  - Priority connection for active transportation
  - Access to community services, transit, school/play areas
  - AADT 1200

Example

- **Potential Tools…**
  - Removing the centerline to visually narrow the roadway
  - Add curb extensions or other horizontal elements to narrow entry points, shorten crossing distances, and slow turning movements
  - Support a more comfortable pedestrian facility where possible; this could include shifting the physical buffer between the sidewalk/path and roadway
  - Introduce wayfinding (i.e., a bicycle boulevard connection). This could include pave
  - Consider a mini-roundabout where applicable

Discussion

Initial Thoughts

- **Three ideas the project team has in mind for the final version:**
  - Add **call-out boxes** with local examples, images, or resources where applicable
  - Reinforce **Gateway** measures as their own category (including new definitions in Section 1)
  - Expand the discussion of regional priorities and safety needs (Introduction), including **local roads** and especially for **transition zones** and **community priority areas**

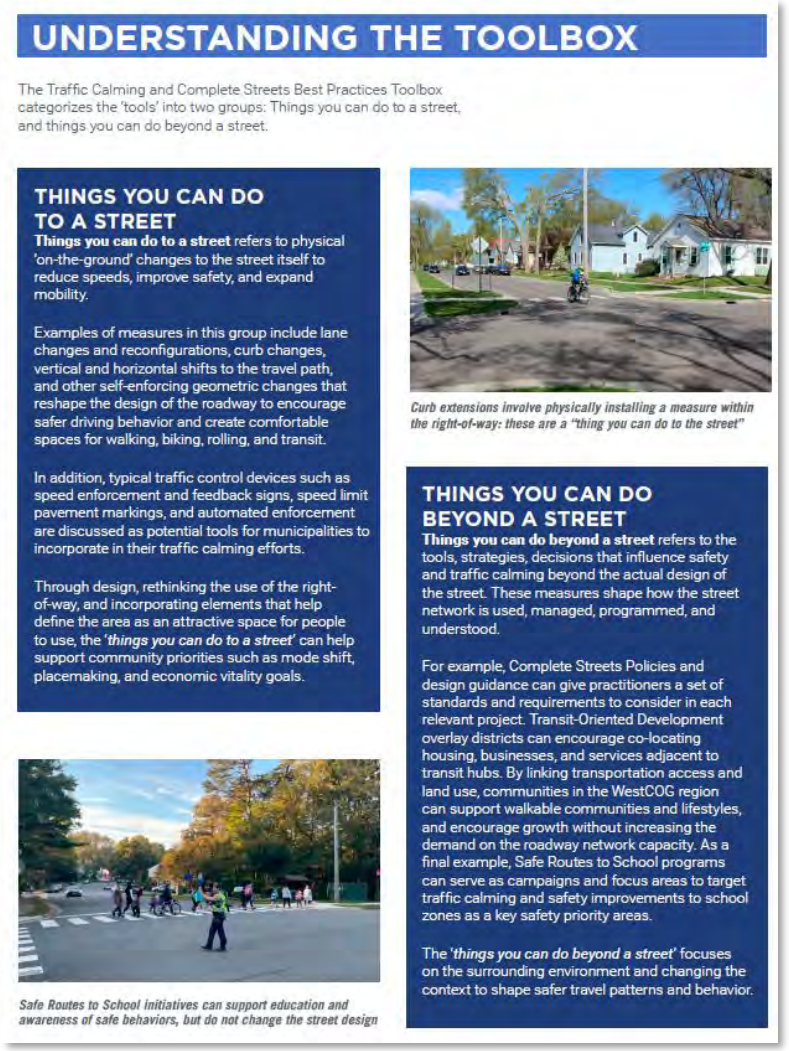
Overall Impressions

- **What are your first impressions?**
  - Follow-up: Any general takeaways: format, flow, details, design, graphics…

- Did you find the Toolbox to be **practical** and **user-friendly**?

Document Flow and Use

- Does the narrative make a compelling case for Traffic Calming in the Region?
- Is "***How To Use This Toolbox***" clear?
- Does the "**Things You Can Do to a Street**" and "**Things You Can Do Beyond a Street**" organization feel intuitive?
- Other: Overall feedback on document structure, flow, and application



UNDERSTANDING THE TOOLBOX

The Traffic Calming and Complete Streets Best Practices Toolbox categorizes the 'tools' into two groups: Things you can do to a street, and things you can do beyond a street.

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO A STREET

Things you can do to a street refers to physical 'on-the-ground' changes to the street itself to reduce speeds, improve safety, and expand mobility.

Examples of measures in this group include lane changes and reconfigurations, curb changes, vertical and horizontal shifts to the travel path, and other self-enforcing geometric changes that reshape the design of the roadway to encourage safer driving behavior and create comfortable spaces for walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

In addition, typical traffic control devices such as speed enforcement and feedback signs, speed limit pavement markings, and automated enforcement are discussed as potential tools for municipalities to incorporate in their traffic calming efforts.

Through design, rethinking the use of the right-of-way, and incorporating elements that help define the area as an attractive space for people to use, the '*things you can do to a street*' can help support community priorities such as mode shift, placemaking, and economic vitality goals.

Curb extensions involve physically installing a measure within the right-of-way: these are a "thing you can do to the street"

THINGS YOU CAN DO BEYOND A STREET

Things you can do beyond a street refers to the tools, strategies, decisions that influence safety and traffic calming beyond the actual design of the street. These measures shape how the street network is used, managed, programmed, and understood.

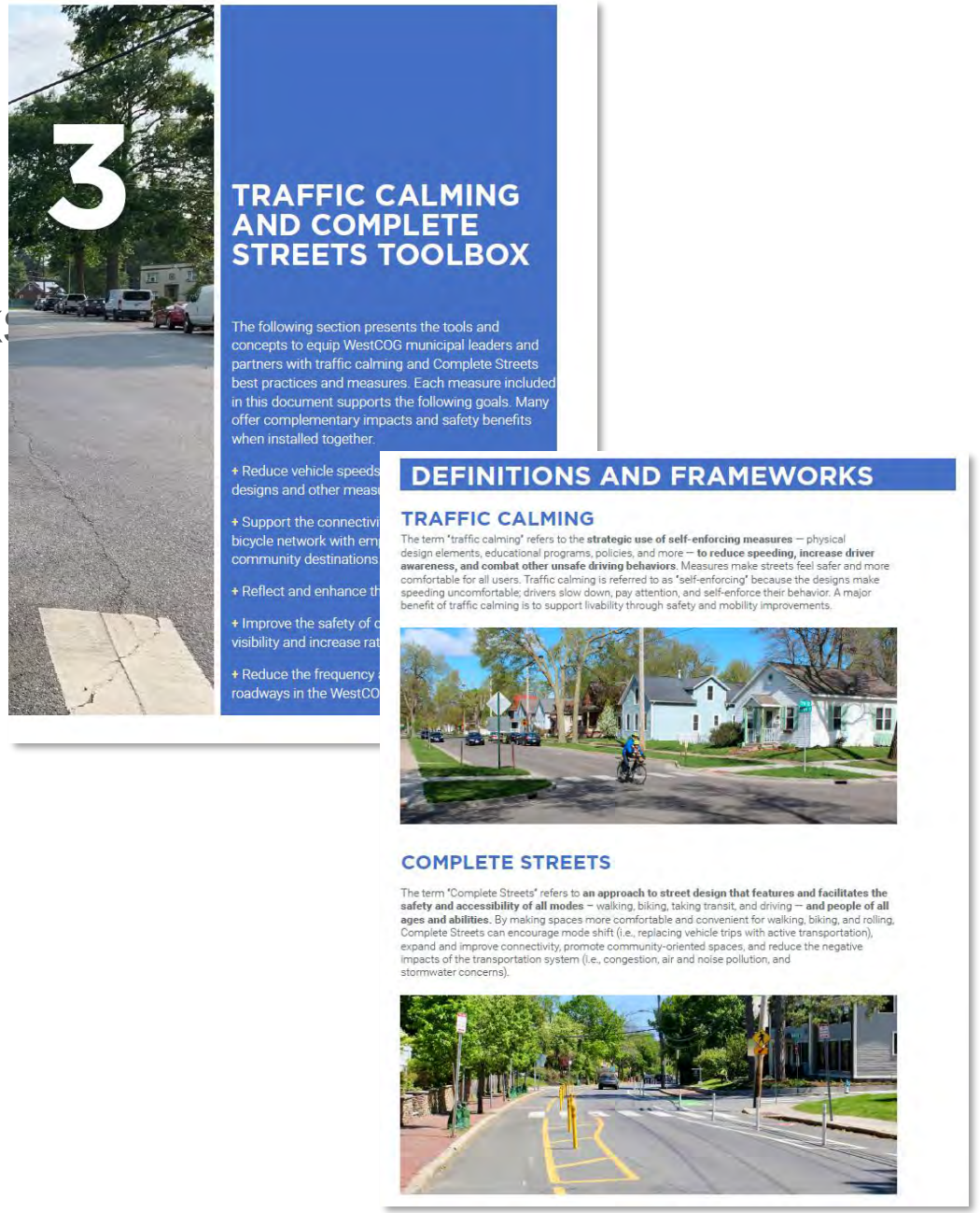
For example, Complete Streets Policies and design guidance can give practitioners a set of standards and requirements to consider in each relevant project. Transit-Oriented Development overlay districts can encourage co-locating housing, businesses, and services adjacent to transit hubs. By linking transportation access and land use, communities in the WestCOG region can support walkable communities and lifestyles, and encourage growth without increasing the demand on the roadway network capacity. As a final example, Safe Routes to School programs can serve as campaigns and focus areas to target traffic calming and safety improvements to school zones as a key safety priority areas.

The '*things you can do beyond a street*' focuses on the surrounding environment and changing the context to shape safer travel patterns and behavior.

Safe Routes to School initiatives can support education and awareness of safe behaviors, but do not change the street design

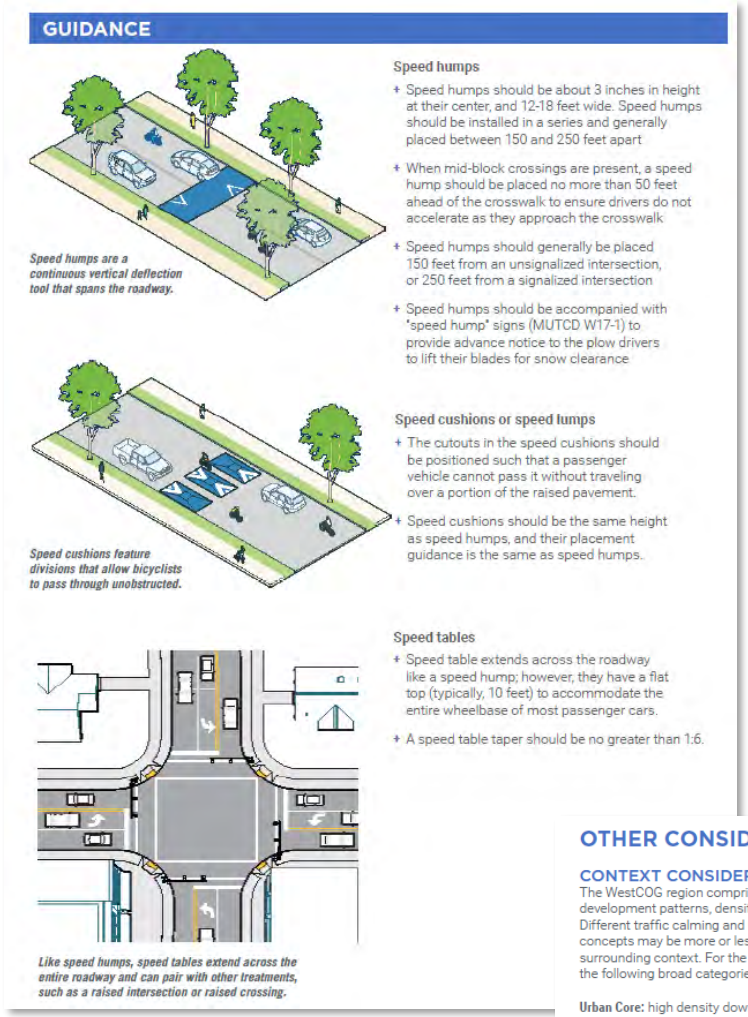
Clarity and Concepts

- Do the definitions, measures, and frameworks feel clear for the WestCOG audience and context?
  - Follow-up: organization of periodic, cross-section, environmental…
  - Follow-up: horizontal/vertical tools, etc.
  - Follow-up: Is the short/long-term discussion clear?
- Does the Toolbox clearly explain why these measures matter?
  - Follow-up: In practice, what outcomes usually drive decision-making – does this Toolbox steer users to those outcomes quickly?



Local Context

- Do the **context categories** make sense for WestCOG communities?
  - Urban Core, Community Center, Transition Zone, and Rural or Residential Areas
- Are there tools likely to be **embraced** or **resisted** in Western CT communities?
  - Any tools or policies you expected/were missing?
- **Clarity check:** are you noticing any jargon, vagueness, or guidance that could be misinterpreted? Does the document feel specifically relatable to the region?



GUIDANCE

Speed humps are a continuous vertical deflection tool that spans the roadway.

Speed humps

- Speed humps should be about 3 inches in height at their center, and 12-18 feet wide. Speed humps should be installed in a series and generally placed between 150 and 250 feet apart
- When mid-block crossings are present, a speed hump should be placed no more than 50 feet ahead of the crosswalk to ensure drivers do not accelerate as they approach the crosswalk
- Speed humps should generally be placed 150 feet from an unsignalized intersection, or 250 feet from a signalized intersection
- Speed humps should be accompanied with "speed hump" signs (MUTCD W17-1) to provide advance notice to the plow drivers to lift their blades for snow clearance

Speed cushions feature divisions that allow bicyclists to pass through unobstructed.

Speed cushions or speed lumps

- The cutouts in the speed cushions should be positioned such that a passenger vehicle cannot pass it without traveling over a portion of the raised pavement.
- Speed cushions should be the same height as speed humps, and their placement guidance is the same as speed humps.

Like speed humps, speed tables extend across the entire roadway and can pair with other treatments, such as a raised intersection or raised crossing.

Speed tables

- Speed table extends across the roadway like a speed hump; however, they have a flat top (typically, 10 feet) to accommodate the entire wheelbase of most passenger cars.
- A speed table taper should be no greater than 1:6.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

CONTEXT CONSIDERATIONS

The WestCOG region comprises a broad spectrum of development patterns, density, and roadway networks. Different traffic calming and Complete Streets concepts may be more or less suitable based on the surrounding context. For the toolbox, context refers to the following broad categories:

Urban Core: high density downtown cores, often featuring gridded street networks and multimodal transportation systems.

Community Center: "Main Streets" that serve as active community centers with a mix of land uses, often in towns and small cities; can also refer to the commercial areas in more rural contexts.

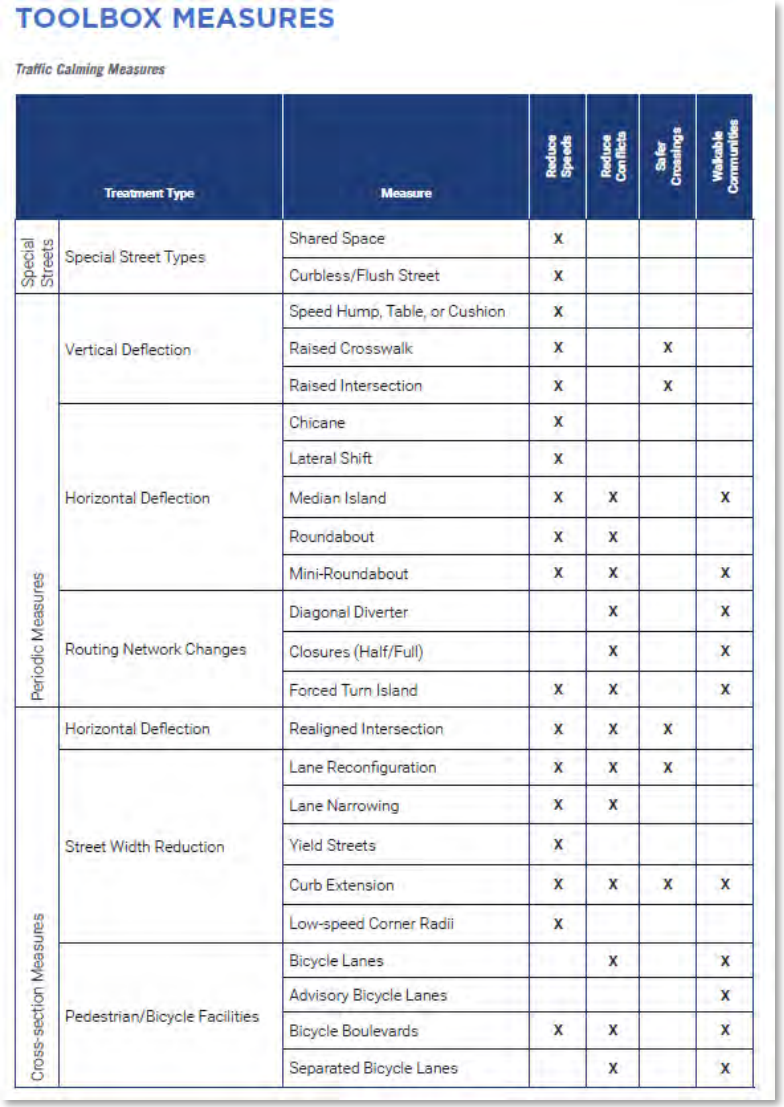
Transition Zone: the area between a lower density area and a community center, where drivers should be alerted to the changing context and prepare to operate at slower speeds and be especially attentive to people walking, biking, or rolling.

Rural or Residential Areas: quiet, residential, or rural areas where low volumes of vehicles can lead to excessive speed.

Action-Oriented

- Does the Toolbox provide clear implementation pathways for projects?
- How would you/your community use this Toolbox moving forward?

- Revisiting Objectives: Thinking about use -- what does a successful Toolbox look like?
  - Combining **theory** and **practicality** to address barriers
  - Bringing together **best practices** with **local** perspectives
  - A toolbox that is practical for a spectrum of contexts (and especially municipal partners with limited bandwidth)



TOOLBOX MEASURES

Traffic Calming Measures

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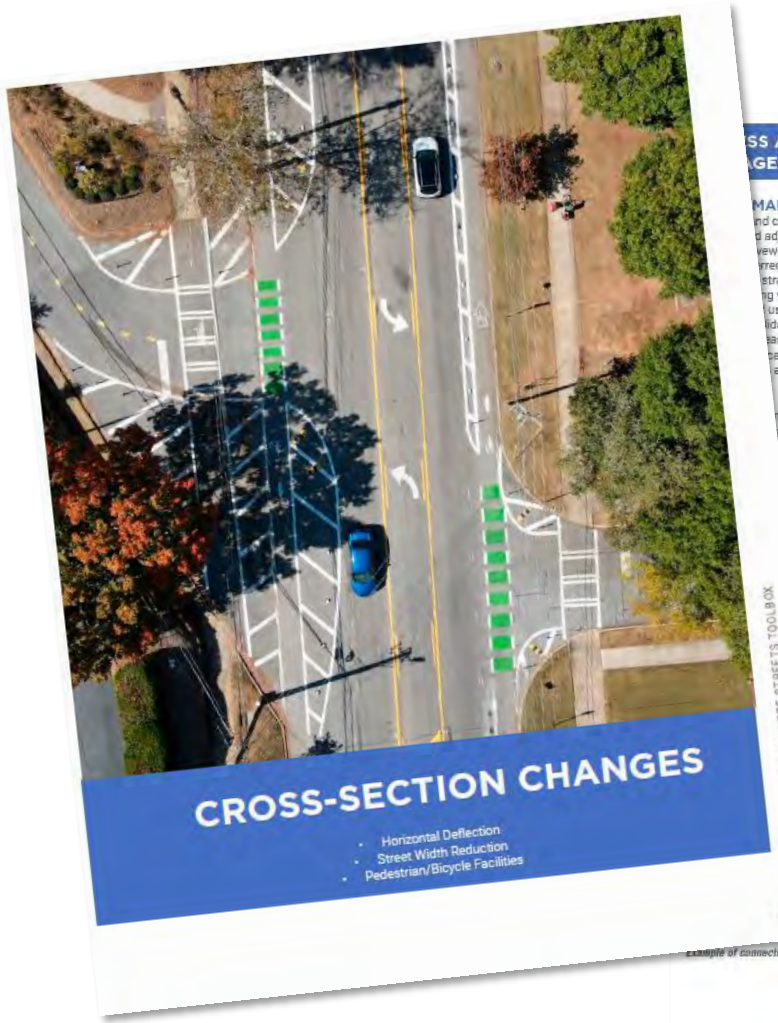
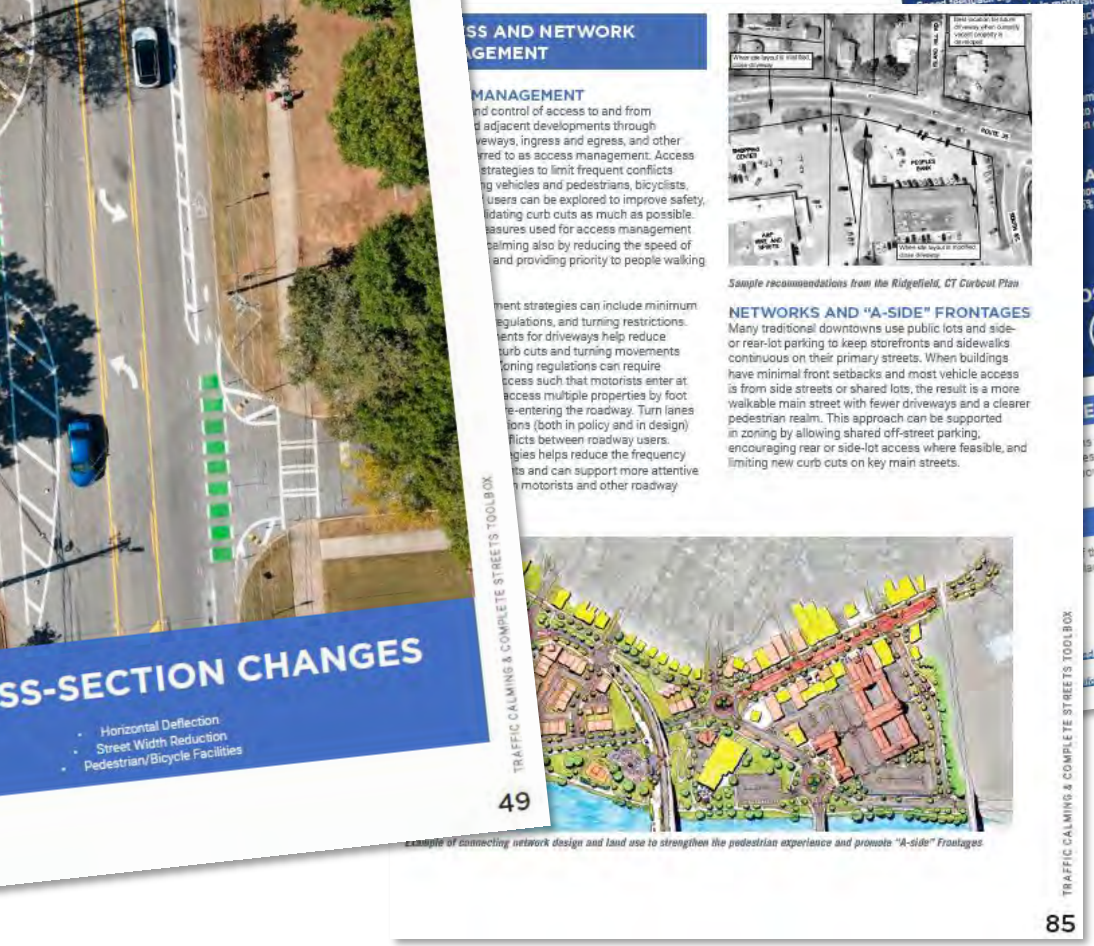
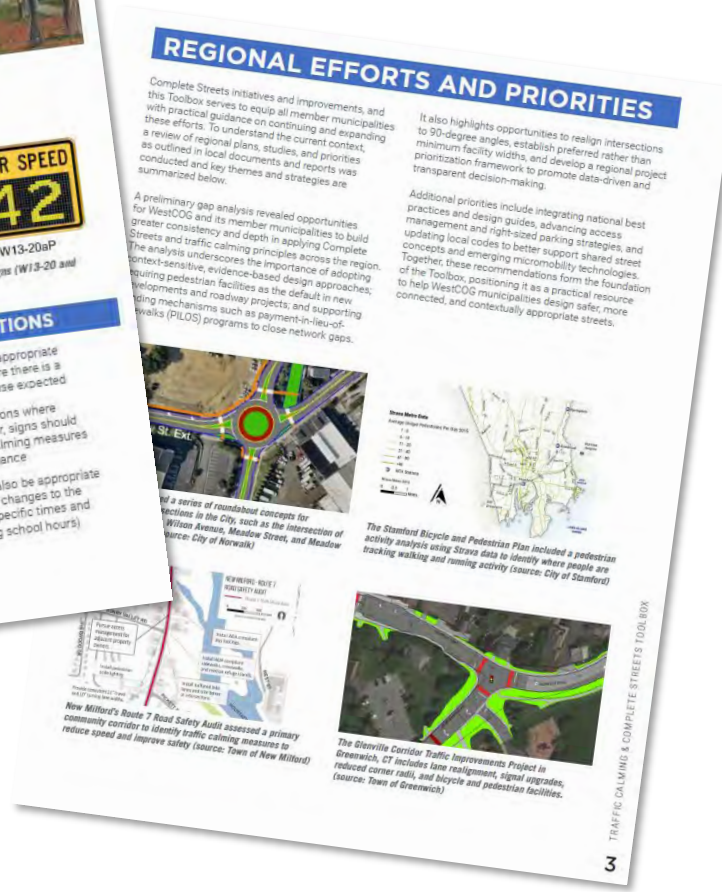
Special Streets	Special Street Types	Shared Space	X			
		Curbless/Flush Street	X			
Periodic Measures	Vertical Deflection	Speed Hump, Table, or Cushion	X			
		Raised Crosswalk	X		X	
		Raised Intersection	X		X	
	Horizontal Deflection	Chicane	X			
		Lateral Shift	X			
		Median Island	X	X		X
		Roundabout	X	X		
		Mini-Roundabout	X	X		X
	Routing Network Changes	Diagonal Diverter		X		X
		Closures (Half/Full)		X		X
		Forced Turn Island	X	X		X
Cross-section Measures	Horizontal Deflection	Realigned Intersection	X	X	X	
	Street Width Reduction	Lane Reconfiguration	X	X	X	
		Lane Narrowing	X	X		
		Yield Streets	X			
		Curb Extension	X	X	X	X
		Low-speed Corner Radii	X			
	Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities	Bicycle Lanes		X		X
		Advisory Bicycle Lanes				X
		Bicycle Boulevards	X	X		X
		Separated Bicycle Lanes		X		X

Anything else?







Next Steps

Next Steps

- ✓ Convene a Project Advisory Committee
- ✓ Review Municipal Guidance
- ✓ Conduct a Best Practices Review
- ✓ Coordinate Focus Groups
- ✓ Develop Planning Precepts
- ❑ Review Draft Toolbox *(PAC and beyond)*
- ❑ Finalize and Share Final Toolbox

Thank you

Questions? Contact:

Mike Wilson | *mwilson@westcog.org*

Carrie Long | *clong@tooledesign.com*