

City of San José, California

COUNCIL POLICY

TITLE TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY FOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	PAGE 1 of 6	POLICY NUMBER 5-6
EFFECTIVE DATE April 25, 2000	REVISED DATE June 17, 2008	
APPROVED BY COUNCIL ACTION 4/25/2000, Item 9j, Res. Nos. 69541 and 69542; 6/26/2001, Item 6.11, Res. No. 70524, 6/17/2008, Item 6.2(a), Res. No. 74443		

BACKGROUND

High traffic speeds and volumes, as well as inappropriate behavior of motorists can adversely impact San José neighborhoods. Traffic can also have a negative effect on pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly near schools, community centers and parks. The City responds to these conditions by conducting traffic engineering studies which may result in the installation of traffic control devices, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, or physical roadway features. The Police and Transportation Departments may also deploy officers to enforce traffic and parking regulations, and provide traffic safety education to school children and adults. For the purpose of this policy, these efforts are referred to as **traffic calming**.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Council policy is to provide a framework for the general processes, responsibilities and outreach related to traffic calming so that interested parties can effectively access this City service. The performance measure goals contained in this policy are desirable, but subject to available City resources and the level of active community involvement.

POLICY

It is the policy of San José to minimize the negative impacts associated with traffic on all streets, particularly within residential neighborhoods and near schools, by applying education, enforcement, and sound engineering solutions developed with strong community involvement. Traffic calming solutions are categorized into two levels: basic and comprehensive.

Basic traffic calming services are those traffic control devices and programs that are implemented on a day-to-day basis to regulate, warn, guide, enforce and educate motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists; and generally apply to all streets. Residential neighborhoods with traffic impacts that cannot be addressed through basic traffic calming services may be eligible for additional traffic calming measures referred to as comprehensive traffic calming projects.

Comprehensive traffic calming projects are physical roadway design features or dynamic signage and warning systems which are intended to slow traffic within, or divert traffic from residential neighborhoods, or to enhance pedestrian safety.

All traffic calming services and projects are to be coordinated with other transportation policies and be consistent with the General Plan; and where possible, coordinated with other capital and private development projects. Traffic calming projects should be designed and implemented with the goal of not transferring negative traffic conditions from one neighborhood roadway to another. For the purpose of this policy, 'cut-through' traffic is defined as traffic that is using a local residential street to avoid arterial or major collector roadways, and is not traffic that has an origin or destination within the immediate neighborhood.

TITLE	TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY FOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	PAGE	2 of 6	POLICY NUMBER	5-6
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BASIC TRAFFIC CALMING SERVICES

A. Request for Traffic Calming Services

Individuals or organizations with concerns about negative impacts of traffic should contact the City's Department of Transportation (DOT) to request a traffic engineering analysis. If the concern regards the enforcement of traffic or parking regulations, the Traffic Enforcement Unit (TEU) of the Police Department, or the Parking Compliance Unit of DOT will be notified. If the concern regards the need for education, a traffic safety presentation will be scheduled.

B. Services and Schedules

DOT performs a wide variety of traffic engineering studies. The appropriate study will be performed to address the requester's particular concern and situation. If traffic control devices, such as signs or pavement markings are needed, DOT will coordinate the installation. The performance measure goal for evaluating a concern and installing an appropriate device is 35 calendar days from the date the request is received.

Some studies require extensive data collection and field observations, or are subject to independent policies and guidelines, such as those for stop signs, crosswalks, and bike lanes, and will require additional time. In addition, devices that require City Council approval, such as heavy truck restrictions may require several months for analysis, public review and implementation. The goal is to take the time and conduct an appropriate level of outreach to ensure sufficient community involvement and awareness of intended actions.

If traffic safety education is requested or recommended to address driver, pedestrian or bicyclist behavior, the goal is to perform a traffic safety education presentation within eight weeks. However, the presentation schedule is often dependent upon coordination of a desired timeframe with neighborhood or school representatives.

COMPREHENSIVE TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECTS

A. Initiation of Comprehensive Traffic Calming Projects

Neighborhoods that are experiencing adverse traffic conditions that cannot be addressed using Basic Traffic Calming Services may be eligible for a comprehensive traffic calming project. If an adverse traffic condition cannot be addressed through basic traffic calming services, DOT will automatically initiate a comprehensive traffic calming analysis.

B. Comprehensive Traffic Calming Projects

A comprehensive traffic calming project generally involves the construction of a physical roadway feature(s) or installation of a dynamic warning sign or message system, and includes the following types of projects:

- **Level 1 traffic calming projects** are intended to reduce vehicular speed or enhance pedestrian safety. Level 1 projects require neighborhood involvement and outreach as described in Section F and Outreach Requirements. Examples of roadway features or signage include, but are not limited to, median islands, chokers, traffic circles, road humps, enhanced crosswalks, and school zone beacons or radar speed display signs.
- **Level 2 traffic calming projects** involve the redirecting of traffic to address excessive volumes resulting from cut-through traffic. Level 2 projects require extensive neighborhood involvement and outreach as described in Section F and Outreach Requirements, and ultimately, City Council approval. Examples of projects and features in this category include traffic diversion islands, full or partial street closures, and changing the direction of travel on a street.

TITLE	PAGE	POLICY NUMBER
TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY FOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	3 of 6	5-6

Examples of roadway features, dynamic warning signs and message systems are contained in DOT's Traffic Calming Toolkit, which is available for community use. The Toolkit can be viewed at www.sanjoseca.gov/transportation/forms/toolkit.pdf and is intended to provide information regarding the various traffic calming services that are available.

C. Eligible Roadways

The implementation of comprehensive traffic calming projects is limited to residential, 2-lane local or minor neighborhood collector roadways, with a maximum posted speed limit of 30 mph. Streets designated as General Plan streets, transit routes, or used as emergency response routes are generally not eligible for comprehensive traffic calming measures, except for dynamic speed signs and messaging systems. These roadways by their classification, or function, are intended to carry higher volumes of traffic and accommodate a large vehicle mix.

Threshold Criteria:

The following threshold criteria must be met for the implementation of comprehensive traffic calming projects:

Local Streets: (posted speed limit of 25 mph and 1,000—3,000 vehicles per day)

- 85th percentile speed of 33 mph or more, or
- 40% or more of the daily traffic is 'cut-through' traffic

Neighborhood Collector Streets: (posted speed limit of 25 mph or 30 mph and 1,000—6,000 vehicles per day)

- 85th percentile speed of 33 mph or more on 25 mph posted streets, or
- 85th percentile speed of 37 mph or more on 30 mph posted streets

D. Prioritization of Comprehensive Projects

Eligible comprehensive traffic calming projects will be prioritized for implementation based upon the severity of the traffic conditions by taking into account the following cumulative traffic impacts: speeding, volume, cut-through traffic, crash history, proximity to pedestrian generators such as schools, parks and community centers and unique roadway conditions. Priority points will be assigned as shown below.

TITLE	TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY FOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	PAGE	4 of 6	POLICY NUMBER	5-6
--------------	--	-------------	--------	----------------------	-----

Priority Ranking

Speed	2 points for each mph difference between the 85th percentile speed and the posted or prima facie speed limit
Volume	1 point for each 500 vehicles over 1,000 vehicles per day 5 points if 40—65% or more ADT on local street is cut-through traffic between arterials or major roadways, 10 points if higher than 65%
Crash History	5 points for each speed related crash in the last 3 years
Pedestrian Generators (15 points max.)	5 points for each school, park or trail access, library, or community center along roadway 3 points if within 1 block, 2 points within 2 blocks
Unique Conditions (15 points max.)	5 points for designation as a bike route or as a General Plan pedestrian corridor, or for proximity to neighborhood business district, or existing/ planned transit hub; 5 points for evidence of crashes or speeding, such as long skid marks or broken glass; 5 points for missing sidewalk section; 5 points for unique roadway geometry that substantially restricts visibility; 5 points for high crash rate

*ADT - average daily traffic

At the close of each funding cycle (fiscal year), the highest ranked projects will be considered for construction in the following fiscal year, depending upon funding, resource availability and community support. However, adjustments in schedules of traffic calming projects may be made based upon coordination with scheduled capital improvement or private development projects, or availability of funding specific to the project.

E. Reassessment of Warranted Comprehensive Projects

Projects not selected in a given funding cycle will remain on the priority list for consideration in the next funding cycle and prioritized along with newly eligible projects. As resources permit, projects may be reassessed to ensure that the priority ranking reflects significant changes in land use, speed, volume, crash history, pedestrian activity, or other conditions that may have occurred on any given roadway(s).

F. Community Support for Selected Comprehensive Projects

Substantial community support is required for the installation of physical roadway devices on either a trial or permanent basis, including the active involvement of a neighborhood traffic committee. Generally, committee members must own property or reside within the affected project area. If the project area falls within a recognized Neighborhood Association, then the traffic committee should also include a member from that Neighborhood Association. Utilizing relevant data and community input, DOT and the traffic committee will develop a proposed traffic calming plan. Based upon potential impacts of the proposed plan, DOT will determine the affected project area. The traffic committee will distribute a petition developed by DOT to all households, businesses, schools, and absentee property owners within the project area. Some physical devices impact adjacent property owners more than others, and have specific installation guidelines and criteria that must also be met.

Trial Installations: The petition must have 50% + 1 support of all affected households, businesses and schools within the project area before a trial installation is implemented (Level 1 projects) or presented to City Council (Level 2 projects) for authorization to proceed.

TITLE	TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY FOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	PAGE	5 of 6	POLICY NUMBER	5-6
--------------	--	-------------	--------	----------------------	-----

Permanent Installations: The petition must have 50% + 1 support of all affected households, businesses and schools within the project area for implementation of the final plan (Level 1 projects) or to be scheduled for presentation to City Council (Level 2 projects) for approval.

G. Comprehensive Project Schedule

Most comprehensive projects will require a trial installation, which will generally occur within four months from the date the plan is finalized and supported by the community or approved by City Council. The duration of the trial will normally be six months, during which time City staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the installation. During the trial, minor adjustments may be made to the plan based upon review by City staff and input from the community. Based on all relevant data and community input, DOT, in coordination with the traffic committee, will develop a proposed plan and schedule for permanent installation of the comprehensive project that will be presented to the community for approval.

Level 1 projects supported by the community will be programmed for implementation. Community supported Level 2 projects will be presented to City Council for consideration, and, if approved, programmed for implementation. Installation of final comprehensive projects will be dependent upon the complexity of the project and available resources for construction and ongoing maintenance of installed devices.

H. Reapplication for Comprehensive Traffic Calming Project

Neighborhoods that do not qualify for a comprehensive traffic calming project may reapply in two years from the date of DOT's final consideration. The two-year time period may be waived by the City Traffic Engineer if significant land use changes or other significant change has occurred.

COMMUNITY FUNDING FOR COMPREHENSIVE TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECTS

The City may accept donations from residents, neighborhoods, community groups, schools and/or businesses for the implementation and ongoing maintenance of comprehensive traffic calming projects that are eligible for installation under the provisions of this policy. Donations will need to comply with all provisions of City Council Policy 1-17.

OUTREACH REQUIREMENTS

Residents, businesses and schools that may be affected by the outcome of a comprehensive traffic calming project, will be notified in writing of any planned actions and schedule. Comprehensive projects that involve the installation of physical roadway features will normally require at least one (1) community meeting with households, businesses and schools in the project area. Notices for any community meeting will be distributed at least ten (10) calendar days in advance. Notices will be provided to all properties within the project area as defined in Section F. The methods of notification will be consistent with those contained in Council Policy 6-30. Projects will also be coordinated with providers of emergency response services, transit services, utilities and related services as needed.

POLICY EXEMPTIONS

Local residential streets and neighborhood collectors that do not meet the threshold criteria in Section C may be eligible for comprehensive traffic calming measures if the City Traffic Engineer determines that a unique or unusual condition exists which results in negative traffic impacts caused by a high number or rate of crashes, vehicles traveling at excessive speeds, significant pedestrian activity, or proximity to major traffic corridors or traffic generators that contribute to extraordinary changes to normal traffic conditions. These roadways will be prioritized along with the roadways that meet the threshold criteria based upon the ranking methodology in Section D.

TITLE TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY FOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	PAGE 6 of 6	POLICY NUMBER 5-6
---	-----------------------	-----------------------------

General Plan streets, transit routes, emergency response routes, may be eligible for dynamic warning signs or messaging systems if substantial levels of speeding are present as determined by DOT through an engineering traffic study, and funding is available for their installation and ongoing maintenance.

DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS IN EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

All proposed private and public development projects will be reviewed for potential traffic calming or pedestrian safety issues and a study will be required when necessary as determined through the City's development review process. DOT, Public Works and other City staff or consultants will be actively involved in the review of any proposed development that is determined to potentially create or significantly increase an adverse traffic condition in an existing neighborhood. It is the intent of this involvement that the development will be designed or that traffic calming or pedestrian or bicycle conditions will be placed on the developer to eliminate or minimize the portion of the adverse impacts that are a result of the development.