

*City of San José, California*

**COUNCIL POLICY**

<b>TITLE</b> TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY FOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	<b>PAGE</b> 1 of 7	<b>POLICY NUMBER</b> 5-6
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**BACKGROUND**

High traffic speeds and volumes, as well as inappropriate behavior of motorists can adversely impact San Jose neighborhoods. Traffic can also have a negative effect on pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly near schools, community centers, parks, senior centers, and high-density housing. 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 services and performance measure goals contained in this policy are desirable, but subject to available City resources and the level of active community involvement. This policy does not apply when the city implements adopted safety mode shift and Climate Smart goals and plans. This Policy shall only apply to requests for traffic calming submitted by residents or individual members of the Council and is not intended to dictate how the City implements adopted safety, mode shift, and Climate Smart goals and plans.

**POLICY**

It is the policy of San Jose 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 as needed for some Level 1 projects, and Level 2 projects. 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 enhance traffic safety, and 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 signs and message 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.

## **BASIC TRAFFIC CALMING SERVICES**

### A. Request for Traffic Calming Services

Individuals or organizations with concerns about traffic impacts or traffic safety in their neighborhood 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 may 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, bike lanes, and road humps, and will require additional time. In addition, devices that require City Council approval, such as heavy truck restrictions and road closures, 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, a traffic safety education presentation may be scheduled and is often dependent on available resources and 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 may 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 dynamic sign(s) or message system(s), 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 may require neighborhood involvement and outreach as described in the Community Support and Community Outreach sections. Examples of physical roadway features or dynamic signs or message systems include, but are not limited to, median islands, chokers, traffic circles, road humps, enhanced crosswalks, and 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 typically require extensive neighborhood involvement and outreach as described in the Community Support and Community Outreach sections, 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.

Examples of roadway features, dynamic signs and message systems are contained in DOT's *Traffic Calming Toolkit*. The *Toolkit* can be viewed at [www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/2432/636631207594630000](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/2432/636631207594630000) 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, two-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 enhanced crosswalks, dynamic signs and message 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 to address speeding and ‘cut-through’ traffic concerns:

- Local Streets: (posted speed limit of 25 mph and 1,000-3,000 vehicles per day)
  - 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of 31 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)
  - 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of 31 mph or more on 25 mph posted streets, or
  - 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of 35 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 and bicyclist generators such as schools, parks and community centers, and unique roadway conditions. Priority points will be assigned as shown below.

**Priority Ranking**

Speed	2 points for each mph difference between the 85 <sup>th</sup> 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/Bicyclist Generators (15 points max.)	5 points for each school, park or trail access, library, community center, senior center, or high-density housing along roadway, 3 points if within 1 block, 2 points within 2 blocks
MTC Combined Equity Score (5 points max.)	1 point for each point the Combined Equity Score is greater than an equity score of 5.
Unique Conditions (15 points max.)	

	5 points for proximity to a neighborhood business district, urban village, existing/planned transit facility, or existing/planned bike facility. 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
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\*ADT – average daily traffic

\*\*MTC – Metropolitan Transportation Commission

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 allocated for Citywide traffic calming projects, 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 during which funding has been allocated for traffic calming projects 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 and bicyclist activity, or other conditions that may have occurred on any given roadway(s).

F. Community Support for Selected Comprehensive Projects

Substantial community support may be required for the installation of some physical roadway devices on either a trial or permanent basis, including the active involvement of a neighborhood traffic committee. For example, a traffic committee and community support via a petition is generally not needed for the installation of enhanced crosswalks, dynamic signs and message systems, or small median islands and chokers. Physical roadway devices that require substantial support include Level 1 corridor-long speed control measures such as road humps and Level 2 traffic calming projects. 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 and determine if a petition is needed. For Level 1 corridor-long speed control measures, DOT will notify each household, business, school, and absentee property owner(s) within the project area about the planned measures and provide these individuals and groups the opportunity to provide feedback. DOT will use this feedback to determine if a petition is needed.

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

Permanent Installations: The petition must have 50% + 1 support of all affected households, businesses, schools, and absentee property owners 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

Some comprehensive projects will require a trial installation, which will generally occur within six 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 to twelve 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, which can be viewed at <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/12873/636669975473570000>. manual

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Residents, businesses, schools, and absentee property owners within the comprehensive traffic calming project area will be notified in writing of any planned actions and schedule for Level I corridor-long projects and Level II projects. Comprehensive projects that involve the installation of physical roadway features may 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. . 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 existing or planned bike facility, major traffic corridors or traffic generators that contribute to extraordinary changes to normal traffic conditions. The combined equity score developed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for Equity Priority Communities will also be considered as part of the policy exemption process. These roadways will be prioritized along with the roadways that meet the threshold criteria based upon the ranking methodology in Section D.

General Plan streets, transit routes, and emergency response routes, may be eligible for enhanced crosswalks, quick build improvements, dynamic signs or message systems if substantial levels of speeding are present as determined by DOT through an engineering traffic study or pedestrian safety enhancements are needed, 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.