

CITY OF CASTROVILLE

Traffic Calming Policy June 24, 2014

This document has been generated as a means of memorializing the rationale, process and engineering specifications which make up the City's "Traffic Calming Policy". It is not intended to be an absolute set of rules, but rather a guideline to be followed when responding to traffic calming related issues. In Castroville, the City Council is the final authority for such improvement decisions because they are charged by State law, as a type A General Law City, with the ultimate responsibility for the guardianship on behalf of the public, for all public rights-of-ways within the City boundaries (with the exception of State Highways).

Traffic calming is a proactive attempt to improve the livability of residential neighborhoods. It is an attempt to physically change the character of streets, improve safety and encourage drivers to obey the speed limit. Traffic calming utilizes a variety of physical devices to alter the geometry of a street as well as create visual narrowing to slow down traffic. The following policy has been developed to address traffic speed issues in our neighborhoods.

It is the intention of the City of Castroville Traffic Calming Policy to address traffic problems and concerns on residential streets. While not intended to make streets play areas for children or adults, calming traffic intends to generally improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and others who travel along or across our streets.

A. RATIONALE

Funding a traffic calming program with the limited resources of the City is difficult. Therefore, the following recommendation has been established. When the affected residents desire to change the characteristics of a street in an attempt to slow traffic, without a documented speed problem, they will be responsible for funding the out of pocket costs of such changes. This methodology is consistent with the City's Subdivision Ordinance.

Normally, a subdivision developer will select the construction type of new neighborhood streets at the time the land is platted and the development is created. The developer then pays for the initial construction. Once the street improvements are built to proper standards, the City will accept the streets for maintenance.

In the case where a documented speed problem does exist, staff will make recommendations on how to best begin the process of eliminating the problem. Less expensive solutions such as *speed monitoring and display equipment* (a temporary device that is primarily used to educate motorists regarding the fact that they may be significantly exceeding the posted speed limit), *increased patrol* (traditional enforcement activity on the part of the Castroville Police Department intended to modify behavior to result in a safer situation for all drivers and

neighbors) and *sign improvements and pavement markings* (if necessary, City staff will install additional signing or striping in the area) should be considered first. The City staff will wait a minimum of forty-five days and a maximum of six months, and then conduct another speed data collection. The data will then be analyzed to determine if the traffic calming measure(s) taken were successful. If the measure(s) were successful, then the traffic calming process will end at that point. If those measures do not work then physical changes should be considered to slow traffic. With approval from Council, City staff will include a budget line item in the following year's budget to cover the estimated cost of those improvements; unless, the City Council directs that the improvements be funded from the current year's budget.

Prior to making any permanent changes to the street, the following procedure has been established to guide the process.

B. PROCEDURE

The definition of the impact area needs to be large enough to cover the residents directly impacted by the improvements, but also must consider that traffic calming is intended to address the needs of the neighborhood and not those of through traffic.

The impact area will be defined as the properties within one block of an intersection project, and all properties fronting the study block of the street in the case of a project at the mid-block of a street. In addition, roads that have their sole access through the study block will be included in the impact area such as dead end streets, which intersect an affected block.

If a neighborhood has an established, active homeowners association, all properties within that association will be included in the impact area. In cases where the street, in the study area, is on the boundary of the association, the study area will not include the entire association, but shall be defined as mentioned in the above paragraph.

C. PROCESS

When the City receives a request for a traffic calming study, the requesting party or association will be required to obtain signatures of a majority of properties within the impact area.

When the required signatures have been presented to the City, a traffic speed survey will be performed on the study street(s). All speed surveys will be conducted while local schools are in session and when weather conditions do not indirectly affect the speed of vehicles in the study area. Staff will schedule the speed surveys so the data can be tabulated and a project can be designed with ample time to include the project in the following year's budget request to City Council; unless, directed otherwise by City Council.

A speeding problem is defined as the 85th percentile speed being 5 MPH or more over the posted speed limit in both directions. If the speed survey indicates a problem, City staff will submit to City Council the findings and make a recommendation on how best to proceed to

begin the process of calming traffic. If the speed survey data collected indicates no speeding problem within the study area, no improvements will be budgeted by the City. If the residents within the study area are still interested in traffic calming improvements without supporting data, they may choose to pay for the improvements including the cost for design, oversight implementation of the improvements and any required project contingency funds as defined in a specific plan developed by City staff with City Council approval of that plan. In formulating the specific plan, City staff shall adhere to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) or its equivalent. For the City to approve a project with no supporting speed data there must be documented 80% support from the affected neighborhood.

The traffic calming tools to be considered in the development of a plan are:

1. Sign Improvements and Pavement Markings
2. Increased Enforcement
3. Speed Monitoring and Display Equipment
4. Raised Crosswalks
5. Speed Humps and Tables
6. Pedestrian Improvements
7. Curb Extensions (Bump Outs)
8. Landscape Medians
9. Roundabouts

Speed humps will only be used on local streets, and should not be considered on restricted streets or "residential collector" streets. Restricted streets are defined as streets that allow emergency vehicles to reach all parts of the City without delay.

The City staff will schedule a neighborhood meeting inviting all residents in the impact area to attend. The preliminary plans will be discussed and input from the residents will be considered before developing a final plan. At that point in the process, the plan will be presented to the City Council for consideration. If City Council approves the plan, City staff will include the project estimate in the next year's budget for possible funding; however, the plan may be funded from the current year's budget if approved by the City Council.

The construction of the plan will be scheduled into the next year's budget work program for the Public Services Department, unless directed otherwise. The Department will perform any project components that they are able to. All other work will be contracted out during that year's Street Improvement Program and incorporated into the project scope. In the event that a documented speeding problem exists, the City will attempt to fund all traffic calming improvements in a timely manner. Where there is not a documented speeding problem, the estimated cost of the project performed by contractors, as well as any out of pocket costs to the City, will be the resident's responsibility to fund. The City must receive the amount estimated in advance of any construction. Those funds will be placed in an escrow account and drawn from to pay for the project. Any excess funds will be returned to the residents.

The City may perform the following tasks as part of the Plan:

1. Removal of Existing Asphalt and Concrete for Project Preparation
2. Simple Irrigation Design and Construction in Planning Areas
3. Tree and Shrub Planting
4. Some Concrete Curb and Gutter Construction
5. Most Asphalt Patching
6. Traffic Control for its Own Work
7. Speed Bump Construction
8. Sign Installation

The City may outsource one or more of the tasks below as part of the Plan:

1. Concrete Construction Beyond the Scope of City Staff
2. Asphalt Construction Beyond the Scope of City Staff
3. Irrigation Design and Construction Beyond the Scope of City Staff
4. Engineering Drainage Plan for Improvements
5. Pavement Markings
6. All Materials Needed to Facilitate Construction of the Improvements Including all Asphalt, Concrete, Landscape Materials and Irrigation Equipment

Adopted

6/24/14