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Neighborhood Traffic Management Program

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) is to establish a consistent set of guidelines to provide residents and property owners with a means to obtain relief from traffic-related concerns such as speeding vehicles in the unincorporated areas of San Mateo County.

ENFORCEMENT

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) has primary responsibility for enforcing the provisions of the California Vehicle Code (CVC) on streets in the unincorporated areas of the County. Traffic calming device installations require the support of the CHP, the governing fire department, and the Sheriff's Office.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The primary purpose of the NTMP is to address neighborhood concerns related to speed and volume of traffic on local streets by installing traffic calming devices, where appropriate and applicable.

The NTMP applies only to local streets or local roads, as defined under the [California Road System - Functional Classification Map](#). The Department of Public Works (Department) utilizes the official functional classification map adopted by Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for roadway classification. A Local Street or Local Road is described as a road primarily for access to residence, business or other abutting property.

These guidelines do not apply to arterials or collectors as they are generally wider than local streets, are intended to carry higher traffic volumes at higher speed than local streets, and are connected to local streets.

The Department will not consider traffic calming devices on streets where the posted speed limit is 30 miles per hour (mph) or more. Streets must also have suitable geometric roadway characteristics, such as roadway grade, sight distance, storm drainage features, curves, and proximity to other existing traffic calming devices, as determined by the Department.

The Department will not consider traffic calming devices on transit routes or on roads within the [San Mateo County Tsunami Hazard Zone](#), as determined by the County of San Mateo Department of Emergency Management (DEM).

Removal of some on-street parking spaces may be necessary to install traffic management measures. Parking loss at specific locations will be balanced with the neighborhood's desire for the traffic calming devices.

Examples of traffic calming devices are shown in the NTMP (page 6) and staff will evaluate the applicability of these devices during the evaluation process.

Traffic management devices will be planned, designed, and constructed in keeping with sound engineering practices. The installation of traffic calming devices, such as signs, markings, and speed humps will comply with the CVC and the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA-MUTCD).

Only approved signs based on the CA-MUTCD will be installed.

Traffic management measures require support from affected residents and/or property owners as part of the evaluation process prior to implementation.

Speed humps are the most common type of traffic calming devices constructed and permitted within public road rights-of-way in the County of San Mateo. For more information on speed humps, raised intersections and raised crosswalks, please see the examples of traffic calming devices on page 6. Other traffic calming devices that might be considered include, but are not limited to: median islands, traffic circles, bulb-outs, electronic speed feedback signs, and/or chicanes.

The Department evaluates requests based on a first-come, first-served basis. Implementation of approved projects is based on funding availability.

Speed data and/or reports more than two (2) years old will not be used to determine whether a street qualifies for traffic calming devices (see Procedures).

PROCEDURES

The NTMP includes a structured, six-step process. Each step in this process is outlined below.

Step 1. Initial Inquiry and Request by Residents

Any person who owns property or resides on a local street in the unincorporated area of the County may initiate a request for a neighborhood traffic calming device on their street by completing a Neighborhood Traffic Calming Request application and petition, which can be found at the County of San Mateo Department of Public Works [Traffic Calming website](#). The local street, applicable cross streets, description of the problem and contact information must be indicated on the form. The resident or property owner who initiated the request will be appointed as the Neighborhood Project Coordinator (Coordinator) to help facilitate the process. The Coordinator must advocate to the neighborhood and obtain written support from a minimum of 50% of the residents or property owners on the street in question to reflect the concern of the neighborhood. The Coordinator will also be designated as a point of contact for the neighborhood for any questions and concerns regarding the traffic calming request.

Step 2. Traffic Study

After the request indicating community support for the traffic calming request on the local street has been received by the Department, a traffic or speed survey will be conducted by the Department to determine if the local street meets the NTMP criteria. The criteria established for local streets are detailed as follows:

NTMP Program Criteria for Local Streets

1. Minimum 85th percentile speed of 32 mph. This means that 85 percent of the vehicles on the local street travel at or below 32 mph.
2. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 1000-3000 vehicles per day (VPD).
3. Suitable roadway grade (5% grade or less), alignment, sight distances, storm drainage features, curves, and proximity to other existing traffic calming devices, as determined by the Department.
4. Not on a transit route or within the San Mateo County Tsunami Hazard Zone.
5. With concurrence from the California Highway Patrol, the governing fire department, and the Sheriff's Office.

Requests that do not meet all five criteria will not be considered or advanced for consideration.

If a request for the local street to be considered for the NTMP has been submitted, evaluated, and determined not to have met the NTMP Program criteria, said local street will not be eligible for consideration until at least three (3) years following the decision date or there have been substantial roadway changes to the local street that would have affected the evaluation criteria.

As part of the evaluation process, Department staff will identify a notification/survey area. This area will include residents that are directly affected by the traffic issue and the possible traffic-calming measures to address the concerns. Only residences on the segment of the street in question, or on cul-de-sacs or courts directly connected to the street, will be included in the notification/survey area. Individuals on separate or distance areas of the same street or on streets with alternate ingress and egress will not be included in the notification area, as they will not be directly affected by the traffic calming measures.

Design and construction costs will be paid for using the NTMP Budget, based on availability of funds.

Step 3. Neighborhood Survey and/or Outreach

Following the completion of Step 2 and if the request met the identified criteria, the Department will conduct a formal survey by mail of residents and property owners within the notification area to confirm support for the traffic calming request and device(s) to be installed on their street. The survey will include contact information of the Coordinator and a link to the County of San Mateo Department of Public Works [Traffic Calming website](#), where these Procedures can be found. The survey will include a map of the properties within the notification area, as defined by the Department.

A simple majority (50% + 1) of the surveys must be returned, and of the returns, a simple majority (50% + 1) support is required to support installation of the traffic calming device(s). If the survey returns are below the simple majority or there is no simple majority support for the traffic calming request and device(s), the request will not be advanced. Property owners and/or residents will be notified of the survey results.

Any adult (18+) resident of a property within the notification area will be deemed authorized to sign the survey on behalf of that parcel (one signature per parcel). The property owner of a residence response of the survey will be counted in lieu of the current tenant if the vote is conflicting. Only one vote will be counted per address.

Public outreach may be conducted by the Department, as necessary, to discuss any traffic calming device(s) that may be implemented.

Step 4. Director of Public Works and/or Board of Supervisors Approval

The Department will notify all property owners and residents within the area if the traffic calming request receives majority support. Depending on the type of device(s) selected, the Director of Public Works may approve the installation of the device or may recommend to the Board of Supervisors (Board) for approval.

Additional traffic-calming measures may be considered as new techniques and devices are developed.

Fire and law enforcement agencies, public works agencies in adjoining cities/towns, and community councils and homeowners' associations will also be notified, where applicable.

Step 5. Design

The Department will prepare a design specifying locations and types of traffic calming device(s). The traffic calming device(s) will be designed in conformance with the County of San Mateo Department of Public Works Standard Drawings and the California Department of Transportation Traffic Calming Guide.

The design will also evaluate impacts to drainage, utilities, driveways, pedestrian and bicycle routes, and road maintenance considerations. The final design including locations and types of traffic calming device(s) will be at the sole discretion of the Department.

Step 6. Construction

The Department may contract or may employ its own forces to construct the traffic calming device(s).

MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING

1. Maintenance

The Department will maintain the traffic calming device(s) including signs and legends.

2. Monitoring

The Department will conduct a follow-up survey between six (6) and twelve (12) months after construction of the traffic calming device(s) to determine if the device(s) should stay in place or be removed.

EXAMPLES OF TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES

1) Speed Hump

A speed hump is a permanent traffic calming device and has proven to be the most effective device to slow traffic. The current standard for speed hump design is 3 inches high and 14 feet wide. Typically, speed humps extend across the entire street. Speed humps should only be installed on streets longer than 750' and placed no more than 500' apart. On unimproved streets or streets with rolled curbs, bollards may be installed at each end of the speed hump to deter motorists from traveling around the speed hump. Speed humps are not recommended as a traffic calming device on roads where the grade is greater than 5%.

Minor increases in emergency vehicle response times will be experienced, with the average delay being three to five seconds per speed hump. Less experienced cyclists may also be uncomfortable traveling around the speed humps.

Cost:

Cost estimates range between \$10,000 to \$20,000 for each speed hump, including signage and striping, depending on location.



Speed Hump with Wheel Slots

2) Raised Crosswalks (also known as Speed Tables)

A raised crosswalk is a permanent traffic calming device which includes pavement raised to the level of the sidewalk, usually around 4 inches to 6 inches. In some locations, the raised area has been given a special pavement treatment to differentiate the area from the normal paving surfaces.

The concept of the raised intersection has been used widely in Europe. In the United States, they have been used more for enhancements for pedestrian safety and aesthetics rather than for neighborhood traffic management.

The long, raised plateau of the intersection encourages drivers to take care to slow their speed. This device also benefits pedestrians as the street is raised to the same level as the sidewalk. However, because the intersection has been raised, emergency vehicles will need to slow their speed, increasing response times.

Installation of a raised crosswalk also requires modifications to the drainage system. Raised crosswalks are more easily installed in new developments or redevelopments. They are also a possibility for private streets, whether they are retrofitted or installed during construction.

Cost:

The cost of a raised crosswalk ranges between \$10,000 and \$30,000.



Raised Crosswalk

3) Painted Curb Extensions

A painted curb extension, or bulb-out, is a temporary traffic calming device which extends the sidewalk or curb into the roadway. Pavement markings are used in lieu of a concrete curb extension, and the markings can be accompanied by delineators to improve visibility for drivers.

The painted curb extension serves to narrow the roadway and widen the sidewalk, making the road appear narrower to drivers and to encourage slower speeds. The extended sidewalk also reduces the crosswalk distance, enhancing pedestrian safety.

Due to the narrowing of the roadway, all vehicles, including emergency vehicles, may pass through at slower speeds, potentially increasing emergency response times.

As painted curb extensions only require pavement markings (and delineators where they are deemed appropriate), it can easily be installed and is a temporary solution. However, curb extensions may result in a reduction in the number of street parking spaces.

Cost:

The cost of a painted curb extension ranges between \$2,000 and \$5,000 for each extension.



Painted Curb Extension (Bulb-Out) with Delineators