



CITY OF LA CENTER PUBLIC WORKS

TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM

APPROVED PER RESOLUTION 08-304

ON DECEMBER 10, 2008

<u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Summary	1
Procedures	2
Project Eligibility	2
Project Funding & Development	2
Procedures Element.....	3
Eligibility Criteria.....	6
Project Area Guidelines	6

SUMMARY

The City of La Center is committed to maintaining and improving the livability and safety of its residential neighborhoods. The City's traffic calming program is designed to reduce the negative impacts of traffic on neighborhood streets and to improve safety. The program is a collaborative process with residents, City Staff, and emergency agencies. It is based on years of implementation experience of jurisdictions around the world. The traffic calming program will be consistent with La Center's Comprehensive Plan and Capital Facilities Plan.

Traffic calming is defined as the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users.¹ The traffic calming program goals and objectives are:

Traffic Calming Program Goals

1. Improve neighborhood livability.
2. Effective use of City resources.
3. Create safe and attractive streets for residents, pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit users.
4. Reduce the negative effects of motorized vehicles on the environment.
5. Promote pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use.

Traffic Calming Program Objectives

1. To achieve lower vehicle speeds in neighborhoods with identified speed problems.
2. To improve real and perceived safety for motorized and non-motorized users.
3. To promote pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use.
4. To reduce cut-through traffic in neighborhoods.
5. To increase access for all modes and preserve reasonable emergency vehicle access.
6. To enhance the street environment.
7. To incorporate the preferences and needs of those using the street.

Traffic calming measures include vertical changes in the street (e.g., speed humps, raised intersections), lateral changes in the street (e.g., chicanes), constrictions (e.g., street narrowing, islands, pinch points), narrow pavement widths (e.g., medians, edge treatments), traffic circles, small corner radii, gateway features, signage and striping, and landscaping.

¹ Lockwood, Ian M., "ITE Traffic Calming Definition", ITE Journal, July 1997.

Procedures

The procedures for the neighborhood traffic calming program are described in the *Procedures Element*. The procedures are consistent with City Council and Public Works Processes. The program is a phased program. The first phase is education and monitoring. The second is eligibility and funding determination. The third phase is design, testing, implementation, and evaluation. Citizens are required to coordinate with the Public Works Department and the Police Department.

Project Eligibility

Screening of potential projects is necessary to determine whether there is a significant traffic problem on a street requiring traffic calming. The program's eligibility criteria are included in the *Eligibility Criteria*. The criteria are consistent with the City of La Center Capital Facilities Plan, Police Department Procedures, and emergency services requirements.

Project Funding and Development

Projects that are screened and determined to be eligible will be presented to the City Council for funding as a capital project for the following year. Projects need to be determined eligible by September 30 to be presented to the city council for inclusion in the capital project budget for the following year.

If the project is approved and funded by the City Council design of the project will be completed by May 15 with construction occurring from June – September of that year. Smaller projects will be constructed by La Center Public Works Staff. Larger projects may require public bidding to hire an outside contractor to complete the work.

If a project is approved by the city council but not funded by the City Council, the project can be funded privately by citizens or the neighborhood. The *Procedures Element* explains how projects can be privately funded. The private funds can come from approved Homeowner's Associations, individual donations, or a combination of the two.

Projects that are not approved by the City Council can not be privately funded.

PROCEDURES ELEMENT

When a resident or neighborhood identifies a traffic problem they think should be addressed by the Traffic Calming Program, the following processes shall be followed:

Phase One

1. **Written Request:**
An individual or neighborhood submits a written request for a traffic calming project to the Public Works Director. The traffic problem is identified in the request.
2. **Information Sharing and Coordination:**
The City will assist neighborhoods interested in traffic calming by sharing information about the City's program. Staff will be available for presentations.

Education and enforcement is emphasized in phase one by requiring neighborhoods to coordinate with the Police Department and Public Works Department as a first step.

Staff gathers preliminary data about the identified problem and works with the neighborhood to determine a primary approach; e.g., possible participation in Neighborhood Watch, use of the speed trailer or enhanced enforcement, or implementation of less restrictive engineering solutions such as signing or striping.

The Police and/or Public Works Departments implement the approach and monitor the effectiveness. If the approach is not appropriate to the problem, or if it is not considered effective after a six-month period by the Public Works Director, the project area may be considered for inclusion in Phase Two of the Traffic Calming Program.

Phase Two

3. **Eligibility Determination:**
Staff will gather and analyze the traffic data for the project area. Using the *Eligibility Criteria*, the Public Works Director makes a determination of whether the project is eligible for installation of traffic calming measures. The requestor(s) is notified of the eligibility determination.
4. **Project Request:**
If the project area is determined to be eligible, the requestor(s) is provided with a City Project Request Petition form. The requestor(s) must gather signatures documenting support from 60% of all of the identified property owners, households, and business owners within the Project Area. The petition will indicate that those signing want the City to consider a traffic calming project for the Project Area.

The Public Works Director will determine the Project Area Boundary based on the *Project Area Guidelines*. For each tax lot within the Project Area, only one person may sign the petition as a representative of the property owner(s). In addition, for each residential unit and each business in the Project Area, if the occupant of the unit is not the property owner, only one person may sign the petition as a representative of the tenant(s) of the unit.

Phase Three

5. City Council Approval and Funding:

The City Council will hold a public hearing in October for all proposed projects that have completed a project request by September 30. At the hearing, City Council will consider staff recommendations and citizen comments for each proposed project. The City Council will approve or reject each project.

Following that public hearing Staff will provide a prioritized list of approved projects with an estimated budget to complete the projects to City Council in November as part of the capital budget for the following year. Staff will prioritize the list based on Staff recommendations and the City of La Center Engineering Standards for Public Works Construction. The City Council will then vote on the prioritized list and the capital budget to complete the projects. The approved projects will be entered as Capital Projects for the following year's budget. If a project is approved but the budget is used up with higher priority projects the project will be resubmitted the following year to the City Council.

A neighborhood may choose to pay 100% of the project cost if a project is approved but there is not enough money in the budget to complete the project. If a neighborhood or citizen chooses to proceed with private funding of a project, they will notify the Public Works Department. The Public Works Department will proceed with Step 6 below prior to payment of the project. Once Step 6 has been completed and a project plan identified, a cost estimate will be presented to the requestor by the Public Works Department. All privately funded projects must be paid in full prior to the City proceeding to Step 7 of the project. Project costs include the cost of the support survey, construction, design, inspection, project management, and (if needed) the cost of right-of-way acquisition. If funds are received but the support survey does not receive a 60% majority in Step 7 all funds will be refunded minus the cost to distribute and analyze the support survey.

6. Project Development:

The City will host meeting(s) for residents, interested participants, business owners, and property owners within the Project Area. As a minimum, notice of the meetings shall be provided by the monthly city newsletter that goes out with the sewer bills.

At the meeting(s), staff will present traffic data, gather input, and discuss project design, neighborhood issues, and emergency access. Emergency services agencies will provide input to assure compliance with emergency access requirements. Through the meeting(s), staff will work with the neighborhood to assess needs, identify alternative plans/solutions, and select a proposed plan based on sound engineering practices.

The cost of implementing the plan and the cost of maintenance shall be considered in selecting the plan.

Traffic calming strategies that are likely to cause a significant increase in the traffic volume on another street shall not be used. Exceptions will be made if it can be shown that the diversion is a desirable one (e.g., if through trips are diverted from a

neighborhood route to a collector or arterial). If the traffic calming strategy is expected to cause an increase greater than 10% in traffic volume on another street, the affected area will be included in the support survey.

7. Support Survey:

The City will conduct a survey to determine support for the traffic calming project proposed plan. The survey area will be determined by the Public Works Director in accordance with the *Project Area Guidelines*. The survey area will be based on the selected project plan and may be different from the Project Area of Step 4.

The City will mail survey forms to all tax lots within the survey area, and perform the survey analysis. In tallying survey responses the City will consider only the responses received within 30 calendar days after the date that the survey forms are mailed. For each tax lot within the survey area, one person may respond as a representative of the property owner(s). In addition, for each residential unit and each business in the survey area, if the occupant of the unit is not the property owner, one person may respond as a representative of the tenant(s) of the unit. Phone calls in support or opposition of the project will not count as part of the survey.

The project will proceed to Step 8 only if the survey results indicate support from at least a 60% majority of all the identified property owners, households, and business owners in the survey area.

8. Design and Construction:

If the project support survey receives a 60% majority of property owners the project moves forward to design and construction. Depending on the scope of the project, city staff or an outside consultant will complete the design of the project. If appropriate the Public Works Department may install temporary traffic calming measures for a trial period. The trial period shall last from two to six months. Staff will collect traffic data before and after installation of the temporary measures to evaluate their effectiveness. If temporary measures are shown to be effective the City will complete permanent construction of the traffic calming measures.

9. Project Monitoring:

Implemented projects will be monitored after the first and third years. The Public Works Director will provide an annual monitoring report to the City Council for review. Any recommendations or modifications to a project and any recommended City Council action will be included in the report.

10. Removal of Traffic Calming Measures:

The City Council will consider removing traffic calming measures if a petition is received indicating that at least 67% of the properties within the Project Area support the removal. The Project Area Boundary will be determined by the Public Works Director in accordance with the *Project Area Guidelines*. Only one person may sign the petition for each property and only one for each rental unit. The request will be processed through the Public Works Department. Removal of all traffic calming measures will be privately paid for by residents, property owners, and businesses of the Project Area.

Eligibility Criteria

Streets may be considered for installation of traffic calming devices when all of the following criteria are met:

1. The neighborhood has participated in Phase One of the Traffic Calming Program, to an appropriate level as determined by the Public Works Director.
2. The posted speed is 25 mph or less.
3. The 85th percentile speed of vehicles is at least 5 mph over the posted speed, or cut-through traffic exceeds 25% of total volume on the street. Cut-through traffic means those vehicles having neither an origin nor a destination in the neighborhood.
4. The street is not a primary emergency response route. The primary emergency response routes in La Center are East 4th Street, East 5th Street from Pacific Highway to East Cedar Avenue, East Cedar Avenue from 4th to 5th Street, Pacific Highway, Aspen Avenue, Highland Road, and West 10th Street.
5. The street is a two-lane street.

The Public Works Director may approve exceptions to items 1 through 5 on a case-by-case basis.

Project Area Guidelines

All properties within the Project Area shall be considered in determining the percentage of support shown by project petitions or surveys. Project notices and surveys sent by the City shall be sent to all properties in the Project Area. For each survey or petition, the Public Works Director will determine the Project Area Boundary based on the following guidelines.

1. The Project Area shall include all properties directly abutting a street or portion of a street where traffic calming is proposed. The Project Area shall include properties abutting the street for 250 feet beyond the last proposed traffic calming measure.
2. The Project Area may include all properties directly abutting a street or section of a street significantly impacted by proposed traffic calming on another street. A street will be considered significantly impacted if proposed traffic calming measures can be expected to cause an increase greater than 10% in traffic volumes on the street.
3. The Project Area may include properties along side streets if they are located within 250 feet of a potential traffic calming measure.
4. The Public Works Director may amend the Project Area to include additional properties affected by the proposed traffic calming program or to exclude properties clearly not affected by the proposed program.

Petitions and surveys are intended to solicit the opinions of those who live or work adjacent to proposed traffic calming measures. These are the people most likely to benefit from traffic calming measures. They are also the people most impacted by negative aspects of traffic calming, such as increased traffic noise, neighborhood appearance, or diversion of traffic to new routes.