



Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT: TRAFFIC CALMING

PURPOSE: To reduce the negative effects of motorized vehicle use by improving livability in the surrounding neighborhoods.

(Approved by the Traffic & Transportation Commission on 4-22-99, and the City Council on 6-8-99.)

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**General Policy:** Claremont recognizes that the manner in which people and goods move within and through the City is a major part of maintaining a quality living environment. One of the means of controlling the movement of traffic through an area is called traffic calming. Claremont has a number of examples of traffic calming measures throughout the City. Some of the more notable examples are the design of Indian Hill Boulevard between Harrison Avenue and Foothill Boulevard, features installed on south Mills Avenue near Russian Village, and the re-striping of a number of streets. Landscaping, trees, sidewalks, and bike lanes also help to calm traffic. In recent years there have been many requests for additional traffic enforcement, controls, and calming in the City. For this reason, it was deemed necessary to develop a policy to help citizens through the process in an orderly manner.

Traffic calming is defined as the combination of policies and measures that reduce the negative effects of motorized vehicle use by improving livability in the surrounding neighborhoods. With traffic calming, accessibility and mobility are not reduced, they are modified to fit the needs of the neighborhood. Traffic calming achieves this by modifying the design of streets to serve a broad range of transportation, social, and environmental purposes. With traffic calming there is an attempt to strike a balance between vehicular traffic and everyone else who uses the street (i.e., pedestrians, bicyclists, businesses, and residents). Traffic calming attempts to alter driver behavior in contrast to route modification, which changes traffic routing along a street network.

This Traffic Calming policy furthers the goals of the Transportation and Circulation Element of the City's General Plan by encouraging traffic routes that minimize adverse impacts on residential neighborhoods and providing a balanced system of circulation that incorporates motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, and other transportation modes.

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the process and criteria by which implemented traffic calming measures on public streets may be considered. This policy applies only to requests initiated by citizens. It does not apply to traffic calming measures on public streets initiated by the City to address specific traffic safety issues, or to comply with State and Federal standards and warrants. Also, this policy does not apply to temporary changes in traffic that are needed to stage special events in the City.

## **Basic Principles**

- Selective police enforcement is the first step in traffic calming. Selective enforcement means concentrating traffic control efforts in a particular area to obtain compliance with traffic laws. When City staff observe a traffic problem or it is reported by residents, the Engineering Division refers the problem to the Police Department for selective enforcement.
- Proper education and analysis to study the overall impact of traffic calming measures in a specific neighborhood is necessary early in the process.
- Traffic calming measures will not be installed if the problem may be shifted to another street.
- Some traffic calming measures (e.g., street closures, rumble strips, etc.) that result in congestion and restricted traffic flow are generally not intended for main arterial streets. Arterials carry the traffic burden of the City, and they should not be compromised. Where there is congestion at peak hours or a history of congestion-related accidents, it is important to keep traffic moving in the most efficient manner.
- Some traffic calming measures (e.g., street closures, rumble strips, etc.) that result in congestion and restricted traffic flow on collector streets are generally not desirable and must be considered carefully. This is especially true where there is no reasonable alternate route and congestion is likely during peak traffic hours.
- Arterials and collectors must remain open for emergency vehicles.
- Some traffic calming measures that control traffic could have a negative impact on emergency vehicle access while, at the same time, improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Before any traffic calming measure is implemented, the City, in conjunction with Police and Fire Departments, will analyze and evaluate the overall impact of proposed measures.
- Speed bumps or speed humps are not an approved speed control device in the State of California. It is City Council policy that speed bumps or speed humps will not be used until such time they are state-approved for use as a speed control device, or there have been settled lawsuit actions which limit city liability.

**Acceptable Traffic Calming Measures** (See Attachment B glossary for definitions of these measures and the cost of various measures.)

- Stop signs (must meet state mandated warrants)
- Traffic and pedestrian signal (must meet state mandated warrants)
- Neighborhood speed watch programs
- Traffic signs (stop signs, speed limit signs, one-way signs, no-turn signs)
- Rumble strips (must be balanced with the noise impact to the locality)
- Narrower lane striping (including separate bike and parking lanes)
- Reduction in street width
- Reduction in number of travel lanes
- Street closure
- Semi-diverters with minimal landscaping
- Barriers traversable by emergency vehicles
- Median island at entrance to neighborhood
- Traffic roundabouts
- “Neckdowns,” “bulbs,” and other road and sidewalk changes
- Semi-diverters with brick landscaping
- Barriers to force turns
- Traversable barriers with brick landscaping
- Enhanced pedestrian facilities
- Traffic signage/signals
- Raised intersection
- Roundabouts with landscape and drainage
- Full medians
- Cul-de-sacs
- Measures adopted by City Council

### **Liability**

The implementation of traffic calming measures can result in varying degrees of liability exposure to the City. Thus, the Engineering Division must analyze all the impacts of a measure taken to slow traffic. The traffic calming measures must use engineering design features and practices so as not to result in unacceptable liability exposure for the City. As necessary, staff will consult with the City Attorney and other experts to determine if the traffic calming measures are acceptable in terms of liability.

### **Request to Study Traffic Calming Measures**

All concerns regarding excessive speeding and/or traffic volumes on residential streets should be submitted to the City Engineer. The City Engineer shall request that the Police Department begin selective enforcement as the first step in the process. If selective enforcement does not resolve the problem, other traffic calming methods can be explored as outlined below.

1. The person(s) requesting traffic calming measures will be the responsible party for preparing a petition and collecting the necessary signatures. The petition shall be prepared and signed by a simple majority of the affected property owners. In general, as a starting point, directly affected property owners are defined as those residents whose properties front onto the street where the traffic calming measure is installed.
2. A neighborhood meeting will be held to educate the property owners about possible traffic calming measures and funding options. The person(s) spearheading the request shall set up a meeting with the affected property owners. The City will provide necessary staff at the mutually agreed time and place to facilitate the educational meeting.
3. An ad hoc committee will be formed to study possible traffic calming measures in the affected neighborhood. The committee will be made up of two Traffic and Transportation Commissioners, two or three property owners from the affected neighborhood, the City Engineer or his/her designee, a representative from the Police Department, the Fire Department, and other interested parties (e.g., business owners or bicyclists).
4. The ad hoc committee shall make a recommendation to the Traffic and Transportation Commission on whether or not to implement traffic calming measures. If measures are warranted, the committee shall recommend specific measures for the affected area.

### **Recommendations and Property Owner Approvals**

Following recommendation of the proposed traffic calming measure(s) by the Traffic and Transportation Commission to the City Council, all directly affected property owners shall be sent a notice of approval. Each of the directly affected property owners, as determined by the City Engineer on a case by case basis, shall sign the petition expressing their interest in funding the proposed measure(s), and submit the petition to the City Engineer. In order for the measure(s) to be undertaken, two-thirds of the directly affected property owners must sign the petition in favor of the measure(s) and payment.

### **Cost/Payment Option**

The City is responsible for the budgeting and installation of traffic safety measures that meet the necessary state warrants (requirements). Good examples of traffic safety measures that require state warrants are stop signs and traffic signals. Traffic calming measures do not have state warrants for their installation, and they are not typically considered a traffic control feature. The cost of traffic calming measures can range from less than \$1,000 to more than \$40,000. The cost of funding traffic calming measures requested by residents throughout the City could cost thousands of dollars each year, which the City cannot afford to pay without negatively impacting other programs. All costs related to the funding, installation, and maintenance of traffic calming measures will be the responsibility of the directly affected property owners. The City Engineer shall identify the directly affected property owners on a case by case basis. Directly affected property owners shall be determined based on the special benefit to the property (e.g., safety and impact on property values). One of the following procedures shall be used to pay for installation costs of said traffic calming measures.

1. **Full Payment Option**

After the petition has been submitted to and formally approved by the City Engineer, the City Engineer shall allocate costs among each of the determined directly affected property owners (as defined above).

Each property owner shall present the City with full payment of his/her allocated costs not more than sixty (60) days after receiving notification of costs due to the City. If full payment is not received within sixty days, the measure(s) will not be undertaken. All money shall then be refunded in full to those property owners who have already submitted payment.

2. **Assessment Option**

The assessment option shall be used only if the cost of the approved traffic calming measure(s) exceeds \$10,000.

In compliance with Proposition 218, a notice to form the proposed assessment district and a description of the assessment proceeding shall be sent to the affected property owners (as defined above). This notice shall identify the amount of the assessment for each property owner, as determined by an independent assessment engineer's report, and any administrative costs associated with implementation of the traffic calming measures. The affected property owners will be given an opportunity to vote on the assessments. The votes shall be weighted based on a one dollar, one vote apportionment. A simple majority of the votes cast must be in favor of the assessment in order for the assessment to be levied and installation to occur.

A public hearing shall be held no less than 45 days after the notice of proposed assessment has been mailed to property owners. This hearing shall provide an opportunity for property owners to express public views regarding the proposed assessment.

### **City Council Authority**

The City Council shall retain the authority to alter provisions of the policy. In addition, all funding mechanisms used for installation of traffic calming measures are subject to City Council approval and/or revision. The City Council is also responsible for initiating assessment elections and holding the necessary public hearings.

Revisions  
6-30-99 (new policy)

Attachment A & B

## **Cost of Traffic Calming Measures**

1. Measures which cost less than \$1,000
  - a. Neighborhood speed watch programs
  - b. Traffic signs (e.g., stop signs, speed limit signs, one-way signs, no-turn signs, etc.)
  - c. Rumble strips
  - d. Narrower lane striping
  
2. Measures which cost between \$1,000 and \$10,000
  - a. Street closure
  - b. Semi-diverters with minimal landscaping
  - c. Barriers traversable by emergency vehicles
  - d. Median island and "welcome" sign at entrance to neighborhood
  
3. Measures which cost between \$10,000 and \$40,000
  - a. Lane narrowing
  - b. Traffic roundabouts
  - c. "Neckdowns," "bulbs," and other road and sidewalk changes
  - d. Semi-diverters with brick landscaping
  - e. Barriers to force turns
  - f. Traversable barriers with brick landscaping
  
4. Measures which cost more than \$40,000
  - a. Road deviations with brick landscaping
  - b. Intersection changes
  - c. Raised intersection
  - d. Roundabouts with landscape and drainage
  - e. Full medians
  - f. Cul-de-sacs
  - g. Traffic signals

## **Glossary of Terms**

The following definitions are provided to further clarify the terms used in the City's traffic calming policy statement. This glossary is outlined in the Public Technology Institute's publication entitled, Slow Down, You're Going Too Fast: The Community's Guide to Traffic Calming.

<b>Arterials</b>	Roadways that conduct vehicular traffic between collector streets and highways. Traffic is supposed to move on a sequence through the "hierarchy" of streets: residential to collector to arterial to highway, and then back down the hierarchy. Arterials in Claremont are those streets designated as such in the City's Circulation Element of the General Plan.
<b>Bulbout</b>	A bulbous extension of the curb, usually at an intersection, that narrows the vehicular pathway and inhibits fast auto turns.
<b>Chokers</b>	A narrowing of the street, often in mid-block, sometimes at an intersection. May be done with curb extensions, landscaping, or islands set in the street.
<b>Collector Streets</b>	The intermediary streets that funnel vehicular traffic from residential streets to arterials and back. They are typically 40 feet wide. Collectors in Claremont are those streets designated as such in the City's Circulation Element of the General Plan.
<b>Curb Extensions</b>	Curbs that stick out into the roadway, narrowing the path for vehicles. They reduce pedestrian crossing distances, prevent passing of turning vehicles, and require no deviation from a straight line.
<b>Diagonal Diverter</b>	A partition that connects two diagonally opposite curbs, bisecting the intersection, to force motor vehicles to slow down and turn. A traversable barrier allows emergency vehicles, as well as bicyclists and pedestrians, to cross over.
<b>DiverTERS</b>	Road barriers that force traffic to turn. Semi-diverters, one-way chokers, or half-closures are all used to prevent entrance into an otherwise two-way street.
<b>Entry Treatment/ Gateways</b>	Mostly alterations in the pavement surface such as brick, stamped concrete or different colors, signaling to the driver that he or she is entering a neighborhood or community that may have slower speeds. Pillars and archways are also used.
<b>Median</b>	An island in the center of the street or intersection to protect pedestrians and provide landscaping. Medians prevent passing and left turns, separate opposing travel lanes and provide visual enhancement.
<b>Median Slow Points</b>	Center-located barriers dividing opposing roadway travel lanes at either intersections or midblock.



<b>Neckdown</b>	Curb extensions at the corner of intersections to slow motor vehicles and give pedestrians a shorter distance to cross. Sometimes called “bulbouts” or “knockdowns”.
<b>Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan</b>	Comprehensive guidelines for dealing with traffic problems in an area-wide fashion. To avoid emotional appeal, they usually set forth clear criteria and step-by-step approval process for adopting a traffic-calming solution, typically including traffic studies, petitions, area-wide ballot, and municipal approval.
<b>Photo radar, Speed board, Speed wagon</b>	Unmanned units that automatically measure speed of approaching vehicles.
<b>Raised crosswalk</b>	A traditional pedestrian crossing area purposely raised – like a long flat-topped speed hump – to give better vision of the crossing area. It interrupts a driver’s momentum and signals a yielding to pedestrians. Also see “speed bumps.”
<b>Roundabout</b>	A small island in mid-intersection, as small as 16 to 25 feet in diameter, that forces traffic to slow and negotiate the curve. They can be landscaped for aesthetic or barrier purposes, and may have mountable curbs to facilitate emergency vehicles.
<b>Rumble Strips</b>	Paving that creates a change of texture in the road surface, signaling the driver to slow down.
<b>Signage</b>	Traffic and roadway signs.
<b>Speed bumps, Speed humps</b>	Raised pavement designed to slow traffic speeds. These terms are used interchangeably by the public. These are not approved traffic control devices in California.
<b>Speed watch</b>	Neighborhood program in which volunteers are outfitted with radar guns and record the license tags of cars that speed through their community. Speeders are typically sent a “reminder” letter from the municipality to slow down.
<b>Traffic calming</b>	Methods used to reduce vehicular speed and volume, and increase the sharing of streets by pedestrians and other users. Generally refers to physical measures and roadway design changes, but enforcement and education can be components.
<b>Traffic mitigation</b>	Used interchangeably with “traffic calming.”
<b>Warrants</b>	The minimum criteria necessary to “warrant” a roadway solution, such as installation of a stop sign or traffic calming device. Typically required are objective measures such as speed surveys, traffic volume studies, and accident experience.