NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING MANUAL

CITY OF SARASOTA

January 31, 2025

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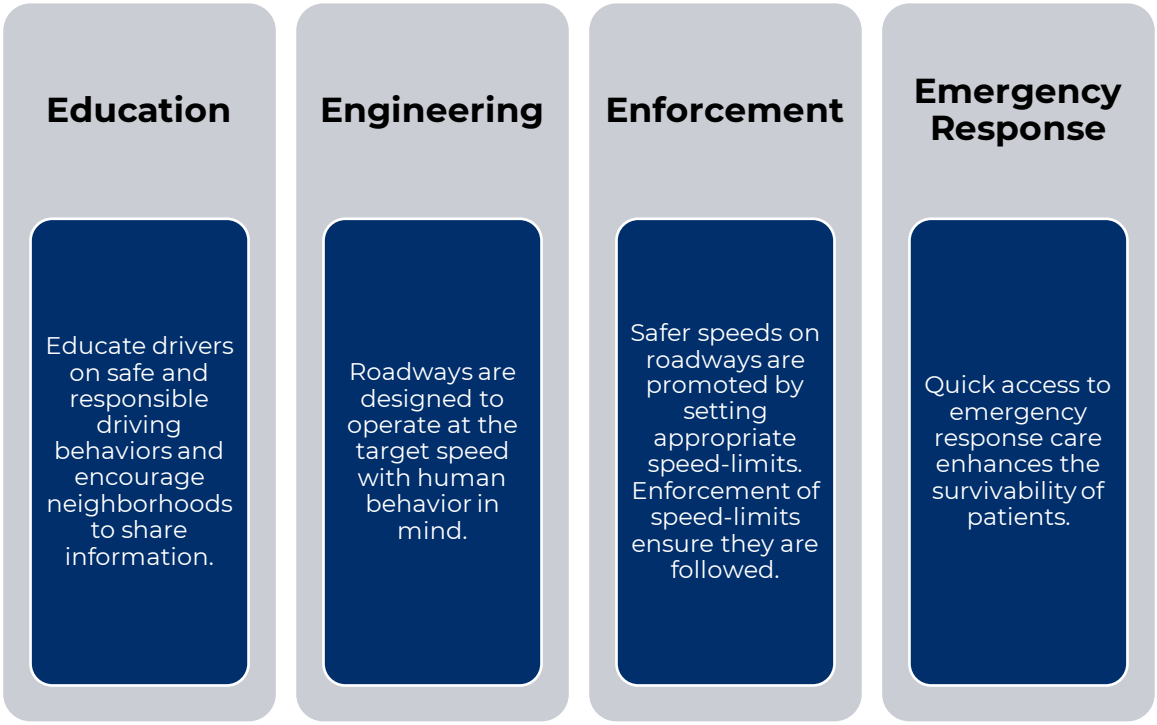
INTRODUCTION

The City of Sarasota is committed to providing safe roads for its citizens. In order to do so, the City follows the Safe Systems Approach and works closely with the Sarasota Police Department to provide educational programs as well as traffic enforcement to encourage safe driving behaviors.

Figure 1. Safe Systems Approach



These principles are the foundation of the City's Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program (NTCP).

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NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM

The current program's purpose is to reduce speeds on neighborhood streets. The program no longer addresses cut through traffic because the City operates on a grid network. A grid network provides drivers with different routes that prevent congestion, or stop and go traffic, within the City. While this program, and the City, does not attempt to prevent people from accessing streets to reach their destination, it does address speeding on local streets.

Similarly, this program does not address growth or increase volume on streets. The City of Sarasota continues to see population growth that impacts the number of cars on the roadway. This program does not work toward reducing the number of cars rather it creates street design that ensures speed limits are followed, creating a safe and pleasant condition for residents and visitors.

The City is committed to Vision Zero and road safety. City staff seeks funding sources outside of the Traffic Calming Program to support safety related projects including, but not limited to, crosswalks, rapid flashing beacons, and high emphasis crosswalks. Additionally, the City of Sarasota partnered with Sarasota County to develop a Safety Action Plan that will identify areas of concern and provide recommended treatments. Sidewalks and sidewalk gaps have been prioritized using a scoring system developed by Transportation Planning. Sidewalks, and sidewalk gaps, have alternative funding sources identified in the Capital Improvement Plan. Sidewalk gaps may also be eligible for Safe Routes to School Grants depending on the proximity to a school and whether that route is used by students.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. Provide safe and pleasant conditions for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on neighborhood streets.
2. Improve quality of life to residents and visitors.
3. Involve citizens participation.
4. Authorize corrective action if a speeding problem is discovered.

ENGINEERING

Engineering principles and best practices are used to propose the most effective solutions to the affected area. There are differences between traffic calming and traffic control devices. Traffic control devices, simply put, are measures that assign right-of-way when navigating the roadway. Meaning, these are critical measures that ensure orderly operations of the roadways, not put in place to calm speeds. **For example, stop signs, yield signs, and traffic signals are not traffic calming and would not be considered as traffic calming solutions**.

Separately, design elements that would inhibit access to streets would not be considered as part of this program. It is critical to keep the city's grid operational especially for emergency response care. Restricted access treatments may include diverters, full street closures, partial street closures, driveway links, or other such treatments.

TRAFFIC CALMING PROCESS

Eligibility: Any resident can request traffic calming on streets within the City's Municipal Boundary. Neighborhood presidents will be included in communications regarding traffic calming in their respective neighborhood associations. If the requestor is not associated with a neighborhood, then they are encouraged to invite their neighbors to the site visit. If the street scores 6+, gathering neighborhood feedback and submitting a petition is required.

MEET WITH NEIGHBORHOOD

The City will meet onsite with the requestor and their neighbors to discuss concerns and explain the process. Once staff is notified, they will work to schedule an on-site meeting at their earliest convenience. Additionally, the neighborhood president, if applicable, will be included on the communication as early as possible. This onsite meeting may be scheduled 2-3 weeks from contact.

SPEED STUDY

The City will retain a contractor and/or partner with Sarasota Police Department to conduct traffic counts on the street(s). This is done by placing pneumatic tubes on the street which count the volume and speed of vehicles over a three-day period. Sarasota Police Department may use different methods to collect data. The counts should include weekends.

EVALUATE DATA

Upon receiving traffic count data from the contractor, staff will review each street to determine if traffic calming measures are warranted. Staff will also collect historical crash data. The evaluation can take 2-4 months upon receiving the data.

TRAFFIC CALMING CRITERIA

Criteria were developed to determine whether streets qualify for traffic calming. There are six warrants: vehicle volumes, 85th percentile speed, pedestrian volume, one-way streets, crash data, and sidewalks. **Table 1** provides a description of each warrant, the criteria, and points awarded. Streets must score six or higher to qualify for a permanent traffic calming investment. If the data shows the 85th percentile speed is above the posted speed limit, then street treatment may be considered based on the solution matrix. If not, then the street is eligible for re-evaluation in 3 years. **Table 2** is a solution matrix that identified potential solutions depending on the score.

Table 1. Traffic Calming Scoring System

Warrant	Description	Criteria	Points
Vehicle Volumes	Obtained through a 72-hour traffic count (seasonally adjusted), which identifies how many vehicles use the roadway on a daily basis reported in the adjusted average annual daily traffic (AADT) counts.	1000—1499 AADT ≥ 1500 AADT	1 2
85th Percentile Speed*	The 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85 percent of the motorists drive on a given road. This speed indicates the speed that most motorist on the road consider safe and reasonable under ideal conditions. Traffic engineers rely on the 85th percentile rule to help establish speed limits on non-local streets. Typically, the speed limit is set to the speed that separates the bottom 85% of vehicle speeds from the top 15%. For example, if speeds of 100 vehicles are measured and 85 vehicles are traveling at 27 mph or less, the speed limit for the subject street could be set at 25 mph.	1-5 mph 6-10 mph ≥ 11 mph	3 4 6
Pedestrian Volume	Presence of pedestrian generators within 1/4 mile of subject area. Pedestrian generators for this evaluation generally include schools, daycares, colleges, parks, and community centers.	Within 1/4 mile	2
One-way Streets	Percent of wrong-way vehicles based on daily traffic volumes.	≥ 10%	2
Crash Data	Number of crashes in the last three years.	1-3 ≥ 4	1 2
Sidewalks	Absence of sidewalks on both sides of the roadway	No sidewalks	1

Table 2. Solution Matrix*

Score 3	Score 4-5	Score 6+
Eligible for striping and signage solutions. i.e. Lane narrowing, speed limit signs, etc.	Eligible for quick-build solutions. Quick-build solutions are non-permanent traffic calming treatments that can be installed using striping and flexible delineators. i.e. chokers, chicanes, etc.	Eligible for permanent traffic calming solutions. Solutions are developed by city Engineers based on date, best practices, and existing conditions (driveways, etc.) i.e. speed tables, speed humps, chicanes, medians, signs, etc.

*Items have been modified based on discussions with CCNA Traffic Calming Group

STREETS SCORE 6 OR HIGHER

If the street scores 6 or higher, then it moves forward to the next step: Solution Development. Follow-up studies are available upon request and performed 6-months to 1-year from installation to determine effectiveness.

STREETS SCORE 5 OR LESS

If a street scores 5 points or less, then it's eligible for the solutions identified in the solutions matrix (**Table 2**). Quick-build treatments are installed with striping and non-permanent vertical elements including flexible posts, parking stops, planters, or other items listed in the Engineering Design Criteria Manual (**Figure 2**). **Figure 3** demonstrates pilot quick-build solutions that were installed on 7th Street and Morrill Street.

Figure 2. EDCM Quick-Build Vertical Elements

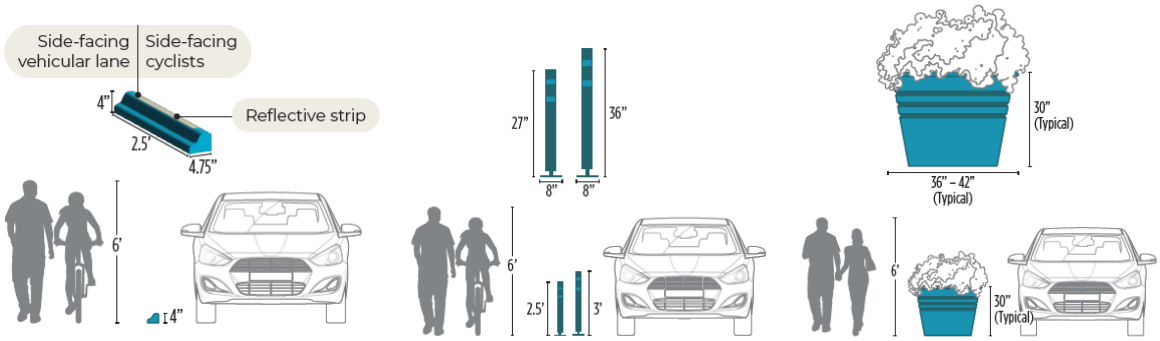


Figure 3. Quick Build Examples

Figure 4. Examples of Speed Feedback Signs

If the street scored 5 points or less, then neighborhoods also have the option to request speed feedback signs (**Figure 4**) at their expense with majority neighborhood support on the location. The City will install and maintain the signage. The neighborhood must provide insurance which would be documented in a Minor Encroachment Agreement.

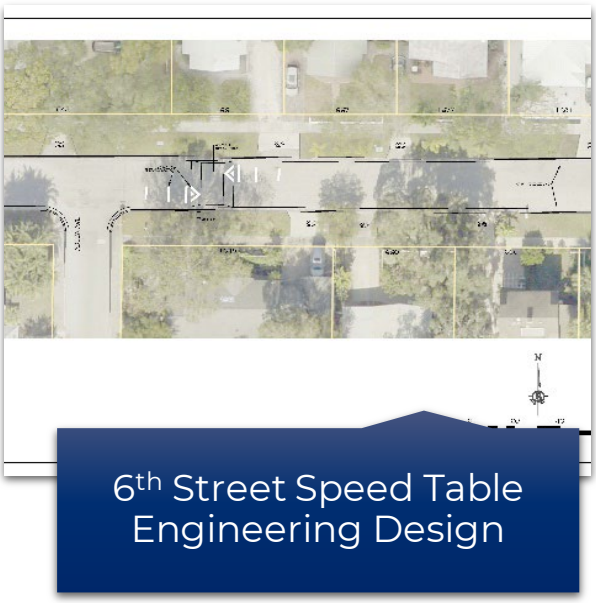
Areas that score 5 points or less: Neighbors may request to initiate the process after a 3-yr. period. This timeframe can be reconsidered based on significant redevelopment in the area.

SOLUTIONS DEVELOPMENT

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Engineers will work with Transportation Planning to develop two to three possible solutions, plus a no-build alternative. The proposed solutions are developed by engineers and planners based on best practices, industry standards, and the challenges presented in concert with the built environment. Examples of potential traffic calming solution designs can be seen in **Figure 5**.

Figure 5. Potential Traffic Calming Solution Examples



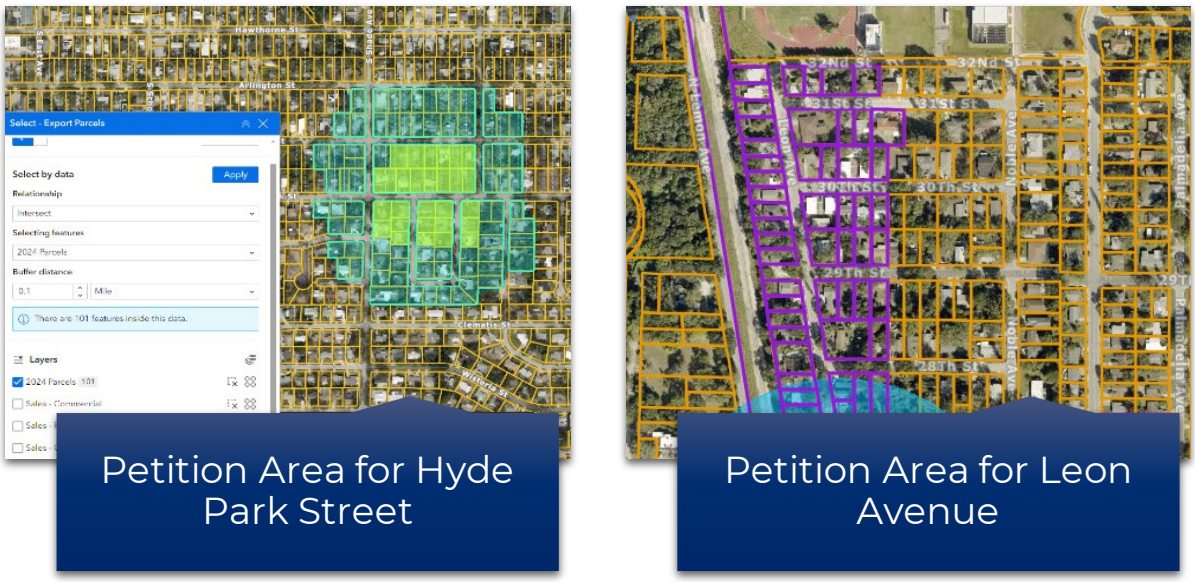
NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

The Program Manager will meet with the neighborhood to discuss the proposed solution and seek input. The point of contact is responsible for scheduling a meeting or working with the neighborhood association to provide an opportunity for the Program Manager to present the information and gather feedback.

NEIGHBORHOOD ENDORSEMENT*

After treatment is finalized based on community feedback, a petition is provided with a required number of signatures in an area surrounding the project site. The Program Manager develops the petition area by identifying properties located within 1/10th of a mile buffer surrounding the proposed traffic calming site (**Figure 6**).

Figure 6. Examples of a 1/10th Buffer Area for Petition Packages



There are two petition options available to choose from. The requestor will be provided a form where they will select which option to move forward with.

Option 1: Require at least 51% of property owners to agree to the solution from the area provided by City Staff. This number may vary depending on project.

Option 2: Require 60% of property owners to agree to solution from a 51% response rate of the study area provided by City Staff. The requestor/neighborhood is responsible for providing the City with documentation of notifying 100% of the project area.

Documentation examples for option 2 include, but are not limited to, certified mail, HOA/Neighborhood Association minutes, emails/newsletters, combination of these listed, or an individual may present an idea for approval by the City Program Manager

For either option, the petition must be returned with the proper number of signatures within 90 days. The Program Manager will provide the deadline along with the petition package via email. A 30-day extension for the petition will be considered based on a formal request from the point of contact.

If petition is not returned by the deadline, or an insufficient number of signatures are collected, the process may begin again after three years.

*Petition process has been modified based on discussions with CCNA Traffic Calming Group

PROJECT DELIVERY

If petition is returned with the required number of signatures by the deadline, the project will be prioritized based on available funding.

EXCEPTIONS AND AUTHORIZATIONS

The traffic calming program is an administrative function. Staff may amend the program from time-to-time depending on operational, citizen-based needs, and budgetary issues.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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APPENDIX A
TRAFFIC CALMING HISTORY

PROGRAM HISTORY

The Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program was established in 1990. The City's program was initiated to prevent cut through traffic through neighborhood streets but has evolved over time. Below is a short history of traffic calming in the City of Sarasota.

1990 - 1999

- Traffic Calming Program begins in the Engineering Department.
- Traffic Calming was implemented on a trial basis. Speed tables and humps were installed to reduce speed and volume.
- First traffic calming program guide produced by engineering department. It outlined a new process and identified alternative techniques for traffic calming.
- Program expanded and introduced processing and implementing a petition. City Commission approval for traddic calming devices.

2000 - 2010

- Due to success of the program the City receives more requests than available funding. To ensure funds go to neighborhoods that have never received traffic calming, an amendment was proposed wherein a neighborhood that does not meet warrants must wait for a five-year period before making another request.
- Traffic Calming Task Force were created.
- Development of Master Plan.
- Process is modified to address concerns.
  - Replaced warrants with a point system.
  - Send out direct mailers to notify residents.
  - Establish goals and timeline for task force meetings.
  - Added warrant criteria: vehicles traveling the wrong way on a one-way street.
- Changes to make the program citizen driven in terms of demonstrating support for traffic calming, economical in terms of staff time and funds for program administration, equitable in terms of distributing decreasing funds among neighborhoods and useful by providing educational services during the extended waiting period.
  - Allowed neighborhood funded changes.
  - Created Neighborhood Speed Pledge Program.
  - Eliminated cut through traffic criteria.
  - Required greater level of demonstrated neighborhood support.

2011 - Present

- Transportation Planning Division oversees the traffic calming program.
- Continued to implement the Pace Car Program.
- In order to minimize contact, during COVID-19, the process was flipped. The speed study would be performed prior to pace car pledge to identify if the street qualified for traffic calming.
- The five-year period before making another request was reduced to three years.
- The petition requires signatures from 60% of property owners within 1/10th of a mile circular buffer surrounding the treatment area.
- If the area does not qualify, or can't get the petition signatures, the neighborhood can purchase speed feedback signs for City to install and maintain with a minor encroachment agreement.
- City meets with neighborhood onsite to initiate the traffic calming process.
- If the area qualifies, in addition to the petition, signed letters of consent will be required from property owners who are directly affected based on the location of the traffic calming device.