

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 22, 2006

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER *J*

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #20 : CITIZEN CONTRIBUTIONS FOR TRAFFIC CALMING

This memorandum is in response to Councilman Krupicka's question regarding citizens voluntarily contributing to traffic calming projects in their neighborhoods.

Staff supports neighborhood contributions to (or paying entirely for) traffic calming if they meet the eligibility criteria within the existing program. A copy of the City's *Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program Guide* is attached, which describes the qualifying criteria and the process for implementing traffic calming devices.

Staff piloted a neighborhood contribution program for two traffic calming projects in 2003, and found that the citizens were receptive to the idea. Projects were completed ahead of schedule on West Mason Street and Lloyds Lane, and City dollars were freed up to complete other priority traffic calming construction.

Although there is no written policy regarding citizen contributions for traffic calming projects in their neighborhoods, staff supports this practice.

Attachment



Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program Guide

City of Alexandria, Virginia

June 1, 2003

www.AlexTrafficCalming.org

INTRODUCTION

The City of Alexandria's Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program (NTCP) incorporates education, enforcement and engineered street design into protecting the quality of life in City neighborhoods. The City has developed the NTCP to provide residents with the opportunity to raise neighborhood traffic concerns and to participate in the selection of strategies that promote safe and pleasant conditions for residents, pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists in City neighborhoods.

Traffic calming is defined by the Institute for Transportation Engineers 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." With this Guide as a framework, staff will work with neighborhoods to develop a plan to calm traffic in order to meet the goals listed below.

GOALS

The goals of the NTCP are as follows:

1. Provide protection to residential neighborhoods from traffic operating at excessive speeds and excessive volumes of traffic.
2. Keep neighborhood street use, to the greatest extent possible, within the classification defined in the transportation chapter of the Master Plan (i.e. local streets, residential collectors, primary collectors).
3. Increase access, safety, comfort and convenience for pedestrians and bicyclists by changing the culture of neighborhood street use from "cars first" to "people first."
4. Base the expenditure of public resources on need.
5. Foster a collaborative working relationship between City staff and neighborhood residents in the development of traffic calming measures.

CRITERIA

For a neighborhood to qualify for NTCP assistance, at least one of the criteria thresholds below must be met for a local street, residential collector or primary collector, as defined in Appendix A - Street Classification Map. Traffic surveys conducted by the City will determine whether these thresholds are met. These criteria are based on those used in successful traffic calming programs in North America and Europe.

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requirement is to ensure that the problem is perceived as neighborhood-wide, not solely an individual problem. If one is unsure about the presence of a civic association in his/her neighborhood, contact the City's Office of Citizen Assistance at 703-838-4800.

Traffic calming requests are made using the City of Alexandria NTCP Application (see Appendix C). Communities should only submit their most serious traffic concerns. There is no deadline for applications, but rather applications will be processed on a continuing basis. Communities who submitted an application for traffic calming in the past fiscal year should contact the Traffic Calming Coordinator at 703-519-3400 x217 or trafficalming@ci.alexandria.va.us to request their application be reconsidered for the present fiscal year.

This request will include:

- Street segment where the problem(s) exists (i.e. X Street between Y Place and Z Avenue)*;
- Time of day when the problem(s) occurs;
- Possible causes of the problem;
- Perceived dangers to pedestrians, bicyclists, residents and property as a result of the problem; and
- Names, addresses and phone numbers of 2 - 5 nearby residents who share the concerns, (a petition is not needed at this point).

*Some streets are not appropriate for traffic calming, including dead-ends and private streets.

Staff will acknowledge the completed application in writing to the civic association contact.

2. DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

Staff will collect and analyze necessary traffic data to determine whether 1) the data supports the problem(s) identified in the application and 2) the street segment meets either of the criteria for traffic calming as explained on page 4. Data collection will be conducted on weekdays, September through May, when public school is in session.

Communities that applied for traffic calming last year and did not meet the criteria may reapply this year due to the revised criteria.

A) DATA DOES NOT SUPPORT THE APPLICATION

If the data collected indicate that the situation does not meet the thresholds for speeding and traffic volume as defined on page 4, staff will report back to the civic association, and any other individuals who have made their interest known to staff, that the problem did not warrant any specific action. The situation will be eligible for re-evaluation after a two-year waiting period.

- Working with City staff to develop preliminary design options and cost estimates for review by the neighborhood at public meetings held by the association.

Once the preliminary designs are acceptable to the Working Group, community support must be gained via petitioning.

5. ASSESS COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR TRAFFIC CALMING (PETITION)

The next step in the implementation process is to obtain the required level of community support to be eligible for final design and funding. To assess support, the community will be responsible for collecting signatures from the affected homes on the street segment(s) with the petition (see Appendix E). Only one resident of each affected home may sign the petition. Homeowners and renters may sign. The Working Group shall explain to the affected residents that by signing the petition they accept the possibility that traffic calming may be built in front of their home. To assist the community, staff will prepare a map and brochure explaining what the proposed measures will look like and where each traffic calming measure will be located. The Working Group should include a cover letter validating that the criteria has been met, when delivering the petitions to staff.

Condominium and apartment buildings incorporating 25 or more households will not be required to get signatures from all the residents, but rather the written support of the traffic calming plan by the condominium association or property management company, respectively. For this, the Working Group should fill-out and sign Appendix F. The building may either approve or disapprove of the traffic calming plan.

A) PLAN RECEIVES SUFFICIENT SUPPORT

If the traffic calming plan receives sufficient support (usually 65% of affected households signing) and a letter of support of the plan by the civic association, then it will be presented before the T&PB. See the Traffic Calming Toolbox Guidelines for specific support requirements.

B) PLAN DOES NOT RECEIVE SUFFICIENT SUPPORT

If the response is not sufficient, staff will recommend either that the problem be referred back to the Working Group or that the process end. If the project is referred back to the Working Group, staff may recommend alternative approaches more likely to meet with community acceptance. Projects failing to receive community support cannot be resubmitted for T&PB review for a period of two years.

Staff will provide its expertise in traffic calming to assist the Working Group in developing its plan.

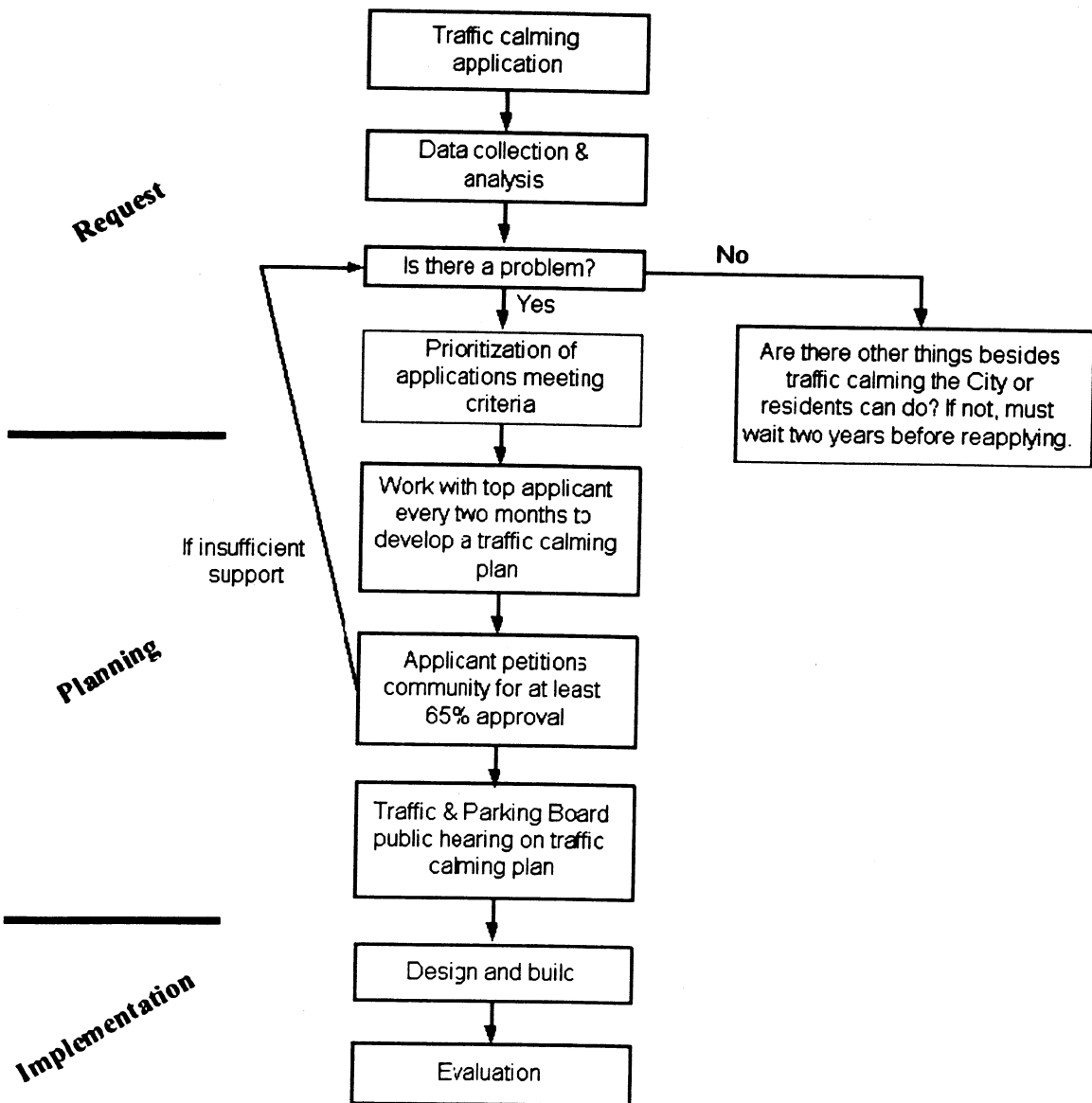
LEARN MORE

To learn more about traffic calming and view images of a variety of measures, visit any of the following Websites:

- Alexandria's traffic calming Website
www.AlexTrafficCalming.org
- Arlington, VA, traffic calming Website
www.co.arlington.va.us/dpw/planning/ntc
- Portland, OR, traffic calming Website
www.trans.ci.portland.or.us/trafficcalming
- Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center Image Library
www.pedbikeimages.org and click on "Traffic Calming and Management"
- TrafficCalming.org
www.trafficcalming.org

Issue	Measure	Description	Criteria	Minimum Community Support Needed	Expense
Pedestrian safety (cont.)	paddles	3' lime green bollards placed on centerlines	case by case basis	approval by civic association	low, \$250
	in-ground flashing beacons	highlights presence of pedestrians in crosswalk with flashing lights	case by case basis	65% of households	high, \$21,000
	pedestrian countdown signal	provides the number of seconds remaining to cross the street at an intersection	significant pedestrian traffic	approval by civic association	medium to high, \$13,000
	bulb-outs	shorten distance to cross the street and slow traffic	speeding criteria is met	65% of households	high, \$10,000/set
Speeding	street markings	visually narrow street to slow traffic	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices	65% of households	low, \$300
	street narrowing	physically narrow street to slow traffic	speeding criteria is met	65% of households	high, \$15,000
	median	narrows streets to prevent turns at intersections or slow traffic	speeding criteria is met	65% of households	high, \$15,000
	chicane	winding street causes motorists to drive slower	case by case basis	65% of households	high, \$20,000-\$50,000
	speed cushion	effective at slowing vehicles 5 - 10mph when crossing the bump	speeding criteria is met	65% of households	medium, \$3,000
	variable speed display board	radar unit and board alert motorist to their travel speed	speeding criteria is met	no minimum	medium, \$6,000
	speed limit sign	reminds motorists of the speed limit	any citizen complaint	no minimum	low, \$250
	traffic circle	circular intersection appropriate for local streets	case by case basis	65% of households	high, \$6,000-\$10,000
	roundabout	circular intersection appropriate for streets with higher volumes of traffic	case by case basis	65% of households	high, \$15,000-\$25,000

Speed cushions have replaced speed tables due to emergency response concerns.

APPENDIX B - PROCESS FLOWCHART

APPENDIX D - PRIORITY WORKSHEET**NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM PRIORITY WORKSHEET**

Location: _____

Measure	Definition	Points
Speeding (0-100 pts.)	The percent of motorists who travel at over 5mph above the speed limit plus the percent who travel at over 10mph.	_____
Volume (0-100 pts.)	Average daily traffic volume, divided by 100.	_____
Crashes (3 pts. each)	Number of reported crashes on the street segment in the last three years.	_____
Fatalities (15 pts. each)	Number of fatalities on street segment in the last three years.	_____
Bike/Transit Route (5 pts. each)	Street designated as official bicycle route on the City Recreation Facilities and Trails Map (bike map), or used as a regular transit route by DASH or Metrobus.	_____
Pedestrian Generators (7 pts. each)	Public and private facilities which are likely to generate high volumes of pedestrian traffic.	_____
Sidewalks (0 or 5 pts.)	Existing sidewalks: If yes, 0 points; if no, 5 points.	_____
Traffic Calming (-5 or 0 pts.)	Existing traffic calming measures: If yes, -5 points; if no, 0 points.	_____
Total points =		<input type="text"/>

Speed and Volume Data

Volume = _____

85% Speed = _____

% 5 mph above = _____

% 10 mph above = _____