



SANTA ROSA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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Traffic Calming Procedures Jan. 2009

Background:

Santa Rosa County recognizes that excessive vehicular speed on local roadways is a major concern to many of our citizens. It is understood that law enforcement has had limited success in controlling individual driver's behavior on the many residential type streets in the County. Budget cuts over the last two budget cycles have further decreased law enforcement's ability to patrol problem streets in residential areas. Further, budget cuts have caused the County to first eliminate the traffic calming line item in the County's Road and Bridge Department budget; and finally caused the elimination of the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) that was administered by the County's Planning and Zoning Division.

The NTMP was responsible for the evaluation of traffic calming requests, conducting traffic studies, making recommendations for implementation of traffic calming techniques, and evaluating possible funding sources. With the elimination of the NTMP, the Santa Rosa County Public Works Department has been instructed to establish a procedure for citizens to continue to be able to request traffic calming for specific streets; to establish guidelines that determine if a particular street is eligible for traffic calming; and to establish appropriate funding mechanisms for approved traffic calming facilities.

Policy:

Under the appropriate circumstances, traffic calming techniques are a recognized and acceptable method of decreasing traffic speeds and increasing overall public safety. Therefore, the Public Works Department intends to review all traffic calming requests submitted by our citizens, homeowners groups, and other organizations to determine if an appropriate course of action can be undertaken to attempt to positively affect driver behavior. If a course of action is proposed by the Public Works Department, it may or may not coincide with the requestors' desired traffic calming measures. Under certain circumstances, no action by the County may be deemed the most appropriate action.

Requests for traffic calming measures will be taken and cataloged by Public Works staff. The particular street will be evaluated for eligibility based on the criteria listed below; and the eligibility status and appropriate next steps will be conveyed to the requestor.

The street eligibility criteria are as follows:

The street must be residential in nature with a posted or presumed speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less. The street must not be deemed a collector or arterial roadway.

Implementation of traffic calming facilities should not present drivers with an opportunity to easily divert to a street with similar or more restrictive characteristics where traffic calming is not present.

The street must be paved and maintained by the County.

Public safety, maintenance considerations, and drainage should not be negatively affected by any proposed traffic calming features.

The Public Works Department shall have the responsibility of determining what/if any traffic calming measures are deemed appropriate. These measures may include, but are not limited to: speed humps, speed tables, medians, chicanes, striped crosswalks, speed limit reductions, and multi-way stops. If the street or portion there-of is deemed eligible for traffic calming features, the requestor will be notified of the measures approved, the area required to be covered, and the estimated cost to the residents, if any, to implement the measures.

If speed humps or other resident funded measures are recommended, the requestor must either obtain signatures in support of the proposed traffic calming features from at least 75% of the affected residents, or provide a letter of request from the Homeowner's Association. If County funded measures, such as multi-way stops or speed limit reductions are requested or proposed to be implemented, a letter from the Homeowner's Association requesting the measures will be required or, signatures from more than 50% of the affected residents must be presented supporting the proposed traffic calming features. The Public Works Department retains the authority to implement traffic calming features on eligible roadways, at the County's expense, if it is deemed in the best interest of public safety. The Public Works Department will be responsible for determining the affected residents, contingent on the roadway characteristics and traffic calming measures to be implemented.

Funding for traffic calming features may be the responsibility of the residents or owners within the affected area. Funding methods will include: a payment from individuals directly to the County, a payment to the County from a Homeowner's Association, or funding through the County's MSBU process. If the MSBU process is utilized for funding, 75% of the Santa Rosa County residents owning property in the affected area must approve the MSBU amount. If an MSBU is to be implemented, the applicant will be directed to the County's Office of Management and Budget for instructions on proceeding with the MSBU process.

For liability reasons, the County will be responsible for the installation of all traffic calming devices on the public roadways. After the installation of approved traffic calming devices, the County will evaluate the effectiveness of the measures. If the County determines the measures are not producing the desired results, or are causing unanticipated results that warrant the removal of the devices; the County will have the right to remove or alter the measures without approval from the affected residents. The removal or alterations to the traffic calming facilities will be done at the County's expense.