

THE CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO TRAFFIC CALMING IN VIENNA
Prepared by the Vienna Transportation Safety Commission

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Based on the
TOWN OF VIENNA'S
TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY, PROGRAM, CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

BACKGROUND

In the mid-1990's the Vienna Town Council became particularly concerned with the problems created by the ever-increasing volume and speed of cut-through traffic within the town boundaries. It was felt an overall approach involving all parts of the community was needed to evaluate Vienna's traffic problems. In 1996 the Council hired a traffic consultant who held four meetings with residents of each of the Town's quadrants and a fifth meeting with the business community. The consultant's recommendations were reviewed and refined by the Vienna Transportation Safety Commission and forwarded to the Town Council. At its meeting on November 16, 1998, the Town Council adopted a number of traffic-calming measures, which were implemented throughout the town beginning in December 1998. The Town Council also approved a procedure for the implementation and evaluation of future traffic-calming measures that may be proposed by the citizens of Vienna.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Citizen's Guide is to provide a simplified explanation of the procedures by which citizens can request the implementation and evaluation of traffic-calming measures in their neighborhoods. The Citizen's Guide is extracted from the "Town of Vienna Traffic Calming Policy, Program, Criteria and Procedures," and from the "Town of Vienna's Criteria for Stop Signs." Both of these documents are available at Town Hall.

PROCEDURE

Citizens who wish to have traffic-calming measures installed on a particular street in their neighborhood should do the following:

1. Suggest the type or types of traffic-calming measure desired. The traffic-calming options include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Speed hump
 - b. Speed dip
 - c. Restrictions on traffic flow and patterns
 - d. Stop signs

CITIZENS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT NOISE AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CAN OCCUR WITH THE USE OF TRAFFIC-CALMING MEASURES.

2. Petition the Town (to the attention of the Town Manager) to implement a traffic-calming study.
 - a. The petition must be signed by at least one member of 75% of the households on the block(s) on which the traffic-calming measure is

requested. The petition must certify that notice of the proposed traffic-calming measure has been given to each affected resident.

- b. A block shall consist of every developed property having frontage on the street to be studied between successive intersecting streets.
3. The petition will be referred to the Vienna Transportation Safety Commission, and the Commission will direct certain information to be collected concerning the streets involved with the proposed traffic-calming measure. The following information will be collected:
 - Street classification
 - Traffic volumes
 - Traffic speeds
 - Posted speed limits
 - Physical data of the streets
 - Accident data
 - Nearby community facilities and schools
 - Emergency vehicle and snow emergency routes
 - Bus routes
 - Truck routes
 - Alternate routes that traffic may take if traffic-calming measures are installed
 4. Once the statistical information is collected, the matter will be scheduled for a hearing before the Vienna Transportation Safety Commission. All interested parties are invited to attend and address the Commission. The proposed traffic-calming measure will be evaluated against the following criteria:
 - a. Street Type: Normally a traffic-calming measure will be limited to streets classified as collector or local.
 - b. Speed Limit: The posted speed limit may not be more than 25 mph.
 - c. Lanes of Traffic: A traffic-calming measure will be limited to streets having only one travel lane in each direction.
 - d. Emergency Routes: Streets must not be a primary route for fire and rescue equipment.
 - e. Traffic Volume: Priority shall be given to streets that exceed 2,000 vehicles on an average weekday.
 - f. Traffic Speed: Priority shall be given to streets where 15% or more of the traffic exceeds the posted speed limit by five or more miles per hour.
 - g. Grades: At the discretion of the Director of Public Works, certain traffic-calming devices will not be used if street grades are too steep.
 - h. Sight Distance: At the discretion of the Director of Public Works, certain traffic-calming devices may not be used if curves or obstacles would create an unsafe condition for motorists driving a normal speed under average driving conditions.
 - i. Community Facilities: Priority shall be given to streets that provide direct access to schools or other community facilities.

- j. Bus Routes: Normally the street should not be a through-bus route unless an acceptable alternate is identified.
- k. Truck Routes: Normally the street should not be a through-truck route unless an acceptable alternate route is identified.
- l. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety: The traffic-calming measure shall not adversely affect pedestrian or bicycle safety.
- m. Drainage: The traffic-calming measure shall not adversely affect street drainage.
- n. Device Requirements:
 - A traffic-calming measure should not be placed closer than 300 feet from any stop sign, yield sign or traffic signal.
 - Traffic-calming measures should not be placed closer than 300 feet apart.
 - Consideration shall be given to the use of traffic-calming devices in combination with other traffic-calming devices and/or other naturally occurring traffic-calming conditions, e.g., curvature and inclination of the roadway. Traffic-calming measures should not be used as stand-alone traffic-calming solutions.
- o. Cut-through Traffic: Restrictive entrance signs may be considered when cut-through traffic is 40% or more of the one-hour single direction volume and a minimum of 150 cut-through trips occur in one hour in one direction.
- p. Traffic Diversion: If the traffic-calming measure could divert more than 5% of the traffic to another collector or local street, such street shall also be considered for traffic calming.
- q. Special Criteria Applicable to Stop Signs:
 - The placement of stop signs is indicated where there is a combination of excessive speed, restricted view and a serious accident record involving turning traffic. A serious accident record is considered to be 5 or more reported accidents in a 12-month period.
 - Two-way stopping of traffic may be implemented where safety considerations may justify stopping traffic to permit left-hand turns at heavily traveled intersections.
 - The total vehicular volume entering the intersections from all approaches must average at least 500 vehicles per hour for any eight hours of an average day.
 - The combined vehicular and pedestrian volume from the minor street or highway must average at least 200 units per hour for the same eight hours, with an average delay to minor street vehicular traffic of at least 30 seconds per vehicle during the maximum hour.
 - When the 85th percentile approach speed or the major street traffic exceeds 40 mph, the minimum vehicular volume warrant is 70% of the above requirement.

5. The Vienna Transportation Safety Commission will make a recommendation to the Town Council to approve or not to approve the traffic-calming measure. The recommendation is by majority vote of the Commission at its open meeting.
6. The Vienna Town Council will make the ultimate decision whether to implement the proposed traffic-calming measure. The matter will come before the Town Council at one of its regular meetings. All interested parties are invited to attend and address the Town Council meeting. The recommendation of the Vienna Transportation Safety Commission is also considered. The actual implementation of a traffic-calming measure will be scheduled and performed at the convenience of the Director of Public Works.

MODIFICATION AND REMOVAL

A similar procedure to the one used to install a traffic-calming measure is used to modify or remove a traffic-calming measure. Generally speaking, a traffic-calming measure is allowed to exist for one year before its effect can be adequately evaluated. However, if the Director of Public Works finds that a traffic-calming measure causes a hazardous situation he may unilaterally modify or remove the traffic-calming measure.

In situations where there is not an apparent hazard, the modification or removal of a traffic-calming measure may be initiated by a petition signed by at least one member of 75% of the households on the block(s) on which the traffic-calming measure is located. The petition should be brought to the attention of the Town Manager, and it will be referred to the Vienna Transportation Safety Commission for review and hearing. The Transportation Safety Commission will make its recommendation to the Town Council, which will ultimately decide whether to modify or remove the traffic-calming measure.

The Vienna Transportation Safety Commission will gather and use the following information to evaluate any existing traffic-calming measure:

- Comparisons of speed and traffic volumes before and after the installation of the traffic-calming measure;
- Review of archives as to reasons and circumstances that promoted the traffic-calming measure;
- Correspondence and surveys of citizens affected by the traffic-calming measure and input from Town personnel and departments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Questions and comments concerning traffic-calming may be directed to the Transportation Safety Commission, Town Hall, 127 Center St., S., Vienna, VA 22180, phone 703-255-6300, or by visiting the Town of Vienna Web site, www.viennava.gov, and following the links to the Transportation Safety Commission.