

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-1990s 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 consolidated 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. Identify the type or types of traffic-calming measure desired. The traffic-calming options include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Speed table
 - b. Traffic Circle
 - c. Restrictions on traffic flow and patterns
 - d. Stop signs
 - e. Center Island Narrowing/Median
 - f. Chicanes
 - g. Closure
 - h. Lane Narrowing (striping)
 - i. Radar Speed Indicators

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. See Appendix A for an example of typical petition for traffic calming.
 - a. A petition for traffic calming must;
 - i. Be signed by one member of 75% of the households on the street segment where traffic calming is requested.
 - ii. Be signed by one member of 50% of the households on cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets whose sole access is via the street segment in the petition.
 - iii. Include a map of the affected area, including property addresses.
 - iv. Certify that notice of the proposed traffic-calming measure(s) has been given to each affected resident of the impacted area.
 - b. For petition purposes, a street segment consists of every developed property having frontage on the affected street segment between two successive intersecting streets.
 - c. The petition should indicate whether or not the resident(s) in the vicinity of the proposed traffic calming measure would agree to have the traffic calming measure placed in front of their residence.
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:
 - a. Street segment data;
 - i. Street classification
 - ii. Traffic volumes
 - iii. Traffic speeds
 - iv. Posted speed limits
 - v. Physical street segment data
 - vi. Accident data
 - b. Vicinity data;
 - i. Nearby community facilities and schools
 - ii. Emergency vehicle and snow emergency routes
 - iii. Bus routes
 - iv. Truck routes
 - v. Alternate routes that traffic may take if traffic-calming measures are installed

4. Once the relevant 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 according to the following criteria ¹:
 - a. Street Segment Data;
 - i. Street Type: Normally a traffic-calming measure will be limited to streets classified as collector or local.
 - ii. Speed Limit: The posted speed limit may not be more than 25 mph.
 - iii. Lanes of Traffic: A traffic-calming measure will be limited to streets having a maximum of one travel lane in each direction.
 - iv. Traffic Volume: Priority shall be given to streets that exceed 2,000 vehicles on an average weekday. The minimum street volume for physical traffic calming measures to be considered shall be 500 vehicles per day (total volume).¹
 - v. 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. Physical traffic calming measures will be considered when the 85th percentile speeds average 31mph or more (simple combined average of the 85th percentile speed in both directions). The 85th percentile speed is the speed below which 85% of the traffic is traveling.¹
 - vi. Grades: At the discretion of the Director of Public Works, certain traffic-calming devices will not be used if street grades are too steep.
 - vii. 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.
 - b. Vicinity Data;
 - i. Emergency Routes: Streets must not be a primary route for fire and rescue equipment.
 - ii. Community Facilities: Priority shall be given to streets that provide direct access to schools or other community facilities.
 - iii. Bus Routes: Normally the street should not be a through-bus route unless an acceptable alternate is identified.
 - iv. Truck Routes: Normally the street should not be a through-truck route unless an acceptable alternate route is identified.
 - c. Other Considerations;
 - i. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety: The traffic-calming measure shall not adversely affect pedestrian or bicycle safety.
 - ii. 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.

- iii. 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.

d. Engineering Considerations:

- i. A traffic-calming measure should not be placed closer than 200 feet from any stop sign, yield sign or traffic signal.
- ii. Traffic-calming measures should not be placed closer than 300 feet apart.
- iii. Drainage: The traffic-calming measure shall not adversely affect street drainage.

e. Restrictive Entrance Signage;

- i. 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 (for roadways carrying up to 6,000 vehicles per day). For roadways with over 6,000 vehicles per day the threshold shall be 30% or more of the one-hour single direction volume.

f. Special Criteria Applicable to Stop Signs:

- i. The placement of stop signs may be considered 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.
- ii. All-Way stop signs, in general, shall be limited to streets having a 3:1 ratio of traffic volume from the main street to the minor street and a total minimum volume of 1,000 vehicles per day entering the intersection from all directions.
- iii. All-Way stop intersections should be spaced no closer than 1,200 feet apart.¹
- ~~iv.~~ Two-way stopping of traffic may be implemented where safety considerations may justify stopping traffic to permit left-hand turns at heavily traveled intersections. Petitions for All-Way stop signs should include all properties on both intersecting streets from the intersection in question to the nearest through-street in each direction.

- ¹ The Transportation Safety Commission and the Vienna Town Council reserve the right to make exceptions to limits set out if extenuating circumstances exist. Exceptions will be reviewed on a case by case basis. In general roadways with volumes and speeds under the specified amounts in this guideline should be considered for targeted enforcement, education (speed trailers) and other non-physical traffic calming measures (painting, signage, narrowing, etc.).
5. The Vienna Transportation Safety Commission will make a recommendation to the Town Council to approve or not to approve the traffic-calming measure(s). 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(s). 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 determination of the Director of Public Works. The timing of the implementation of any proposed traffic calming measures will be based on available funds and on the construction schedule established by the Department 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 the Director or Town Manager 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) (and 50% of households on cul-de-sacs per standards above) 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](#), <http://www.viennava.gov/>, and following the links to the Transportation Safety Commission.

Appendix A

Sample Petition
For
Physical Traffic Calming Measures

[It is important to have 75% of the affected residents sign the petition (and 50% of any side street or cul-de-sac. See Section 2-a). The petition should be clear as to what the residents view to be the problem with the roadway and exactly what traffic calming measures they would like to see implemented. The second page of this Appendix shows a sample petition. The third page shows a map to aid both the petitioner and the Town Council in determining the affected properties and to help ensure that 75% of the residents are contacted for the petition.]

Affected Area

