


## COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

 CITY OF DES MOINES OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER	Number:	23-150	Meeting:	March 27, 2023
	Agenda Item:	43	Roll Call:	23-410
	Submitted by:	Steven L. Naber, P.E., City Engineer		

### AGENDA HEADING:

Approving the updated City of Des Moines Traffic Calming Program.

### SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of the proposed updated City of Des Moines Traffic Calming Program. The program includes the program process, requirements, and consideration of future funding. One (1) of the most frequent concerns Traffic & Transportation staff receives from neighborhoods on a routine basis is the issue of speeding vehicle traffic in residential areas. As each of these issues is unique, it is important that there be a clear, defined process for evaluating and implementing the need for traffic calming in a neighborhood. The goal of this program is to reduce vehicular speeds and discourage traffic not related to residential use to provide a more livable neighborhood that encourages walking and biking.

### FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$150,000 annually (study & installation) plus costs for maintenance of traffic calming measures (e.g., traffic signs and markings).

Funding Source: 2023-24 Recommended CIP, Page 176, Traffic Calming Improvements, TR032 C038EG. 2023-24 Recommended Operating Budget, Page 59, Engineering Department T&T – Sign, Painting, Signal and Lighting, EG062080, Road Use Tax Fund.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The following definition of traffic calming was developed by the Federal Highway Administration and Institute of Transportation Engineers:

“The primary purpose of traffic calming is to support the livability and vitality of residential and commercial areas through improvements in non-motorist safety, mobility, and comfort. These objectives are typically achieved by reducing vehicle speeds or volumes on a single street or a street network. Traffic calming measures consist of horizontal, vertical, lane narrowing, roadside, and other features that use self-enforcing physical or psycho-perception means to produce desired effects.”

- On November 20, 2017, by Roll Call No. 17-2003, City Council approved the establishment of a Traffic Calming Program for Des Moines' neighborhoods.
- Five (5) years into the Traffic Calming Program, City staff have reviewed the program and recommend the following revisions:
  - Adjusting language from functional classification to use street typology in accordance with MoveDSM.
  - Indicating that a request may be initiated by residents as well as property owners.
  - Specifying that survey cards will be sent to residents along a street. Previously the survey cards were sent to property owners regardless of whether or not they resided on the street.
  - Updating data collection language to reflect current practice and use of technology.
  - Clarifying engagement process when not in a recognized neighborhood association.
  - Defining what occurs when a project is rejected.
  - Clarifying process for funding and City Council ordering construction for a traffic calming project (step #11).
  - Adding notes regarding:
    - Temporary roadway disruption or construction.
    - Addressing traffic or speed concerns on streets with daily traffic volumes more than 4,000 vehicles per day.

The review culminates in updated program guidance (below) and development of a public-facing program web page.

- The revisions described above are shown in the following mark-up:

1. The street considered for traffic calming must be classified as either a local, Neighborhood Residential or Community Residential street typology (see MoveDSM p. 31), or collector street (this will be updated with new Street Typology categories as developed through the TMP).
2. Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes should be greater than 500 vehicles per day but less than 4,000 vehicles per day.
3. To initiate a traffic calming study, a formal request is required from the neighborhood association, the Mayor or a City Council member, OR thru a signed petition from at least 60% of the property owners or residents along the street proposed for traffic calming.

**\*\*\* Ward Council Member and Transportation Safety Committee Notification \*\*\***

4. ~~Traffic speed studies with a sample of at least 50 vehicles in Speed and volume data will be collected over multiple days to develop an average daily volume and speed, each direction at a given location should show. Areas where at least 15% of the vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit by more than at least 5 miles per hour (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) will be eligible for further consideration for traffic calming.~~
5. If the requirements above are satisfied, staff will conduct a traffic study including an evaluation of crash history, potential traffic problems, roadway street characteristics geometry, and the impact the proposed traffic calming measures may have on adjacent streets.
6. ~~Staff will solicit comments and support on the proposed traffic calming measures from Police, Fire, Public Works, and DART as appropriate.~~

**\*\*\* Ward Council Member Check In \*\*\***

- 6.7. Staff will meet with the applicant(s) to review the traffic study and discuss potential traffic calming devices and safety infrastructure improvements to address the traffic concerns.
7. ~~Staff will develop a conceptual plan of improvements based on the traffic study and feedback from the applicant(s). Staff will solicit comments and support on the proposed street modification from potentially impacted City departments and partner entities (e.g., DART, Des Moines Public Schools) Police, Fire, Public Works, and DART as appropriate.~~

**\*\*\* Ward Council Member Check-In \*\*\***

8. ~~If the applicant(s) is NOT the neighborhood association, Staff and the applicant(s) will discuss the traffic concerns, traffic study, and conceptual plan of improvements with the neighborhood association for support. If the street is not located within a recognized neighborhood association, City staff will coordinate with the Ward Council Member to organize neighborhood meeting(s).~~

9. ~~If the traffic study and~~ the neighborhood association supports the proposed traffic calming measures, ~~one~~ survey card will be sent to ~~each~~ adjacent property addresses. The proposal ~~must~~ should be supported by at least 60% of those residents responding ~~in order~~ to be considered for implementation. A low number of survey responses will be taken into account as well as responses from properties directly adjacent to the proposed improvements. If the survey results reject proposed traffic calming, the street will not be eligible for further consideration through this program for five years.

**\*\*\* Ward Council Member Check-In \*\*\***

10. The traffic concerns, traffic study, conceptual plan of improvements, survey results and comments received will be presented to the Transportation Safety Committee for their information. If the proposal is being supported as described above, the traffic concerns, traffic study, conceptual plan of improvements, and comments received will be presented to the Des Moines Transportation Safety Committee will be asked for comments and a recommendation to move the project forward for funding as established by City Council.
11. City Council will approve the traffic calming projects to be funded from the Traffic Calming sheet of the Capital Improvement Program. Each year the Des Moines City Council will be asked to approve established funding for the Traffic Calming Program be incorporated into the City's Capital Improvement Program. City Council reviews traffic calming projects and orders construction. Projects will be programmed and installed based on available funding.

Additional Program Notes

1. Staff will perform an "after" study approximately 1 year after the traffic calming improvements are constructed to determine the effectiveness of the project.
2. If the "after" study shows that the project is accomplishing the traffic calming goals, the project must stay in place for at least 3 years from the installation of the improvements. Removal of the traffic calming project after 3 years would require a petition process similar to what is required to install the project.
3. Traffic calming requests for streets that parallel streets that are receiving traffic calming infrastructure will not be ~~studied~~ considered until the "after" study is completed.
4. If deemed necessary due to safety or maintenance concerns, the City ~~can~~ may remove or make modifications to the traffic calming project at any time.
5. Traffic calming requests to address traffic concerns resulting from temporary roadway disruption or construction on an adjacent roadway will not be considered.
6. Traffic or speed concerns on streets with an average daily traffic (ADT) volume greater than 4,000 vehicles per day may be evaluated through a safe systems approach and prioritized based on crash history, potential for crash reduction and Vision Zero principles.

## CITY OF DES MOINES TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM

The City of Des Moines Traffic Calming Program includes the following process / requirements:

1. The street considered for traffic calming must be classified as a local, Neighborhood Residential or Community Residential street typology (see [MoveDSM](#) p. 31).
2. Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes should be greater than 500 vehicles per day but less than 4,000 vehicles per day.
3. To initiate a traffic calming study, a formal request is required from the neighborhood association, the Mayor or a City Council member, OR thru a signed petition from at least 60% of the property owners or residents along the street proposed for traffic calming.  
\*\*\* Ward Council Member Notification \*\*\*
4. Speed and volume data will be collected over multiple days to develop an average daily volume and speed. Areas where at least 15% of the vehicles exceed the posted speed limit by more than five (5) miles per hour (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) will be eligible for further consideration for traffic calming.
5. If the requirements above are satisfied, staff will conduct a traffic study including an evaluation of crash history, potential traffic problems, street characteristics, and the impact the proposed traffic calming measures may have on adjacent streets.
6. Staff will meet with the applicant(s) to review the traffic study and discuss potential traffic calming devices and safety improvements to address the traffic concerns.
7. Staff will develop a conceptual plan of improvements based on the traffic study and feedback from the applicant(s). Staff will solicit comments and support on the proposed street modification from potentially impacted City departments and partner entities (e.g. DART, Des Moines Public Schools) as appropriate.  
\*\*\* Ward Council Member Check-In \*\*\*
8. Staff and the applicant(s) will discuss the traffic concerns, traffic study, and conceptual plan of improvements with the neighborhood association for support. If the street is not located within a recognized neighborhood association, City staff will coordinate with the Ward Council Member to organize neighborhood meeting(s).
9. If the neighborhood association supports the proposed traffic calming measures, one (1) survey card will be sent to each adjacent property address. The proposal should be supported by at least 60% of those residents responding to be considered for implementation. A low number of survey responses will be taken into account as well as responses from properties directly adjacent to the proposed improvements. If the survey results reject proposed traffic calming, the street will not be eligible for further consideration through this program for five (5) years.  
\*\*\* Ward Council Member Check-In \*\*\*
10. The traffic concerns, traffic study, conceptual plan of improvements, survey results and comments received will be presented to the Transportation Safety Committee for their information. If the proposal is being supported as described above, the Transportation Safety Committee will be asked for comments and a recommendation to move the project forward for funding as established by City Council.
11. City Council will approve the traffic calming projects to be funded from the Traffic Calming sheet of the Capital Improvement Program. City Council reviews traffic calming projects and orders construction. Projects will be programmed and installed based on available funding.

## Program Notes

1. Staff will perform an “after” study approximately one (1) year after the traffic calming improvements are constructed to determine the effectiveness of the project.

2. If the “after” study shows that the project is accomplishing the traffic calming goals, the project must stay in place for at least three (3) years from the installation of the improvements. Removal of the traffic calming project after three (3) years would require a petition process similar to what is required to install the project.
3. Traffic calming requests for streets that parallel streets that are receiving traffic calming infrastructure will not be considered until the “after” study is completed.
4. If deemed necessary due to safety or maintenance concerns, the City may remove or make modifications to the traffic calming project at any time.
5. Traffic calming requests to address traffic concerns resulting from temporary roadway disruption or construction on an adjacent roadway will not be considered.
6. Traffic or speed concerns on streets with an average daily traffic (ADT) volume greater than 4,000 vehicles per day may be evaluated through a safe systems approach and prioritized based on crash history, potential for crash reduction, and Vision Zero principles.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):**

Date: November 20, 2017

Roll Call Number: [17-2003](#)

Action: [Approving](#) the establishment of a Traffic Calming Program for Des Moines’ neighborhoods. ([Council Communication No. 17-803](#)) Moved by Gatto to adopt; add to number three (3) of process/requirements, or a Mayor or Council request. Motion Carried 7-0.

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):**

Board: Transportation Safety Committee

Date: February 14, 2023

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Moved by Luis Montoya to approve staff recommendation to approve the proposed updated Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program guidelines; seconded by Brianne Sanchez. Motion passed 6:0.

**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:**

Funding approvals for individual traffic calming projects and continued program funding.

For more information on this and other agenda items, please call the City Clerk’s Office at 515-283-4209 or visit the Clerk’s Office on the first floor of City Hall, 400 Robert D Ray Drive. Council agendas are available to the public at the City Clerk’s Office on Thursday afternoon preceding Monday’s Council meeting. Citizens can also request to receive meeting notices and agendas by email by calling the Clerk’s Office or sending their request via email to [cityclerk@dmgov.org](mailto:cityclerk@dmgov.org).