

NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM (NTCP)

What is the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program?

It is a comprehensive program designed specifically to protect the environment and quality of life in Oak Ridge neighborhoods through the management and control of traffic on neighborhood streets. This program is unique because of neighborhood participation and the establishment of a recommended Neighborhood Traffic Advisory Committee that will work with city staff to create a more pleasant and safe environment in which to live.

What are the Program Goals?

-  Protect existing neighborhood environments, cohesion, and integrity through traffic management.
-  Promote safe and comfortable travel in neighborhoods.
-  Achieve effective and safe movement of traffic within neighborhoods, including emergency vehicles.
-  Provide acceptable levels of accessibility for local traffic, minimize unwanted traffic, and discourage excessive speeds.

Is Any Road a Candidate for Traffic Calming?

A NTCP is designed only for those residential streets that provide direct access to homes. It applies to existing relatively low volume streets. It does not apply to high-speed, high volume roads.

What types of physical measures can be used?

Depending on the situation, speed tables, chokers, traffic circles, raised crosswalks, raised intersection, chicanes and other physical measures as further described in the program could be used.

Are there less expensive options than physical measures?

Increasing community awareness about the program is an important first step. The Public Works Department, Engineering Division is available to speak to homeowners or neighborhood organizations about traffic calming measures and to help raise awareness about advantages, disadvantages, approximate costs and funding options. Depending on the situation, a Neighborhood Speed Watch Program, stepped-up police enforcement efforts or installation of signs and pavement markings could be used.

Who Pays for These Measures?

The costs are paid by the neighborhood through neighborhood contributions. The neighborhood works directly with a licensed contractor, approved by the City, and the work is performed under the supervision of city staff.

How Does the Process Begin?

The process begins when the City receives a request for solving traffic problems in their neighborhood that may be solved by traffic calming measures. The request should be made through the Public Works Department, Engineering Division, 425-1807, sbyrd@corn.org.

How Does the Program Work?

Step One

-  In response to the request, an information packet containing petition forms, brochures and a booklet, "Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program" is mailed to the individual(s) requesting a study.
-  Information is available on the City web site at corn.org.
-  Before any remedial actions can be implemented and after the information has been reviewed, a petition must be circulated in the neighborhood influence area.
-  Boundary of the influence area, as determined by city staff with input from the neighborhood, may extend beyond the immediate street of concern.
-  The residents should meet among themselves and establish a Neighborhood Traffic Advisory Committee to work closely with city staff. The Committee should not exceed three to four members and should be a representation of the general neighborhood at large.

Step Two

-  As demonstrated by signatures on the petition, at least 75% of the property owners within the influence area must support the proposed study to identify traffic management problems and solutions.
-  Only property owners are allowed to vote.
-  Only one vote per parcel.
-  The petition is to help guarantee that the neighborhood will actively support a traffic-calming program and to give City Council and city staff a clear indication of the neighborhood's concerns.

Step Three

-  If the petition fails to obtain 75% of the influence area signatures, no further action is taken on development of a traffic management plan.

- If the petition qualifies for a traffic study by signatures of 75% or greater within the influence area, city staff will meet with the neighborhood to identify the problems and review traffic calming options and strategies to eliminate or reduce traffic problems.

Step Four

- City staff proceeds with data collection and analysis and prepares a preliminary plan.
- Preliminary plan submitted to Police/Fire/emergency/waste pickup/school entities for comments.
- Preliminary plan reviewed with the Neighborhood Traffic Advisory Committee.
- If speeding is the sole neighborhood concern, the 85th percentile speed must be five (5) mph higher than the posted speed limit to proceed with program.

Step Five

- Staff and the Neighborhood Advisory Committee finalize a feasible traffic management plan.
- Public meeting held with the neighborhood influence area to review final plan.
- Traffic management plan and petition sent to the influence area requesting support and funding contributions.
- At least 75 % of the residents in the influence area must support the plan.
- 100% approval of residents that front a physical traffic control measure.
- City Council review and approval will be required if plan significantly diverts traffic.

Step Six

- Neighborhood funds and implements traffic management plan.
- Some traffic calming measures, such as speed tables are implemented for a 90-day trial period. At the conclusion of the test period, the plan is evaluated for consideration as a permanent solution. The temporary installation will be removed if the test plan proves ineffective.

Step Seven

- The Public Works Department, Engineering Division conducts after study (s) and provides written results to the neighborhood.
- Periodic reports to City Council on effectiveness of NTCP.