

Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program

The intent of the City of Lake Forest Park Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program (NTCP) is to address traffic concerns on low-volume residential roads within the City, as designated within the City of Lake Forest Park Arterial Plan. The NTCP enables individual citizens and/or neighborhood groups to participate in the process of identification, evaluation and possible implementation of traffic calming projects on residential roads.

The implementation of this program must have the cooperation of the residents, all City departments, and external stakeholders (i.e. schools, fire department, etc.). The respective team members are dependent on each other to provide their professional analysis and recommendations for traffic calming and are essential in developing an appropriate response. This cooperative, data-based effort will combine Education, Engineering, and Enforcement.

To effectively implement this program, it is imperative that the process is followed as outlined.

Request for Service

An individual citizen and/or neighborhood group requesting action or expressing a concern will be asked to complete a Request for Service (RFS) Form (see last page for distribution). When completing the form, citizens are asked to provide the most detail possible about their concern, including: specific location, time of day, type of vehicles or modes (pedestrians, bicycles, trucks, busses, passenger cars, etc.), on-street parking, intersection control, vehicles driving off the road, etc.

City Response

All RFS will be routed to Public Works to be numbered and entered into the NTCP database. Public Works staff will then forward the request to the NTCP Coordinator (contracted traffic engineer) to evaluate for an appropriate response/action.

City staff will prepare an initial response acknowledging receipt of the request and identifying data-gathering actions that will be taken. Data-gathering actions may include researching history of similar concerns, scheduled gathering of speed and volume data, collision history, site visits, or referral to another agency (i.e. Police, King County Parks, etc.). The requestor should be informed if the problem has been previously reviewed and any actions taken.

City staff will assemble and acquire data in the area of concern such as previously conducted speed studies, scheduled field data acquisition and Police collision database searches. City staff will document and analyze existing geometric and physical conditions, existing signage and striping and existing in-place speed control devices on this or any connected, neighboring streets that could be causing traffic diversion.

Analysis of Traffic Data

City staff will analyze the gathered data and site conditions in response to the reported concern, unless one of the following conditions exists for which no recommendation for action through the NTCP will be made:

- The street is an arterial as defined in the adopted City of Lake Forest Park Arterial Plan.
- Vehicle volume data (less than three years old) show volumes less than 300 vehicles per day (vpd) or greater than 3000 vpd. Streets with less than 300 vehicles are more effectively addressed through education and enforcement due to very low volumes. Streets with more than 3000 vehicles should be considered as arterials.

- The street is a local access street less than 600 feet long with a cul-de-sac. City staff will verify that the appropriate traffic control signage exists at the nearest intersection.
- The request appears to be an issue between two individuals. City staff will refer the matter to the Police Chief and continue to monitor.

If the site of concern does not meet the above criteria, City staff will analyze the gathered data and identified site conditions for the following conditions:

- **Excessive Speed Criteria – 85th Percentile** - The 85th percentile speed is an accepted engineering practice which evaluates streets based on the speed that 85 percent of all vehicles were measured at or below. This speed is above the average speed of all vehicles, and encompasses a majority of all drivers on a roadway.
 - If the 85th percentile speed is 5 miles per hour or less above the posted speed limit, no action is required. This is considered to be within the limits of human and instrument error and indicates that drivers are following the posted speed limits.
 - If the 85th percentile speed is between 5 and 10 miles per hour over the posted speed limit, education and enforcement measures are recommended, such as a neighborhood requesting the City’s speed trailer or joining the portable active speed sign program. Engineering changes to signing and striping may be recommended to address speeds in this range.
 - If the 85th percentile speed is 10 miles per hour or more over the posted speed limit, speeds are considered excessive. City staff will request traffic enforcement from the Police Chief. City staff will also analyze the available traffic calming engineering tools, including physical devices, revisions to striping and signage, and operational revisions, to address the concern.
 - Streets with high volumes of pedestrians and cyclists, on identified Safe Routes to School, or with a higher population of other vulnerable non-motorized users with 85th percentile speeds between 5 and 10 miles per hour over the posted limit will be considered for traffic calming engineering tools.
- **Other Site Characteristics Criteria** – City staff will, in the process of recommending education, enforcement and/or engineering to address concerns, consider the following other characteristics of the site and request:
 - If there have been more than three requests for action from different households in the past three years.
 - The Police Chief requests action to be taken after additional enforcement.
 - Three or more reported traffic collisions of types that can be mitigated through addressing vehicle speeds in the past three years.

Traffic Calming – Enforcement and Education Solutions

If analysis determines that enforcement and education solutions to a concern are warranted, the City will consider some of the following potential actions, including but not limited to: Police department speed trailer deployment, portable active speed signs, modifications to existing roadway striping and signage, low-cost (i.e. no modifications to pavement, curbing or sidewalks) pedestrian safety measures, vegetation trimming, and the Police Department’s Annual Traffic Safety Plan.

Traffic Calming – Engineering Solutions

If analysis determines that an engineering solution to a concern is warranted, the City will consider physical revisions to the roadway, including in-road physical devices, modifications to striping and signing, and operational revisions in an effort to reduce speeds and maximize safety.

Modifications to signing and striping will be in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. New signage will be accompanied by temporary flags and/or signage alerting drivers to the new signs and/or changes to traffic operations.

If a physical device is recommended as an engineering solution, a neighborhood meeting will be held to address traffic concerns. The meetings will be facilitated by City Staff, and all property owners within the defined area will be invited to the meeting. The meeting will cover items such as: *History of the problem, defining traffic calming, explaining the NTCP process, final definition of the neighborhood, and a discussion on possible mitigation steps.*

Potential physical devices for engineering solutions may include but are not limited to: traffic circles, gateway islands, turn prohibitions (including centerline “c-curb”), partial road closure, chokers/curb extensions, diverters, speed humps or pillows, raised crosswalks, crosswalk visibility enhancements such as rectangular rapid-flash beacons, and mid-block islands.

Technical Considerations for Engineering Solutions

- Traffic calming devices should not be placed where they affect sewer access points, water valves, survey monuments, or other utility structures.
- Speed humps and other physical calming devices are not recommended to be installed:
 - Within 100 feet of an intersection
 - Within 20 feet of fire hydrants
 - Within 20 feet of driveways
 - More than 80 feet from vehicle-scale street lighting
 - Adding of street lighting should be considered if not present
 - Within 200 feet of a horizontal curve
 - On a vertical grade of more than 8 percent
 - Within 200 feet of a vertical curve or inflection point in vertical grade
- Sight distances to speed humps, medians or traffic circle/roundabout islands (including central and splitter islands) should be more than 150 feet.
- Consecutive speed humps should be installed a minimum of 200 linear feet apart. Runs of more than 3 speed humps on one section of roadway (between logical termini or without intervening horizontal geometry or other types of traffic calming devices) are not recommended. Speed pillows (two smaller humps with a separation to allow passage of emergency vehicles) should be considered.
- Islands are typically not landscaped. However, adjacent homeowners, local associations, and/or the neighborhood will be responsible for obtaining the permit and for maintaining the landscaping in perpetuity. The City may revoke landscaping permits if vegetation is not maintained and replace dead or overgrown landscaping with hard surfaces. All landscaping approved shall not exceed 18 inches in height at maturity.

The City will consider the presence of Safe Routes to School routes, designated or highly used bicycle routes, the characteristics of the concern and the characteristics of the neighborhood when analyzing streets for traffic calming devices or other physical changes. Engineering analysis of potential changes will consider:

1. The likely impact of the change to address the concern
2. Impacts to emergency services
3. Impacts to neighboring streets that may see diversion
4. Impacts to transit service
5. Impacts to storm drainage systems
6. Impacts to snow removal (may preclude plowing of street)

Changes will be made in a context-sensitive manner and will seek neighborhood consensus prior to installation of changes. Any in-road physical device will require a neighborhood petition with **70% approval** of residents within the defined area.

The City will pursue temporary changes whenever possible, and will evaluate all changes after a minimum of 90 days for effectively addressing the concern. Temporary changes that are effective may be changed to permanent installations if warranted after the minimum 90-day period.

Funding and Implementation

The City of Lake Forest Park utilizes a long-term Capital Improvement Project list to fund construction projects. Funds are not always available to pay for traffic calming projects, however each request will be considered for funding based upon current and future priorities.

Traffic calming devices will be installed as soon as possible after demonstrated support by the neighborhood and approval by Lake Forest Park engineering staff. Installation will involve design to meet site conditions, a competitive bidding process for contractors and construction of physical changes to the roadway. Roadway work, especially for traffic calming, is heavily dependent on proper weather conditions. This typically limits the construction season to the summer and fall months. In addition, the City can maximize the efficient use of public funding by bidding projects early in the calendar year and packaging together multiple small projects of a similar type. This may cause delays of up to 9 months between final determination for the installation of traffic calming devices and construction. In some instances, temporary devices may be installed. If permanent devices are installed, City staff will collect new speed and volume information after they have been installed for six months.

The City Engineer, Public Works Director, Police Chief, and Contracted Traffic Engineer will meet as needed to review new and current requests and evaluated them for action.

Getting Started

Citizens requesting traffic calming for their neighborhood should fill out the Citizen Action Request form and return it to the Lake Forest Park City Hall.

Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program

Attn: Public Works

17425 Ballinger Way NE

Lake Forest Park, WA 98155

Tel. 206-386-5440 - Fax 206-364-6521 - cityhall@ci.lake-forest-park.wa.us

City of Lake Forest Park

Traffic Calming Policy Flowchart

