

City of Cherry Hills Village

Traffic Calming Policy

March 14, 2006

This document has been generated as a means of documenting the rationale, process and engineering specifications which make up the City's "Traffic Calming Policy". It is not intended to be an absolute set of rules, but rather a guideline to be followed when responding to traffic calming related issues. In Cherry Hills Village, the City Council is the final authority for such improvement decisions, because they are charged by the City Charter, and by State law, with the ultimate responsibility for the guardianship on behalf of the public, for all public rights-of-ways within the City boundaries (with the exception of State Highways).

Traffic calming is a proactive attempt to improve the livability of residential neighborhoods. It is an attempt to physically change the character of streets, improve safety and encourage drivers to obey the speed limits. Traffic calming utilizes a variety of physical devices to alter the geometry of a street as well as create visual narrowing to slow down traffic. The following policy has been developed to address traffic speed issues in our neighborhoods.

It is the intention of the City of Cherry Hills Village Traffic Calming Policy to address traffic problems and concerns on residential streets. While not intended to make streets play areas for children or adults, calming traffic intends to generally improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and others who travel along or across our streets.

RATIONALE

Funding a traffic calming program with the limited resources of the City will be difficult. Therefore, the following recommendation has been established. When the affected residents desire to change the characteristics of a street in an attempt to slow traffic, without a documented speed problem, they will be responsible for funding the out of pocket costs of such changes. This methodology is consistent with the City's gravel road paving policy.

Normally, a subdivision developer will select the ownership category (public or private) and the construction type (gravel, asphalt, concrete) of new neighborhood streets at the time the land is platted and the development is created. The developer pays for this initial construction. The City will no longer allow the gravel option due to the Metro PM 10 reduction regulations.

Once built to proper standards, the City will accept the streets for maintenance. The government is then responsible for the upkeep, repairs and replacement (if necessary) of the local or residential streets.

If, after the initial land development phase, the adjacent property owners decide they want to change the construction type of the street, the adjacent private property owners must pay for this change.

In the case where a documented speed problem does exist, staff will make recommendations on how to best begin the process of eliminating the problem. Less expensive solutions such as sign improvements, speed trailer deployment and increased patrol should be considered first. If these measures do not work then physical changes should be considered to slow traffic. With approval from Council staff will include a budget line item in the following year's budget to cover the estimated cost of those improvements.

Prior to making any permanent changes to the street, the following procedure has been established to guide the process.

PROCEDURE

The definition of the impact area needs to be large enough to cover the residents directly impacted by the improvements, but also must consider that traffic calming is intended to address the needs of the neighborhood and not those of through traffic.

The impact area will be defined as the properties within one block of intersection projects, and all properties fronting the study block of the street in the case of a project at the mid-block of a street. In addition, roads that have their sole access through the study block will be included in the impact area (examples: dead end streets which intersect affected block, neighborhood streets which must use street to exit neighborhood).

If a neighborhood has an established homeowners association, all properties within that association will be included in the impact area. In cases where the street in the study area is on the boundary of the association, the study area will not include the entire association, but shall be defined as mentioned in the above paragraph.

PROCESS

When the City receives a request for a traffic calming study, the requesting party or association will be required to obtain signatures of a majority of properties within the impact area.

When the required signatures have been presented to the City, a traffic speed survey will be performed on the study street(s). All speed surveys will be conducted while local schools are in session and when weather conditions do not indirectly affect the speed of vehicles in the study area. Staff will schedule the speed surveys so the data can be tabulated and a project can be designed with ample time to include the project in the following year's budget request to City Council.

A speeding problem is defined as the 85th percentile speed being 5 MPH or more over the posted speed limit. If the speed survey indicates a problem City staff will submit to City Council the findings and make a recommendation on how best to proceed to begin the process of calming traffic. If the speed survey data collected indicates no speeding problem within the study area, no improvements will be budgeted by the City. If the residents within the study area are still interested in traffic calming improvements without supporting data, they may chose to pay for improvements defined in a specific plan developed by staff with City Council approval of that plan. There must be documented 80% support from the affected neighborhood for the City to approve a project with no supporting speed data.

The following traffic calming tools will be considered in the development of a plan.

- Sign Improvements
- Increased enforcement
- Speed trailer deployment
- Speed humps
- Curb extensions (bump outs)
- Landscape medians

Speed humps will only be used on local streets and should not be considered on restricted streets as identified by the City's Transportation System Map. Restricted streets have been identified as streets that allow emergency vehicles to reach all parts of the City without delay.

The City will schedule a neighborhood meeting inviting all residents in the impact area to attend. The preliminary plan will be discussed and input from the residents will be considered before developing a final plan. At that point in the process, the plan will be presented to City Council for consideration. If City Council approves the plan, staff will include the project estimate in the next year's budget and schedule the improvements in the work program for the Public Works Department.

The construction of the plan will be scheduled into the next year's work program for the Public Works Department. The Public Works Department staff will perform any project components that they are able to. All other work will be contracted out during that year's Street Improvement Program and incorporated into that project scope. In the event that a documented speeding problem exists, the City will fund all of the traffic calming improvements in a timely manner. Where there is not a documented speeding problem, the estimated cost of the project performed by contractors, as well as any out of pocket costs to the City, will be the resident's responsibility to fund. The City must receive the amount estimated in advance of any construction. Those funds will be placed in an escrow account and drawn from to pay for the project. Any excess funds will be returned to the residents.

The City can typically perform the following tasks:

- Removal of existing asphalt and concrete for project preparation
- Simple irrigation design and construction in planting areas
- Tree and shrub planting
- Some concrete curb and gutter construction
- Most asphalt patching
- The City will perform traffic control for its own work.
- Speed hump construction
- Sign installation

Out of pocket costs to the project:

- Concrete construction beyond the scope of City staff
- Asphalt construction beyond the scope of City staff
- Irrigation design and construction beyond the scope of City staff
- Engineering drainage plan for improvements
- Street striping
- All materials needed to facilitate construction of the improvements including all asphalt, concrete, landscape materials and irrigation equipment