



# CITY OF SALINAS

## COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

---

**DATE:** DECEMBER 5, 2023

**DEPARTMENT:** PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

**FROM:** DAVID JACOBS, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

**BY:** GERARDO RODRIGUEZ, ASSISTANT ENGINEER  
ADRIANA ROBLES, CITY ENGINEER

**TITLE:** RAINIER DRIVE NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC  
CALMING PLAN

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution approving the Rainier Drive Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan supported by residents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At its June 13, 2023, meeting, City Council approved the 2023-2024 fiscal year priority traffic calming projects, whereas Rainier Drive ranked the highest priority. Staff held a community meeting and worked with residents of Rainier Drive to develop a traffic calming plan. A vote was conducted to gauge community support, and the Rainier Drive Traffic Calming Plan met the support requirements as prescribed by City's policy. Therefore, staff recommends the approval and implementation of the neighborhood traffic calming plan for Rainier Drive.

BACKGROUND:

In October 2009, the City Council adopted the Salinas Neighborhood Traffic Management Program to address residential neighborhood traffic concerns. The program was established initially to address concerns from neighborhoods that could not be supported by traffic enforcement since it was impractical at the time to deploy traffic enforcement officers in residential areas. There had been a growing request for speed reduction throughout the City for which the City had no tools to address the residents' concerns.

Traffic calming devices are generally not considered traffic control devices as defined by the State and Federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The City began compiling traffic calming studies in 2002 and found there was very few applications in California. To assist in the development of the City's Policy, the City hired a consultant to help develop the City's traffic calming policy based on best practices. The resulting policy contained a toolbox of traffic calming measures that would be used to address neighborhood problems associated with speeds and vehicle volume on residential streets. The adoption of the policy also included the adoption of

traffic calming tools that can be provided on City streets. The policy also provided the process for consideration of projects under the program which is important for securing support from residents of a neighborhood who would be affected by traffic calming implementation.

In the development of the City's policy, City staff met with all affected parties including emergency response providers as well as other service providers such as solid waste collection services and street sweeping. These agencies and providers were all invited in the discussion of the traffic calming policy development. The traffic calming program implementation therefore includes considerations and understanding of the program by potentially affected parties. The City's policy only applies to city streets that have residential uses.

On November 7, 2017, with an influx of traffic calming requests received, the City approved criteria for prioritizing traffic calming requests based on traffic conditions, collision history, nearby land uses, geometrics, and facilities. These criteria provide a transparent way to prioritize requests given the City's limited resources. Every year, staff presents traffic calming recommended priorities based on the criteria to the City Council. Council proceeds with implementation based on Council approved priorities.

In August 2022, residents of Rainier Drive submitted a petition requesting the City to investigate speeding issues along Rainier Drive. Traffic studies were conducted in various locations along the street, and the results confirmed high speeds on Rainier Drive. Results met the criteria for traffic calming implementation.

The Traffic and Transportation Division held a meeting with residents on September 7, 2023, to develop a traffic calming plan for Rainier Drive to address speeding concerns. With residents' input received at this meeting, a neighborhood traffic calming plan was developed and finalized.

In accordance with the City's policy, the plan was taken to vote to determine support from residents. Ballots with pre-paid envelopes were mailed to residents of Rainier Drive, and the vote was conducted over a 4-week period. Residents were encouraged to talk to and inform their neighbors. On October 26, 2023, the voting period ended, and the neighborhood met the support vote requirement as prescribed in the City's policy. The City received ballots from 60% of all applicable households, meeting the 50% return rate requirement. Of the ballots received, 93% were in favor of the Plan, meeting the 67% in favor requirement. Staff is therefore recommending the implementation of the Rainier Drive Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan.

The proposed Rainier Drive Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan includes the installation of four (4) speed cushions and a vehicle speed feedback sign. Speed cushions are vertical traffic calming devices and are similar to speed humps but are made of rubberized material. Speed cushions are designed to have lesser impact on fire department response and are spaced to maintain a speed of approximately 25 mph, which corresponds to the speed limit on residential streets. Vehicle speed feedback sign displays real-time speeds to drivers and flashes when speeds exceed the speed limit. Attachment 1 shows the approximate locations of the speed cushions and the vehicle speed feedback sign.

Traffic and Transportation Commission:

The Rainier Drive Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan was presented to the Traffic and Transportation Commission at its November 9, 2023, meeting. The Commission voted (5-1) recommending City Council approve a Resolution to implement the Rainier Drive neighborhood traffic calming plan supported by residents.

District 1 appointment is currently vacant.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Staff has determined that the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Section 15301, Class 1). The project consists of the operation, repair, or minor alteration of public streets involving no expansion of use. There would be no significant effect on the environment.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The Traffic Calming Policy supports Council’s goal of “Public Safety”.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

Public Works staff coordinate with the Salinas Fire Department on the recommendation of the traffic calming plan. Staff also coordinates with the Salinas Police Department if traffic calming enforcement assistance is necessary.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The estimated cost of the improvements using the City’s On-Call Contract for Traffic Control Devices is \$126,948. Funding is available and appropriated in 5800.50.9163 and 3911.50.8180. Alternatively, in the past the City’s maintenance crews have been able to assist in the installation of speed cushions as overtime work. If City staff is available to perform the work, the estimated cost to install the speed cushions and the vehicle feedback sign is \$45,000.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution  
Attachment 1: Rainier Drive Proposed Traffic Calming Plan