



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: JUNE 21, 2022
DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS
FROM: DAVID JACOBS, DIRECTOR
BY: ANDREW EASTERLING, TRAFFIC ENGINEER
TITLE: 2022-2023 PRIORITIZATION OF TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECTS

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve the proposed neighborhood traffic calming project prioritization list for fiscal year 2022-2023.

RECOMMENDATION:

Numerous requests for traffic calming projects have exceeded the City's budgeted resources to respond to and provide traffic calming solutions for all the neighborhoods currently petitioning for projects. Staff has collected traffic data for each neighborhood requesting a traffic calming project and ranked them according to the Council approved traffic calming prioritization criteria. The City Council is requested to review and approve the proposed neighborhood traffic calming project prioritization list for fiscal year 2022-2023. Alternatively, the City Council can choose to re-prioritize the list based on other considerations not captured in the traffic data.

BACKGROUND:

The City receives numerous complaints and requests from residents regarding neighborhood traffic related issues. Many residential concerns relate to driver behavior in the form of speeding or cut-through traffic on residential streets.

In 2009, the City of Salinas adopted the Neighborhood Traffic Management Programs in an attempt to respond to residents' requests to reduce the speed of vehicles and discourage cut-through traffic on residential streets. With the success and community support for the first complete traffic calming projects on Rosarita Drive and Little River Drive, requests for traffic calming projects began rapidly increasing. The City evaluates requests as they are received but traffic calming projects are now backlogged due to limited time and budgetary resources. In 2017, staff recommended the adoption of a priority rating system based on fair and impartial methodologies to deliver projects based on identified needs and benefits. The recommended

prioritization criteria was approved by City Council with Traffic and Transportation Commission Support.

Staff estimates the average cost of a neighborhood traffic calming project typically ranges \$70,000 to \$150,000 depending on the size and complexity of the project. The project can take several months of community meetings with additional time for a voting period before advancing to implementation. The 2021-2022 budget for traffic calming projects was \$200,000, which is being distributed to two neighborhood traffic calming projects, specifically East Bolivar Street and Madrid Street. Depending on the results for both East Bolivar Street and Madrid Street traffic calming projects or if there are remaining funds the City will work with the next neighborhood from the 2021-2022 prioritized traffic calming project list. Staff will continue working on the next highest priority until funds are depleted.

As of December 31, 2021, the backlog of traffic calming projects includes 23 neighborhoods. Based on the prioritization scoring from the approved criteria, staff is recommending traffic calming improvement projects to be considered in the order shown in the following table for fiscal year 2022-2023 and continued on Attachment 1. Depending on the budget that the City Council allocates for Traffic Calming for the FY 22-23, City staff will work on the projects in the order listed in the table below until the budget is depleted. Once the budget gets depleted, the backlogged traffic calming petitions will be held until resources become available or until the next re-prioritization recommendation.

Rank	Neighborhood	Score
1	Paseo Grande	65
2	West Acacia Street	55
3	Iverson Street	55
4	Victor Street	53
5	Nogal Drive	47
6	Calaveras Drive	42
7	Swaner Avenue	40

**Streets with equal scores rank the highest collision history first*

For all other neighborhoods requesting traffic calming projects, which scored less than 40 out of 100, staff recommends closing out the request. The traffic studies found that these neighborhoods have relatively low speeds, volumes and collision history when compared to other neighborhoods. Given the abundance of traffic calming requests in the City it is reasonably foreseeable that these neighborhoods will not be prioritized for traffic calming in the foreseeable future. Therefore, staff recommends that requests for traffic calming projects be closed and the petitioners notified.

In summary, staff is providing the Traffic and Transportation Commission the list of traffic calming requests received for which a traffic evaluation was already completed. Staff is recommending traffic calming improvement projects to be considered in the order shown in the table above for fiscal year 2022-2023 be recommended to the City Council for consideration for the City’s fiscal year 2022-2023 traffic calming program budget. At the completion of each of the traffic calming process for the recommended neighborhoods based on the allocated budget, staff

will begin working on the next projects in line based on scores until the annual allocation is depleted for FY 2022-2023.

The City developed the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program, which establishes a process for a community led effort to develop the design of a traffic calming plan that is ultimately supported by the residents themselves who will have to live with the project once it is completed. There are a number of countermeasures available to help mitigate traffic issues, however the predominate request from the community tends to be rubberized speed cushions. Staff notes that there are other countermeasures available which be more effective, and may have additional benefits beyond traffic calming, such as curb extensions and pedestrian ramps. However, the planning and design of traffic calming projects is community led effort which tends to result in more rubberized speed cushions.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Because the matter does not cause a direct or foreseeable indirect physical change on or in the environment, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent discretionary projects resulting from this action will be assessed for CEQA applicability.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The 2022-2023 Prioritization of Traffic Calming Projects supports the Council goal of “Investment Strategies/Risk Management”.

The City developed the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program to respond to residents’ concerns regarding traffic safety. Through before and after studies, the City has determined that the neighborhood traffic calming projects have some effect to lower traffic speeds and volumes. However, the City also completed a comprehensive 10-year collision analysis, the Vision Zero Action Plan, which reveals that very few traffic collisions occur on residential streets. The Neighborhood Traffic Management Program may help respond to residential requests, but the program has little effect to support the City Council’s goal of “Public Safety”.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

There will be no impact to the General Fund. Based on the FY 2022-2023 CIP budget for Traffic Calming, staff will work on the neighborhoods from the above table until the budget is depleted. Staff will work on the next highest scoring project until the budget is depleted. Once the allotted budget has been depleted, the backlogged traffic calming petitions will be held until resources become available or until the next re-prioritization recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

Attachment 1: Neighborhood Traffic Calming Scoring Master List

Attachment 2: Neighborhood Traffic Calming Scoring Worksheets

Attachment 3: Neighborhood Traffic Studies

Attachment 4: Neighborhood Traffic Management Program Manual