



CITY OF SALINAS

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

DATE: JULY 10, 2025

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS, TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

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TITLE: PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR TRAFFIC CALMING
PROJECTS STUDY SESSION

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

The Traffic and Transportation Commission is requested to provide feedback on the proposed prioritization criteria.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Beginning in 2016, numerous requests for traffic calming projects began to exceed City resources to respond to and provide traffic calming solutions for Salinas residents' concerns. Traffic Calming projects were awarded to communities as requested and were installed on what was essentially a "first come first serve" policy. In November 2017, Council approved prioritization criteria based on quantifiable conditions rather than "first come first served". At the June meeting, staff presented proposed updates to Traffic Calming Policy. Staff is now requesting feedback on proposed updates to the prioritization criteria for traffic calming projects.

BACKGROUND:

In October 2009, the City Council adopted the Salinas Neighborhood Traffic Management Program ("NTMP") to address residential neighborhood traffic concerns related to vehicle speeding and cut-through traffic. With the success and community support for the first completed traffic calming projects (Little River Drive, Nacional Street, and Rosarita Drive) in 2016 and 2017, requests for traffic calming projects rapidly increased. At that time, the city evaluated requests as they were received, on a "first come, first served basis", but traffic calming projects soon became backlogged due to limited resources (funds and staff).

Annually, the City receives numerous requests, complaints and suggestions from residents about traffic related issues. Many residential concerns relate to driver behavior in the form of speeding or cut-through traffic on residential streets. In 2017, various cities were surveyed to establish a quantifiable prioritization criteria system based on fair and impartial methodologies to deliver projects based on identified needs and benefits. The approved priority rating system included five categories, "Traffic Volumes", "Speed", "Crash History", "Land Use", and "Geometrics and Engineering Judgment" as identified in Attachment 2.

Proposed Update to Prioritization Criteria for Traffic Calming Projects

Staff has once again surveyed other agencies that utilize traffic calming prioritization rating systems to update and develop a well-informed, objective and effective priority rating system. Of the cities surveyed, the most common priorities established included traffic volume, travel speed, crash history, land use (pedestrian generators), sidewalks and bike routes, and geometrics. There were a select few cities that provide additional consideration into the scoring criteria to other factors including percentage of cut through traffic, community support, engineering judgement, and conformance to planning documents. Each criterion could be quantified by measurable metrics and assigned an influencing factor which could be scored and aggregated into a normalized project priority score. Table 1 summarizes the survey findings.

Table 1. Traffic Calming Criteria Survey Findings

Criteria	Description of Metrics	Scoring Range
Traffic Volume	• Average Daily Traffic (ADT) or Average Weekday Daily Traffic (AWDT)	5%-35%
Speed	• Measured 85 th percentile or percent of vehicle traveling over the posted speed limit	17%-40%
Crash history	• Study period 2-5 years • Preventable collisions • Total number of collisions per year • Adjustment factors (4-3) for fatal or pedestrian/bike collisions	5%-20%
Land Use	• School Zones, Pedestrian Trip Generators, • Percentage of street with front facing housing, driveway density	5%-50%
Sidewalk and Bike Routes	• Sidewalk missing on one or both sides, • Gaps in sidewalk, designated bike route	5%-20%
Geometrics	• Sight distances • Slopes and curves	5%-10%
Cut-Through	• Percentage of non-local traffic**	20%*
Community Support	Percent Support	5%*
Engineering Judgement	Unusual Conditions or Characteristics not aforementioned	3%*

*Criteria sourced from only one sample policy

** This criterion would be difficult to measure.

Agencies surveyed were:

Livermore, CA
Anaheim, CA
Berkeley, CA
College Station, TX

Hagerstown, MD
La Habra, CA
Hamden, CT
Pleasanton, CA

San Mateo, CA
Modesto, CA

The proposed updates to the prioritization rating system modify the time-period for data collection, weight of points for the categories, and add conformance with planning document. Currently, data collection is over a 3-day period during the spring and fall to capture school traffic and the agricultural season. As discussed in the June TTC meeting, the data collection period would be changed to year-round, and data would be collected over an entire week (7 days). Based on the petitions received, the major issue described by the residents is speeding causing safety concerns for people(children/adults/elderly) walking within the neighborhood. Therefore, the proposal is to change the weight of the categories to focus the program on safety. This means that no point limit will be used for the safety categories (speed and crash history).

The City Council in 2022 and 2024, respectively, adopted the Safe Routes to School Plan and Active Transportation Plan. These plans include proposed improvements for residential streets and local collectors around or near schools and/or proposed bike facility upgrades related to traffic calming measures. Since increased safety for pedestrians and bikes is the goal of these planning documents, adding a category that acknowledges and incorporates these planning efforts is recommended. Attachment 3 contains the updated proposed changes.

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 Program 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 coordinates with the Salinas Police Department when traffic calming enforcement assistance is necessary.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

There are funds in the Traffic Calming budget for staff to update the policy.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Resolution No. 21291
Attachment 2 – Existing Prioritization Rating System
Attachment 3 – Proposed Prioritization Rating System