



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: MAY 6, 2025

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

FROM: DAVID JACOBS, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

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TITLE: ROCHEX AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC
CALMING PLAN

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution approving the Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan supported by residents for implementation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

City Council approved the FY 2023-2024 Prioritization of Traffic Calming Projects, which ranked Rochex Avenue as the fourth highest priority. Staff held two community meetings and worked with residents of Rochex Avenue to develop a traffic calming plan. A vote was conducted to gauge community support. The Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan did not meet the support requirements as prescribed by the City's Policy. On February 13, 2025, the Traffic and Transportation Commission recommended a second vote to be conducted for the Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan. City staff conducted a second vote and the neighborhood met the support requirements prescribed by the City's Policy.

BACKGROUND:

In October 2009, the City Council adopted the Salinas Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) to address residential neighborhood traffic concerns. The program was established to address traffic concerns from residential neighborhoods. 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 were very few applications in California. To assist in the development of the City's policy, the City hired a consultant to develop the Salinas NTMP. The resulting Traffic Calming Policy ("Policy") contains a toolbox of traffic calming measures that can be used to address neighborhood problems associated with speeding and vehicle volume on residential streets. The adoption of the policy also included the adoption of the traffic calming tools. The policy also provides the process for consideration of projects under the program which is important for securing the residents' support.

While developing the Policy, City staff met with affected parties including emergency response providers, solid waste collection services and street sweeping. Therefore, implementation of the Traffic Calming Program includes considerations and understanding of the program by potentially affected parties.

On November 7, 2017, following an influx of traffic calming requests received, the City Council approved criteria for prioritizing traffic calming requests based on traffic conditions, collision history, nearby land uses, roadway geometrics and facilities. These criteria provide a more holistic way of analyzing and prioritizing requests given the City's limited resources. In order to process requests based on the approved criteria, staff annually present a recommended traffic calming priorities list to the Traffic and Transportation Commission and City Council. City staff then proceed with plan development, plan support and plan implementation based on Council approved priorities.

City staff has received comments and questions regarding the process of the Traffic Calming Policy from residents, Councilmembers, and Commissioners. There has been concerns of the length of the process from when a traffic calming petition is submitted to when traffic calming devices are implemented, resources for the program, and the prioritization process. Staff has taken the comments and questions and will be working towards updating the Traffic Calming Policy. Staff is aiming to begin the process by having a study session with the Traffic and Transportation Commission in July.

In March 2022, residents of Rochex Avenue submitted a petition requesting the City to investigate speeding issues along Rochex Avenue. Staff conducted traffic studies at various locations along the street, compiled data, analyzed the street, and the results confirmed pedestrian/bicycle collisions, horizontal curvature, and proximity to a designated school and pedestrian generator on Rochex Avenue. Rochex Avenue was ranked the fourth highest in the 2023-2024 Traffic Calming Prioritization, approved by City Council.

The Traffic and Transportation Division held two community meetings on January 18, 2024 and August 22, 2024, to develop a traffic calming plan with residents of Rochex Avenue neighborhood to address the concerns. With residents' input received at both meetings, a neighborhood traffic calming plan was developed. The plan includes two (2) speed cushions and striping modifications. Striping modifications will result in narrow travel lanes and shorter crossing distance at the crosswalk on Rochex Avenue and N 4th St. Attachment 1 provides the approximate locations of the speed cushions and striping modifications.

In accordance with the Policy, the plan was taken to vote to determine support from residents. The vote was conducted over a 6-week period. On January 2, 2025, the voting period ended, and the neighborhood did not meet the support vote required. The City received ballots from 43% of all households, not meeting the 50% return rate requirement. Of the ballots received, 94% were in favor of the Plan. Therefore, staff recommended closing the traffic calming request for Rochex Avenue as presented to the Traffic and Transportation Commission on its meeting of February 13, 2025.

Staff conducted a second vote for the Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan over a 4-week period. On March 27, 2025, the voting period ended, and the neighborhood met the support vote required. The City received ballots from 55% of all households, meeting the 50% return rate requirement. Of the ballots received, 95% were in favor of the Plan. Therefore, staff now recommend the approval and implementation of the Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan supported by its residents.

While conducting the second vote for the Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan, it was brought to the attention of staff that the number of households included some businesses fronting North Main Street. This was brought to staff's attention during the first week of the second vote round. Staff acknowledged there had been an error with these addresses and removed them from the remainder of the time period of the second vote. A review of the adjusted results from the first vote revealed that the neighborhood had not met the plan support requirement.

Traffic And Transportation Commission

The Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan was presented to the Traffic and Transportation Commission at its February 13, 2025, meeting with staff's recommendation to close the traffic calming petition because plan support requirements were not met as prescribed by the City's Policy. At the meeting, the Traffic and Transportation Commission recommended for a second vote to be conducted. After conducting the second vote as described previously, staff represented the Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan to the Traffic and Transportation Commission at its meeting on April 10, 2025, with staff's recommendation to recommend an approval of the Plan for implementation supported by residents. At this meeting the Commission voted (5-0) recommending City Council approve a Resolution approving the Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan supported by residents for implementation.

It is important to point out that this recommendation is being brought forward under the existing Council adopted process. However, the current process is scheduled to be brought before the Commission in the near future for review and possible changes. Any updates and/or changes would then be subsequently brought forward to the Council for consideration.

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.

CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLIES:

No.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The Traffic Calming Policy support 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:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with approving the Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan. Sufficient funding is available in the Traffic Calming Program budget (CIP 9163) to complete this work.

Fund	Appropriation	Appropriation Name	Total Appropriation	Amount for recommendation	FY 24-25 Operating Budget Page	Last Budget Action (Date, Resolution)
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

Attachment 1: Rochex Avenue Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan