



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: MARCH 11, 2025

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

FROM: DAVID JACOBS, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

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TITLE: LAS CASITAS DRIVE NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC
CALMING PLAN

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution approving the Las Casitas Drive Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan supported by residents for implementation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At its August 20, 2024, meeting, City Council approved the 2024-2025 Prioritization of Traffic Calming Projects, which ranked Las Casitas Drive as the highest priority. Staff held a community meeting and worked with residents of Las Casitas Drive to develop a traffic calming plan. A vote was conducted to gauge community support, and the Las Casitas Drive Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan met the support requirements as prescribed by the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program ("Traffic Calming Policy").

BACKGROUND:

In October 2009, the City Council adopted the Salinas Neighborhood Traffic Management Program 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 Neighborhood Traffic Management Program. The resulting Traffic Calming 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 presents a recommended traffic calming priorities list to the Traffic and Transportation Commission and City Council. City staff then proceeds 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 gets submitted to when traffic calming devices get 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. City staff is aiming to begin the process by having a study session with the Traffic and Transportation Commission late Spring to early Summer.

In October 2023, residents of Las Casitas Drive submitted a petition requesting the City to investigate speeding issues along Las Casitas Drive. Staff conducted traffic studies at various locations along the street, compiled data, analyzed the street, and the results confirmed high speeds and volume, pedestrian/bicycle collisions, horizontal and vertical curvature on Las Casitas Drive. Las Casitas Drive was ranked highest in the 2024-2025 Traffic Calming Prioritization, approved by City Council.

The Traffic and Transportation Division held a community meeting on November 7, 2024, to develop a traffic calming plan with residents of Las Casitas Drive neighborhood to address the speeding concerns. With residents' input received at the meeting, a neighborhood traffic calming plan was developed. The plan includes three (3) speed cushion on Las Casitas Drive. Attachment 1 provides the approximate locations of the speed cushions.

In accordance with the City's 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 met the support vote required. The City received ballots from 52% of all households, meeting the 50% return rate requirement. Of the ballots received, 100% were in favor of the Plan, meeting the 67% in favor requirement. Staff is therefore recommending the implementation of the Las Casitas Drive Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan.

Traffic and Transportation Commission

The Las Casitas Drive Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan was presented to the Traffic and Transportation Commission at its February 13, 2025, meeting. The Commission voted

unanimously (5-0) recommending City Council approve a Resolution to implement the Las Casitas Drive Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan supported by residents.

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 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:

The estimated total cost of these improvements is \$32,300. There are sufficient funds 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 CIP Budget Page	Last Budget Action (Date, Resolution)
5800	50.9163-66.4000	Capital Outlay Improvements	\$ 200,000	N/A	Engineering & Transportation	6/11/2024

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

Attachment 1: Las Casitas Drive Proposed Traffic Calming Plan