



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: November 7, 2017
DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
FROM: JAMES SERRANO, TRANSPORTATION MANAGER
TITLE: TRAFFIC CALMING UPDATE

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution approving the Laurel Heights Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan; deem the Nacional Street Traffic Calming Project as complete; and receive report on traffic calming projects prioritization

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend the approval of the Laurel Heights Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan; receive the after study report on Nacional Street and deem the traffic calming project for the Nacional Street neighborhood as complete with no further action on traffic calming; and consider approving a prioritization strategy for traffic calming requests.

BACKGROUND:

Laurel Heights Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan

City staff received a request from the Laurel Heights neighborhood residents to reduce speeds in their neighborhood. Laurel Heights is a neighborhood in northeast Salinas bounded by East Laurel Drive to the north and North Sanborn Road on the east. Three collector streets provide residents access to these arterial streets, Saint Edwards Drive, Madeira Street and Circle Drive.

Traffic staff conducted traffic studies and confirmed that speeds on these collector streets meet the requirements for consideration of traffic calming at Laurel Heights. Staff therefore engaged the community in a series of neighborhood meetings until a neighborhood traffic calming plan was developed. A draft neighborhood traffic calming plan was presented to residents in July 2016. A revised draft with comments from the residents was discussed at a November 2016 community meeting where residents recommended seeking support for the plan. However, the neighborhood traffic calming plan failed to get the required neighborhood support in April 2017. At the request of the neighborhood, a revised neighborhood traffic calming plan was developed and presented at a community meeting on July 25, 2017. Residents at the meeting agreed to seek another support

vote from the community. This time the neighborhood traffic calming plan for Laurel Heights received the required support from the neighbors. The final tally of support votes in September 2017 showed strong support for the neighborhood plan.

The final vote is as follows:

Ballots Returned: 58% (Required 50%)

Submitted ballots in favor of the traffic calming plan: 97% (Submitted ballots in favor required: 67%)

The Laurel Heights traffic calming request consideration followed the traffic calming policy process and the neighborhood plan received the required amount of support from the residents. Staff is therefore recommending approval and implementation of the Laurel Heights Traffic Calming Plan.

Nacional Street Traffic Calming

Nacional Street was one of the first streets to receive traffic calming treatments. Staff received a request from neighbors to address concerns of speeding on Nacional Street near Catalina Avenue. A traffic study conducted in October 2014 showed 85th percentile speeds to be 31-32 mph with traffic volumes of 1,856 vehicles per day. These did not meet traffic calming criteria. The criteria for traffic calming is an 85th percentile of 35 mph or greater and vehicle volumes greater than 3000 cars per day. City staff worked with residents on an education program but residents desired more and were willing to contribute to fund a traffic calming project.

In 2015, staff expanded the study area on Nacional Street to include other locations on Nacional Street. The 2015 studies identified a segment of Nacional Street that met the traffic calming criteria. With justification to consider traffic calming, staff worked with residents to develop a traffic calming plan. The final neighborhood traffic calming plan utilizes the following tools:

- Chicanes-islands constructed to physically narrow the road at two locations;
- Striping-Striping of a center lane and the parking lane to encouraging drivers to stay on their side of the road therefore inducing slower speeds; and
- Radar feedback signs - Education tools that provide a reminders for drivers of the speed limit on residential streets.

The traffic calming plan was implemented in 2016. It has been approximately a year from the implementation. Total cost of the Nacional Street traffic calming plan implementation was \$44,000. The Traffic Calming Program was not funded at the time, and Nacional Street residents contributed \$2,500 towards the project that included funding of \$750 from a City of Salinas neighborhood grant and a contribution from the residents for \$1,750. The balance of the project costs came from the City street maintenance budget.

Staff conducted a traffic study at the request of residents to determine if the project resulted in changes. The results of the traffic study indicate substantial reduction of speeding near Central Avenue. Along the rest of the corridor, the speeds remain unchanged, however the speeds are

acceptable and therefore no longer meet the traffic calming criteria. It is staff's recommendation that the traffic calming work at Nacional Street be deemed complete. This will enable staff to move forward addressing other requests received for traffic calming.

Traffic Calming Update and Prioritization

Since the City's policy for traffic calming was adopted in 2009, there have been very few implemented traffic calming plans until the program received its first year of funding in fiscal year 2016-17. Since this initial funding, two projects have been completed with program funding and two more approved plans on the way to construction. Staff anticipates another two traffic calming plans will be supported and recommended for funding by December while staff works with other neighborhoods in the development of traffic calming plans.

Currently, staff has close to twenty neighborhood requests. The transportation division is evaluating requests as they are received, but staff anticipates that traffic calming projects will soon become backlogged due to limited funding. The requests staff is currently working on may well use up the traffic calming budget through Fiscal Year 2018-19. Staff is therefore preparing for the adoption of a priority rating system based on fair and impartial methodologies to deliver projects based on identified needs and benefits.

Recommended Criteria for Prioritization of Traffic Calming Projects

Staff surveyed traffic calming prioritization rating systems currently used by other agencies to help develop a well-informed, objective and effective priority rating system for the City of Salinas. Of all the cities surveyed, the most common priorities established included: traffic volume, travel speed, crash history, adjacent land use, sidewalk and bike routes, and geometrics. There were a select few cities that give some additional consideration into the scoring criteria to other factors including: percentage of cut through traffic, community support, and engineering judgement. Each criteria could be quantified by measurable metrics and assigned an influencing factor which could be scored and aggregated into a normalized project priority score. The summary of the survey findings are shown in the table below.

	Criteria	Description/Metrics	Scoring Range
1	Traffic Volume	ADT or AWDT	15%-50%
2	Speed	Measured 85 th percentile or percent of vehicle traveling over the posted speed limit	20%-50%
3	Crash history	Study period 2-5 years Average Collisions per year Total number of collisions per year Adjustment factors (1.5-2) for fatal or pedestrian/bike collisions	17%-33%
4	Adjacent Land Use	School Zone, pedestrian trip generators, Percentage of street with front facing housing, driveway density	10%-35%

5	Sidewalk and Bike Routes	Sidewalk missing on one or both sides, Gaps in sidewalk, designated bike route	5%-20%
6	Geometrics	sight distances, slopes and curves	5%-10%
7	Cut-Through	percentage of non-local traffic <i>Difficult to determine and measure</i>	15%*
8	Community Support	Percent Support	5%*
8	Engineering Judgement	Unusual Conditions or Characteristics not aforementioned	10%*

*Criteria only sourced from one sample policy

Surveyed Agencies:

Albuquerque, NM
 Anaheim, CA
 Berkeley, CA

College Station, TX
 Hagerstown, MD
 La Habra, CA

Oakville, ON
 Pleasanton, CA
 San Mateo, CA

City staff is proposing adoption of a standard process for ranking traffic calming project prioritization criteria similar to the metrics observed in the surveyed cities. These scoring metrics will better prioritize the need for neighborhood traffic calming projects. This metric will not replace or supersede the policies or framework established in the Salinas Neighborhood Traffic Management Program adopted in 2009, but will be used as part of the traffic data collection and identification of street needs component of the framework. Staff developed the attached scoring/prioritization strategy.

This is similar to the way the City prioritizes Traffic Signals, returning to Council periodically with a list of prioritized projects that the Council can consider in relation to available funding. Staff is gathering data on all requests received with a plan to have the first prioritized list for traffic calming projects before the end of the fiscal year. Staff is therefore seeking Council’s support for prioritization.

The proposed prioritization strategy and scoring was presented to the Salinas Traffic and Transportation Commission at its September 2017 meeting. The Commission voted unanimously to recommend the above prioritization strategy and scoring of traffic calming requests.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The Laurel Heights traffic calming plan is estimated to cost \$110,000 to implement. There are sufficient funds to implement the Laurel Heights neighborhood traffic calming plan in this year’s Traffic Calming Capital Improvement Program (CIP 9163).

The use of the prioritization strategy will help the City effectively align desired traffic calming projects with the City’s ability to fund the program.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

Exhibit – Laurel Heights Traffic Studies

Exhibit – Laurel Heights Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan

Exhibit – Nacional Street Traffic Calming Project and After Study

Exhibit – List of Traffic Calming Requests

Exhibit – Proposed Neighborhood Traffic Calming Prioritization Scoresheet

RESOLUTION NO. _____ (N.C.S.)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVING THE LAUREL HEIGHTS TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION; DEEMING THE NACIONAL STREET TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECT AS COMPLETE; AND DIRECTING STAFF TO PRIORITIZE TRAFFIC CALMING REQUESTS

WHEREAS, the City adopted a traffic calming policy in 2009 to address neighborhood traffic concerns and allocated funds to the City traffic calming program; and

WHEREAS, residents of Laurel Heights engaged the City to develop a neighborhood traffic calming plan with support from residents in accordance with the City traffic calming policy; and

WHEREAS, residents of Nacional Street engaged the City to develop a neighborhood traffic calming plan with support from residents and said plan was completed with after studies conducted showing acceptable conditions; and

WHEREAS, in order to effectively implement the City’s policy in alignment with available funding, a prioritization strategy is proposed for the growing requests for traffic calming received;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Salinas City Council hereby:

- 1) Approves the Laurel Heights Traffic Calming Plan for implementation as supported by residents; and
- 2) Deems the Nacional Street Traffic Calming Plan complete with no further action required.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that considering the increasing number of request for traffic calming, the Council directs City staff to prioritize traffic calming requests using the prioritization strategy outlined in attached Exhibit A.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 7th day of November, 2017, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

APPROVED:

Joe Gunter, Mayor

ATTEST:

Patricia M. Barajas, City Clerk