

City of Winston-Salem Traffic Calming Policy

DRAFT
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Prepared by



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I. Introduction

Purpose

What is a neighborhood? Webster’s International Dictionary defines a neighborhood as “The region near where one is or resides.” A neighborhood can be as small as one street or a network of homes and small businesses with shared streets, parks, and people. ***This Policy on Traffic Calming provides a process by which residents living in the neighborhoods of Winston-Salem can obtain solutions to traffic issues as they relate to quality of life.***

As a Policy, the information presented herein is not intended to be rigid requirements but rather a guide to select, design, and apply the appropriate traffic calming tools. This document is a tool for the Winston-Salem Department of Transportation and other city staff, individuals or groups planning new neighborhoods and the residents of Winston-Salem, NC. This Policy should be applied to provide effective solutions that promote safety for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians while enhancing the appearance of a neighborhood.

How to use this Document:

The use of this document depends on whether the reader is planning traffic calming for an existing neighborhood or for a new neighborhood.

<p>If you are a City staff person or Resident addressing issues in an existing neighborhood, you should focus on the following sections:</p>	<p>If you are a City staff person or Developer planning for a new neighborhood, you should focus on the following sections:</p>
<p><i>Introduction - Goals and Objectives</i></p>	<p><i>Introduction - Goals and Objectives</i></p>
<p><i>Introduction - Further Assistance</i></p>	<p><i>New Neighborhoods</i></p>
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Goals and Objectives

The goal of this document is:

To improve neighborhood quality of life by reducing the negative impact of vehicular traffic in residential neighborhoods and by promoting safe and pleasant conditions for all users of local streets.

This goal can be met by pursuing the following objectives:

- Improving driver behavior, awareness and education;
- Reducing speeds and redistributing traffic volumes;
- Enhancing the neighborhood environment; and
- Promoting safety for all modes of transportation.

Implementation of this Policy requires a combination of several parallel strategies, “the Three E’s”:

- **EDUCATION** – Neighborhoods receive the necessary information and tools to be active participants in addressing their traffic concerns
- **ENGINEERING** – Traffic calming strategies that address community-identified traffic issues are developed and applied
- **ENFORCEMENT** – Police enforcement supports the traffic calming plan developed by residents, City Staff, and Public Officials

The function of the Policy in supporting the goals and objectives mentioned above is to provide a blueprint on how to obtain the goals by applying the strategies.



History of the Policy

The City of Winston-Salem brought together people from different geographic areas with different interests to develop this Policy. By using this approach, a comprehensive and realistic document could be produced to effectively address the traffic calming concerns of the Winston-Salem community.

Steering Committee Formation

The City of Winston-Salem started the development of the Policy by forming a Steering Committee. This committee was comprised of representatives from various City agencies, emergency services and representatives of concerned neighborhoods.

Kick-off Meeting

On March 4, 2002 a kick-off meeting was held to educate the Steering Committee about traffic calming tools, policies, successes and failures; to discuss the project approach for the development of the policy; and to allow the members to meet one another and express their ideas and concerns.

Steering Committee Members

Greg Turner
Assistant City Manager

Stan Polanis
Director, Winston-Salem DOT

Julie Poplin
Town & Country Neighborhood

Ken Keels
Kinnamon Road Neighborhood

Hayes McNeill
Ardmore Neighborhood

Jerry Grubbs
Winston-Salem Fire Department

Mark Geda
Stimmel Associates, P.A.

Brian Pilcher
Winston-Salem Police Department

Glenn Simmons
Winston/Forsyth Planning Board



Two day Charette

In late March 2002, a two-day charette was held to establish the values and concerns of the general community, to educate the community about traffic calming and to give the citizens of Winston-Salem first-hand knowledge of how they will play a part in the development of traffic calming in their neighborhood.

All citizens throughout the city were invited to attend the charette. Participants were organized into small groups and asked to brainstorm problems and solutions regarding traffic in their neighborhoods. Each participant was asked to note five values that they hold most important for their neighborhood. The most frequently noted values are presented below.

CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM NEIGHBORHOOD VALUES

- ✓ **Neighbors/Friends/Family;**
- ✓ **Clean and Beautiful;**
- ✓ **Safe;**
- ✓ **Trees;**
- ✓ **Walkable/Sidewalks; and**
- ✓ **Peaceful/Quiet**

Steering Committee Meeting

On May 7, 2002 a second Steering Committee meeting was held to discuss what was learned from the charrette and to discuss the proposed policy and the policies of other jurisdictions.

Key Points from the Second Steering Committee Meeting were:

- Speed limits are not an effective traffic calming tool
- All types of traffic calming tools should be considered
- Sidewalks would address many of the traffic concerns in residential areas
- Subdivision standards need to accommodate traffic calming tools
- Participation of area residents, including nearby businesses is vital to developing a successful traffic calming plan
- The Policy should include provisions for the use of sidewalks and street trees as traffic calming tools
- Educating drivers about dangers and impacts of speeding through residential areas is important
- The Policy should include a way to prioritize streets and neighborhoods
- Prioritization should be based on the speed of traffic relative to the street speed limit
- The Policy must define a time frame and way for a neighborhood to request that a traffic calming analysis be completed.
- All traffic calming projects should include the involvement of a Neighborhood Steering Committee and this committee will be responsible for coordinating neighborhood involvement
- Approval of at least 2/3 of all property owners within the impacted area and the approval of the neighborhood homeowners association is necessary
- All traffic calming plans must be reviewed and approved by the City/County services that service the neighborhood and by the Board of Aldermen



For Further Assistance

This Policy has been developed by reviewing existing policies, researching professional publications, and receiving input from the City of Winston-Salem's Steering Committee, residents and City Staff. For more information regarding the City of Winston-Salem Traffic Calming Policy, please contact Stan Polanis at the Winston-Salem Department of Transportation by telephone at 336-727-2707, by fax at 336-748-3370, or by email at STANP@cityofws.org; or visit our site on the world wide web at <http://www.ci.winston-salem.nc.us/DOT/trafficcalming.html>.

Policy Revisions

It is understood that this is a dynamic policy in that thresholds, criteria and standards need to be regularly updated to reflect the changing values of the community. The policy should be reviewed on an annual basis and minor revisions made based on the lessons learned about the policy in the previous year. Major revisions to the policy should not be addressed in this manner but should be considered as needed to address changes in the community's view of traffic calming.