

TITLE:			
TRAFFIC CALMING FOR RESIDENT INITIATED REQUESTS			
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Purpose and Context

The Town of Sidney recognizes that traffic speeds, volumes, and driver behaviour can significantly affect the safety, livability, and character of neighbourhood streets. Traffic calming measures are one tool available to encourage safe driving behaviour and support a more balanced use of public roadways.

Residents regularly raise concerns about speeding and shortcutting traffic. These concerns reflect a range of perspectives on how neighbourhood streets should function and can provide valuable feedback for staff consideration.

Competing priorities, finite resources, and the need to balance mobility, safety, and emergency access require that traffic calming decisions that are in response to resident requests be made through a transparent and data-informed process.

This Policy establishes that process.

Policy Objectives

This Policy is intended to:

- Improve safety for all road users, with particular attention to vulnerable users including pedestrians, cyclists, children, and seniors.
- Enhance neighbourhood livability and the quality of the public realm.
- Ensure a fair, transparent, and defensible process for evaluating requests within limited budgets.
- Support efficient and equitable allocation of limited municipal resources.
- Balance neighbourhood concerns with the broader transportation network needs of the community.

Guiding Principles

Decisions under this Policy are guided by the following principles:

- Decisions are data-driven, informed by measured conditions and professional engineering judgment.
- Demonstrated neighbourhood support is required before funds are committed.
- Priority is given to locations with sensitive land uses (such as schools or playgrounds) and higher exposure of vulnerable users.
- Emergency vehicle access is maintained at all times. No measure will proceed without consultation with the Fire Department.
- Traffic displacement effects on adjacent streets will be considered as part of the assessment process. Significant displacement risk may affect which traffic calming measures (if any) are selected, or how the project is prioritized.

- Measures are designed to contribute to quality urban design and, where possible, improve the overall aesthetics and liveability of the neighbourhood.
- Limited traffic calming funds are invested equitably across the Town over time.

Roles and Responsibilities

Residents

Residents identify traffic concerns and may initiate a formal request by coordinating and collecting the required level of initial support from neighbours through the application process. Residents are responsible for collecting signatures for the application; staff administer the neighbourhood support survey independently. Participation in consultation is a required step before any project proceeds to implementation.

Town Staff

Engineering and Public Works staff are responsible for receiving requests, collecting field data, applying the scoring framework, preparing prioritized project lists, and assigning funds from the limited capital budgets approved by Council. Staff exercise professional judgment in the interpretation of scoring criteria and site conditions. Both Engineering and Planning staff may be involved in the evaluation process depending on the specific location and extents.

Council

Council sets policy direction by approving the Traffic Calming Policy and approves overall capital funding through the annual budget process, which is not typically project-specific for traffic calming measures.

Expectations and Limitations

Only a limited number of traffic calming requests will result in the installation of physical measures. In many cases, observed conditions will not meet the minimum threshold score required for advancement. In others, concerns may be more appropriately addressed through targeted enforcement, public education, or signage.

Requests for reduced speed limits are evaluated under a separate process not addressed through this Policy. Staff can provide guidance on the speed limit review process on request.

Implementation of approved projects depends on available capital funding, which is frequently limited. Submission of an application, or achievement of a qualifying score, does not constitute a commitment to construct by the Town. Qualifying projects may be placed on a priority list for future consideration, should funding become available.

Where new roads are being designed or existing roads significantly reconfigured, the Town will seek to incorporate traffic calming considerations directly into the street design process, reducing the need for retroactive measures.

Note: Residents are encouraged to contact the Engineering & Public Works Department for preliminary information before submitting a formal application.

Eligible Roads

Traffic calming measures are considered only on roads that meet the eligibility criteria set out below. Staff will screen requests against these criteria before any assessment or evaluation

process is initiated. Road classifications referenced below are as defined in the Town's Transportation Master Plan.

Eligible Road Types

- Local residential streets.
- Collector roads (typically when located within or adjacent to a school zone or playground zone).

Ineligible Road Types

Traffic calming measures will not be considered on the following:

- Arterial roads with speed limits of 50 km/h.
- Lanes.
- Cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets less than 90 metres in length.

Where a request is received for an ineligible road type, staff will advise the applicant in writing and may identify alternative measures, such as enforcement referral, signage, or public awareness programs that may be applicable.

Initiation of a Request

Resident Application

A formal request for traffic calming must be supported by a formal application that includes the signatures and contact information for owners representing at least one-half (50%) of the affected properties on the subject street or within the identified study area. Strata Councils may represent the entire strata property for the purposes of the initial application. Residents are responsible for administering and submitting the formal application, including the collection of signatures. Staff will define the application area based on the nature and location of the concern.

Staff Initiation

Staff may introduce traffic calming measures at any time without a resident application where field observations, collision data, professional judgement, or network planning considerations identify a location as warranting traffic calming measures.

Scoring Framework

Requests that meet the minimum initiation application threshold will be evaluated using a 100-point scoring framework. The framework assesses six categories reflecting the safety conditions, traffic characteristics, and context of the subject location. Scores are based on measured data (where available) combined with professional engineering judgment. The scoring criteria are not intended to be rigid and staff may adjust scores within one or several categories based on professional judgement that considers other factors that may not be listed in the scoring criteria (Appendix A).

Category	Maximum Points	What It Measures
Speed	20	85th percentile speed vs. posted limit
Volume	10	Average daily traffic (ADT)
Safety	20	Incident history and near-miss reports (may be anecdotal)

Category	Maximum Points	What It Measures
Land Use	20	Proximity to schools, parks, seniors facilities
Vulnerable Users	20	Pedestrian and cyclist activity levels; ATP route designation
Network Function	10	Existing degree of shortcutting or through-traffic on the subject street
Total	100	

Detailed scoring criteria for each category are set out in **Appendix A**. Available traffic calming measures and their trade-offs are described in **Appendix B**.

Thresholds and Prioritization

Minimum Score

A minimum score of 40 out of 100 points is required for a location to be eligible for inclusion on the prioritized project list. Projects with higher scores will be prioritized first.

Projects Below Threshold

Locations that do not achieve the minimum score are not eligible for traffic calming measures at that time. Staff will communicate results to the applicant in writing and may recommend alternative measures where appropriate. Residents may resubmit an application in a future year if material conditions change, for example following a change in adjacent land use, a documented increase in speeds or volumes, or an emerging safety concern.

Prioritization

Eligible locations are ranked by score for inclusion in the capital program. Where scores are similar, prioritization also considers:

- Geographic equity across Town neighbourhoods.
- Clustering or network efficiency benefits.
- Availability of external grant funding or partnership opportunities (for example, provincial or federal active transportation programs such as VisionZero or ICIP).

Projects Above Threshold — Measure Selection

For locations that meet or exceed the minimum score, staff will identify the most appropriate traffic calming measure or combination of measures based on the specific characteristics of the subject street, the nature of the concern, available capital budget, and the traffic calming objectives identified through the scoring process. Not all qualifying locations will receive the same type of measure as selection reflects site conditions, emergency access requirements, network context, neighbourhood design, and cost-effectiveness. The recommended measure will be included in the preliminary plan presented to the neighbourhood for the support survey.

Emergency Access Consultation

As part of the measure selection process, staff will consult with the Fire Department to confirm that potential measures do not materially impair emergency vehicle access or response times. Where a proposed measure fails to receive Fire Department confirmation, staff will revise the preliminary plan to consider alternative measure types before proceeding. In the event that no suitable measure can be identified, the project will not advance to the neighbourhood support survey stage.

Network Impact Assessment

Before a specific traffic calming measure is selected, staff will assess the likely effect on traffic patterns in adjacent streets. Where a proposed measure has significant potential to displace traffic onto parallel residential streets, that displacement risk will be documented and may affect the selection of measure type or overall project priority ranking. Assessment will be based on available data and professional judgment based on network context.

Approval Process

Neighbourhood Support Survey

Before a project proceeds, a neighbourhood support survey will be conducted by the Town in the same area identified as part of the initial application. A final approved project will require formal support from a minimum of two-thirds (67%) of owners representing the affected properties on the subject street or within the identified study area to advance. Strata Councils will not be accepted as representing the entire strata property at the final support survey stage.

Project Approval

Projects meeting the threshold score and neighbourhood support requirements are placed on the prioritized project list maintained by Engineering and Public Works. Staff authorize projects for design and construction in order of priority, within the traffic calming capital budget approved annually by Council. Placement on the prioritized list does not guarantee construction in any given year. Projects may be held on the priority list across multiple budget cycles until funding becomes available. Timing depends on available budget, project readiness, and competing capital priorities.

Appendix A — Detailed Scoring Criteria

Scoring applies quantitative thresholds combined with professional judgment. Where field conditions fall between categories, staff will assign the most defensible score based on the totality of observed evidence. The scoring criteria are not intended to be rigid and staff may adjust scores within one or several categories based on professional judgement that considers other factors that may not be listed in the scoring criteria.

Speed (0–20 points)

Measured using the 85th percentile speed from a minimum 48-hour automated traffic count. For school zones, the applicable reduced speed limit during school hours applies.

Condition (85th Percentile vs. Posted Limit)	Points
At or below the posted speed limit	0
1–5 km/h above the posted limit	5
6–10 km/h above the posted limit	10
11–15 km/h above the posted limit	15
More than 15 km/h above the posted limit	20

Volume (0–10 points)

Measured as average daily traffic (ADT) from the same automated count. Volume thresholds will be reviewed periodically and adjusted if Sidney’s network conditions warrant recalibration.

Average Daily Traffic (ADT)	Points
Fewer than 750 vehicles/day	0
750 – 1,500 vehicles/day (Local Roads)	3
1,500 – 3,000 vehicles/day (Collector Streets)	6
More than 3,000 vehicles/day	10

Safety (0–20 points)

Based on ICBC collision records, police reports, and documented or anecdotal near-miss incidents for the most recent five-year period.

Safety Condition	Points
No documented incidents	0
Isolated incidents only	5
Documented near misses or minor collisions	10 - 15
Established collision pattern (frequency or severity)	20

Land Use (0–20 points)

Reflects the sensitivity of adjacent land uses and the likelihood of pedestrian-vehicle conflict arising from those uses.

Adjacent Land Use Context	Points
Residential only, no sensitive generators	0–5
Proximity to a park or open space	10
School frontage or seniors care facility	15
Multiple sensitive uses (e.g., school + park)	20

Vulnerable Users (0–20 points)

Reflects the level of pedestrian and cyclist activity observed in the corridor. Designation as an existing or future route in the Town's Active Transportation Plan (ATP) may also be considered: existing ATP routes score toward the higher end of this range; future-designated routes toward the lower end.

Vulnerable User Activity Level	Points
Minimal observed activity	0
Occasional pedestrian or cyclist use	5
Regular use by pedestrians or cyclists	10
High volume of pedestrians or cyclists	15
High volume with a predominance of vulnerable users (children, seniors, mobility-impaired)	20

Network Function (0–10 points)

Assesses whether the subject street is experiencing disproportionate through-traffic or shortcutting behaviour relative to its road classification. This criterion reflects existing conditions, not projected post-implementation effects.

Network Function Condition	Points
Local access traffic only – no through use	0
Some through traffic, consistent with classification	3
Evident shortcutting (observational)	6
Significant shortcutting (confirmed by data if possible)	10

Appendix B — Part 1: Traffic Calming Measures Toolkit

The following measures are available for use in Sidney’s traffic calming program. Not all measures are appropriate for every location. Selection is based on the nature of the concern, road classification, emergency access requirements, and network context. Measures may be used individually or in combination.

Measure	Description	Key Considerations
Speed Hump	A raised, rounded pavement feature spanning the full travel lane width, typically 3-4 m long.	Most widely used and cost-effective measure. Some negative effect on snow plow operations. May divert traffic to parallel streets if used in isolation.
Speed Cushion	A segmented speed hump with gaps between sections, allowing wider vehicles (fire apparatus, buses) to straddle the raised portion.	Preferred over speed humps where emergency access or transit routes are present. Slightly less effective than full-width humps at reducing passenger vehicle speeds.
Raised Crosswalk	A pedestrian crossing raised to the level of the adjacent sidewalk, functioning as both a speed control device and a priority crossing treatment.	Effective at school crossings and high-pedestrian locations. Drainage design is important. Higher unit cost than standard humps.
Traffic Circle (Mini-Roundabout)	A raised circular island placed at an intersection, requiring vehicles to travel counter-clockwise around the island.	Effective at multi-way intersections. Requires adequate turning radii for emergency vehicles and delivery trucks. May affect cyclist comfort. More costly to implement; intersection geometry is a determining factor.
Curb Extension (Bump-Out)	A horizontal extension of the curb into the travel lane, narrowing the road at pedestrian crossings or mid-block. Reduces crossing distance for pedestrians.	Improves pedestrian visibility and crossing safety. Can be piloted cost-effectively using flexible delineator posts before committing to permanent construction. May require drainage adjustments. Generally well-supported by cyclists.
Raised Median Island	An elevated median on the centreline of a two-way street, narrowing both travel lanes and requiring drivers to navigate around the island.	Effective at reducing travel speeds. Must maintain minimum lane widths for emergency access. Can be constructed at relatively low cost using poured-in-place methods; landscaping

Measure	Description	Key Considerations
		is optional and can be avoided to reduce maintenance.
Chicane	A series of curb extensions on alternating sides of a road, creating an S-curve that requires drivers to reduce speed to navigate.	Effective on longer straight segments. Displacement of parked vehicles may be required. Careful design needed to maintain emergency access widths.
Lane Narrowing	Reduction of travel lane width using edge line markings, flexible delineator posts, or planted medians.	Lower cost and less permanent than physical measures. Effectiveness depends on driver perception and method of delineation (paint versus physical posts). Can be implemented as a pilot before permanent measures.
Diverter	A barrier placed partially or fully across an intersection to prevent undesired through or turning movements. Used to address shortcutting.	Effective at eliminating shortcut routes. Can significantly alter neighbourhood traffic patterns; network displacement assessment is essential before implementation. Emergency access routes must be confirmed.
Daylighting / Increasing Setback	Restricting parking within a defined distance of an intersection or crosswalk to improve sightlines between drivers and pedestrians or cyclists approaching the conflict point. Achieved through signage and/or curb yellow paint.	Low cost and minimally disruptive to implement. Improves safety at specific conflict points without altering vehicle speeds or travel patterns more broadly. Loss of on-street parking may generate objections from adjacent property owners. Most effective when combined with other measures rather than as a standalone intervention.

Note: The selection of specific measures for an approved project is determined by staff at the design stage, in consultation with the Fire Department, based on site conditions and the objectives identified through the scoring and approval process.

Appendix B — Part 2: Related Traffic Safety Requests

Residents raising concerns about traffic speeds, volumes, or safety on their street sometimes have concerns that are better addressed through measures other than physical traffic calming measures. The following are common requests that fall outside the scope of this Policy but can be directed to Engineering & Public Works staff for separate consideration.

Stop Signs

Stop signs are not a traffic calming measure and are not considered under this Policy. Their installation is governed by traffic control warrant criteria established under the Motor Vehicle Act and related standards, which typically require minimum cross-traffic volumes to justify their use. Installing stop signs where warrants are not met can be ineffective, creates driver non-compliance, and may reduce safety rather than improve it. Residents wishing to request a stop sign review should contact Engineering & Public Works separately.

Crosswalks and Pedestrian Flashers

The installation of new marked crosswalks and/or pedestrian-activated flashers is evaluated separately from traffic calming requests. Crosswalk and flasher installations are guided by the Town's Active Transportation Plan and are subject to their own warrant and prioritization criteria. Residents wishing to request a new crosswalk or flasher should contact Engineering & Public Works separately.

Speed Limit Reductions

The process of evaluating a traffic calming request may lead staff to conclude that a reduction in the posted speed limit may be warranted on a specific street, either as an alternative to physical measures or in conjunction with them. Speed limit decisions are made by Council on the recommendation of staff. Where a speed limit review appears warranted based on the traffic calming assessment, staff will bring the matter forward to Council separately for consideration on a case-by-case basis.