1.0 Introduction

It is important to the Town of Orange Park to maintain the safety and integrity of our Town streets and assure residential qualities in our neighborhoods. In response to these objectives, the Town has developed a Traffic Calming Policy to address neighborhood traffic issues. The primary objective of traffic calming projects is to “pedestrianize” a street by reducing some or all of the following; excessive vehicle speeds, excessive cut-through traffic, adding additional pedestrian crossing facilities as needed, reduce crashes or crash potential, while minimizing impacts to residents. Unfortunately, the major impact of any traffic calming scheme is on the residents who experience any traffic calming treatments every time they leave home and return.

All standard engineering practices shall be followed, unless otherwise directed by Town Council.

This policy allows citizens to request the installation of Traffic Calming measures and establishes a procedure for making and evaluating such requests. The policy and the accompanying procedures specify how a request can be made and what procedures will be used to evaluate a traffic calming request. Because the implementation of a traffic calming project may affect streets besides the one being considered, this policy provides a means for property owners beyond the immediate area to participate in the process and to understand the impact on all affected streets prior to providing their feedback on the proposal. If a traffic calming project is considered desirable, the Town will work with the neighborhood to select the appropriate treatment depending upon the primary goal of the project.

The Public Works Department is responsible for the program application process and implementation of any approved traffic calming measures. The Public Works staff can be contacted at (904) 264-7411.

1.1 Traffic Calming Integration

Opportunities to pedestrianize a street by reducing vehicle speeds, reducing through vehicle volumes or any other reason, should be investigated before any road improvement project.

The Public Safety/Public Works Committee of Council should consider opportunities to pedestrianize any street that is being considered for repaving and every reconstruction of any primarily residential street within the Town for which the Town bears the primary responsibility for maintenance. If pedestrianization is considered desirable, then the Public Works Department will work through the Town Council, following the public involvement process.
2.0 Definitions

An *applicant* is the individual(s) designated as the point of contact for the neighborhood making the traffic calming request. At least 51 percent of the property owners fronting on the calming project area shall sign the petition.

An *application* will consist of a completed form provided by the Town, along with a petition in favor of a proposed traffic calming treatment.

*Critical service routes* consist of streets necessary for the provision of services to the community by Police and Fire.

*Neighborhood concurrence* is the percentage of homeowners in the Primary Affected Area that must concur with the placement of either a temporary or permanent traffic calming treatment.

A *Calming Project* is a street, or the portion with a multi-block street, for which actual traffic calming treatment is being considered. Other parts of a street which have alternative ingress and egress are not part of the calming project.

The *Primary Affected Area* consists of the private property fronting along the street being considered for a traffic calming treatment.

*Speed control measures* can include speed cushions, speed tables, traffic circles, center island narrowing, street closures, chicanes, chokers, bump-outs, midblock narrowing, intersection neck downs, etc.

*Street closure* refers to the partial or complete closure of a publicly-owned and maintained street to through traffic, typically implemented by the installation of a physical treatment or barrier designed to prevent vehicular traffic from passing, and may include warning signage, pedestrian access through the barrier, emergency vehicle access, and a vehicle turn-around, if required.

A *Traffic Calming Treatment* is a physical barrier or treatment or a geometric design feature installed for the purpose of reducing the speed and/or volume of vehicles traveling a roadway, reducing crashes or addition of enhanced pedestrian crossings.

*Residential Cut-through Traffic* means vehicular traffic passing through a residential area without stopping or without at least an origin or destination within the area. Cut-through traffic is identified by a license plate survey and travel time.
3.0 Process

This section describes the process to develop and implement a Traffic Calming Plan as follows:

3.1 Traffic Calming

Request

A request to develop a Traffic Calming Plan for a neighborhood can be initiated by a property owner, staff, or Town Council.

A request to develop a Traffic Calming Plan must be completed, signed by 51 percent of property owners fronting on proposed calming project, and filed with the Town Manager. The request must provide a preliminary description regarding the type and location of the traffic problem(s). This information will enable staff to conduct a field review, and, if needed, to organize some basic studies, speed and/or vehicle volume to determine the extent of the concerns. If necessary, staff will prepare for a preliminary neighborhood meeting.

See Exhibits A and B.

3.2 Data Collection

Data are collected to determine the magnitude of the traffic concerns. If a project is implemented, data should be collected after implementation to measure success and as a learning tool. Data collection will vary based on input provided by citizens during the preliminary neighborhood meeting. Data elements could include:

3.2.1 Speed. Vehicle speeds are recorded to quantify how many drivers exceed the speed limit and to what extent. On long streets it may be necessary to record vehicle speeds in several locations to determine the extent of the speeding.

3.2.2 Origination and destination surveys. These surveys collect data to determine the number of vehicles that are passing through a street or neighborhood without stopping to access a property. To collect this information, a person is stationed at the entry point and another is stationed at the exit point. The type, color, license plate number, direction of entry and time of day for each vehicle is recorded. The person at the exit point notes the same information for each exiting vehicle. This information is compiled and compared. When two vehicle details match, the entry and exit times are evaluated to determine if that vehicle entered and left the neighborhood within the normal travel time plus 2 minutes. The goal is to separate through traffic from traffic entering a street or neighborhood to pick up or drop off people or goods.
3.2.3 Crash information. Crash records from the Police Department will be used to determine the number and type of crashes that have occurred in the neighborhood within the last five years or more, where feasible.

3.2.4 Pedestrian generators. Schools, parks, community centers, public facilities, or other destinations that attract pedestrians will be noted to provide information for Section 4.

3.2.5 Pedestrian counts. The number of pedestrians at a selected site(s) during a specific period of time may be counted to verify pedestrian destinations.

3.2.6 Sidewalks and pathways. Streets within the neighborhood will be assessed to determine where sidewalks or pathways are in place to provide information for Section 4.

3.2.7 Bicyclist counts. The number of bicyclists at a selected site(s) during a specific period of time may be counted.

Data collected will be compiled by Town staff into simple graphics for distribution to the public.

4.0 Data Elements

The purpose of assigning points to different traffic problems is to aid decision makers in assessing the intensity of each source of traffic issues in any potential project. A single very high score will affirm a need for its calming, while multiple moderate scores may together indicate a need for calming even though the different sources may call for different treatments.

Points

Basis for Points

Speed

0 to 30

Extent that the average speed of speeding vehicles exceeds the speed limit; one point assigned for every 1 mph over speed limit.

Cut-Through Volume

0 to 25

1 point for every 5 vehicles that cut-through the neighborhood during the AM or PM peak hour on an average day.
Crashes

0 to 15

1 point for every nonfatal crash and 5 points for every fatal crash recorded by the Police Department in the last 5 years.

Pedestrian Generators

0 to 20

5 points for every school, park, community center, library, or other public facility within the impact area.

Sidewalks or pathways

0 to 10

5 points if there are not continuous sidewalks or pathways on one side of all local residential streets or both sides of all collectors; 10 points if there are no sidewalks.

5.0 Council Vote

Council shall review the request, data collection, and data elements and will decide whether the project should move forward with neighborhood workshops and plans development.

If Council approves the request, the next steps will be to have a neighborhood workshop and begin the preliminary plan process.

If Council denies the request, the applicant will be informed via U.S. mail that after Council’s review there was not sufficient evidence to support the implementation of a traffic calming device. An applicant may not file a repeat request for 12 months.

6.0 Neighborhood Workshop 1

After reviewing the Traffic Calming Plan Request and affected area, Town staff will contact the affected property owners in the primary affected area by mail to schedule the initial neighborhood workshop. This will provide an opportunity for citizens to identify problems, establish objectives, learn about potential solutions, and work together to create a conceptual traffic plan. The agenda will include:

Host: Welcome, Introductions, and Overview of Concerns

Staff: Traffic Calming Presentation explaining the program purpose, proposed project boundaries, procedures, funding options, results of the data collection, possible outcomes and a range of suitable traffic calming treatments. Staff will talk about legal implications,
traffic calming myths and the negative impacts of any traffic calming on residents. Staff will explain when and how enforcement, signs, or other preliminary steps are feasible. Staff will respond to questions and work with property owners to explore their options.

Property owners will then work in groups over plans of the project area to select and locate the various traffic calming treatment they believe will be most effective.

7.0 Preliminary Plans

Following the neighborhood meeting the Town will prepare a preliminary plan that reflects the conceptual plan developed during the neighborhood workshop that reflects the advice and wishes of the neighborhood. The concepts must undergo an engineering evaluation to refine the ideas, to ensure the measures proposed by the community are appropriate for the locations selected and objectives defined, and that the regulatory requirements can be met. The Police Department, Fire Department, and other Town or regulatory entities will be included in the plan review as required. When necessary, staff may recommend a different treatment or placement.

Other factors to be considered during the concept plan preparation include:

- Scheduled street or utility work
- Other construction projects
- Other engineering considerations
- Fire Department priorities
- Police and Sheriff’s Department priorities
- Consistency with the General Plan
- Consistency with the Bikeway Master Plan
- Consistency with the Recreational Trails Plan
- Consistency with other adopted Town Plans

8.0 Neighborhood Workshop 2

After staff review of the preliminary plan, which may include one or more alternatives, it will be presented at the second neighborhood workshop. At this meeting, staff will present the plan with explanation of how it compares to the property owners’ plan, reasons for any variations/additions, and, following a discussion time, seek a vote of approval from the property owners. The goal of this meeting is to achieve a consensus that the layout is
acceptable to the neighborhood. Reaching an agreement could require compromises or changes in the preliminary layout. If agreement cannot be reached during the meeting, a follow-up meeting will be scheduled where revised layouts will be presented. After this meeting a cost estimate will be prepared.

8.1 Obtain Signatures

Town to seek 67 percent approval of traffic plans by property owners in the primary affected area.

1 response per household.

8.2 Council Approval

Following property owner approval, staff will present a package to Town Council on the proposed implementation. If Council votes to move forward, then appropriate funding will be identified or the project will be placed in the Capital Improvement Plan. If Council votes not to move forward, the applicant will be notified via U.S. mail.

8.3 Final Design

Installation

Construction plans will be developed after the project is approved and funded. In some cases, the plans may call for phased implementation, with early strategies that do not require construction.

9.0 Neighborhood Workshop 3

If the plans have been changed since Workshop 2 or if landscaping is included, then there will be a third workshop for property owners to review the construction plans and give input in the development of landscaping plans.

10.0 Reservation of Authority

The authority to issue or revise this policy is reserved to the Town Council of Orange Park.

W. Scott Land
Mayor of the Town of Orange Park