

Guide to Traffic Calming in Strathcona County

The guide summarizes the process for a resident-initiated traffic calming request. Traffic calming is a significant undertaking that involves the engagement of many stakeholders.

NOTE: The traffic calming process is a lengthy one, generally taking 1-2 years from initiation to construction.

Phase 1: Initiation, Screening, Resident Support Survey, Ranking

Process Initiation

A resident or resident group can formally request traffic calming in their neighbourhood via a letter (hard copy or by email) to Transportation and Agriculture Services. By making this request, the resident or resident group is agreeing to be the Community Ambassador for the traffic calming project. Ambassadors will partner with Transportation and Agriculture Services throughout the process.

The role of the Community Ambassador is crucial to the success of the traffic calming process. Strathcona County will facilitate the traffic calming process, but traffic calming projects are rarely successful unless they are community-driven.

Residents are encouraged to partner with neighbours to pursue traffic calming. Your Councillor is also a great resource and champion for your neighbourhood, as they have established lines of communication within their wards, such as newsletters and email lists.

Preliminary Screening

Upon receiving an official request for traffic calming, Transportation and Agriculture Services will conduct a preliminary screening to ensure the issue is appropriate for the Traffic Calming Policy. Where suitable speed and volume data are unavailable, the County will collect the data necessary to quantify the problem.

If the roadway meets screening criteria, County staff will proceed to establish the study area. The study area establishes which residents will be affected and must be engaged with regards to traffic calming. Generally, local roads will have study areas bound by collector roads and collector roads will have study areas bound by arterial roads.

Resident Support Survey

Once the study area has been established, affected residents will be surveyed to determine if there is support to move forward with the traffic calming process. At least 60% of the affected residents (one response per household) must indicate they are “in support” with a minimum return rate of 30% in order to move forward.

If the required level of support is not achieved, the traffic calming process will be terminated, and the study area will not be eligible for reconsideration under the Traffic Calming Policy for a period of three years.

Ranking

If there is a sufficient level of neighbourhood support for traffic calming, the project will be ranked against other proposed projects in the County based on speed and volume conditions in the area, level of community support and maintenance schedules.

When funding is available, the project with the highest score from the Points Matrix will be undertaken first. Other projects will remain on the list until funding becomes available. New projects will be added and the list reprioritized.

Residents and the County can use driver education solutions to address the adverse traffic issue while neighbourhoods wait for traffic calming funding. Driver education increases communication about driving behaviour in the neighbourhood without the implementation of physical traffic calming measures. The County maintains a toolbox of education options, such as driver feedback signs.

Phase II: Traffic Calming Plan Development and Support Survey

When funding is available, traffic calming plans will be developed for the highest ranked project. A traffic calming plan provides the community with a visual representation (conceptual design) of the proposed placement of traffic calming features. The proposed traffic calming features will be designed in accordance with Strathcona County Design and Construction Standards (2011), guidelines and recommendations contained in the *Canadian Guide to Neighbourhood Traffic Calming (1998)*, engineering judgement, and the experience of staff. A minimum of two alternative plans will be developed wherever possible.

The neighbourhood will be given opportunities to provide feedback on the designs. Other stakeholders, such as school boards will also have the opportunity to provide input. Based on feedback, engineering staff will modify the conceptual designs as necessary, while conforming to design and construction standards.

Traffic Calming Plan Support Survey

Final traffic calming plans will be presented to residents. Residents will be provided with information about the proposed designs, a summary of traffic issues, goals of traffic calming, potential impacts of traffic calming measures, and their implementation. Residents will be asked whether they are “in support”, “neutral” or “not in support” of the traffic calming plan, with a space for feedback. Residents will also be asked to indicate their preferred option for traffic calming

The level of response must meet at least 30% of the issued surveys returned. A minimum of 70% of residents in the study area must be in favour of one of the proposed designs. If the required level of support is not achieved, the traffic calming process will be terminated, and the study area will not be eligible for reconsideration under the Traffic Calming Policy for a period of three years.

Phase III: Detailed Design, Construction and Evaluation

When a preferred design has been chosen by the community, County staff will carry out detailed designs for the preferred traffic calming option. The detailed design will consider sidewalks, utilities, placement of bus stops, landscaping, signs, drainage, snow removal and maintenance. The design will be completed to a level of detail that considers the relevant requirements outlined in the Strathcona County Design and Construction Standards (2011).

In most cases, implementation and construction of the traffic calming plan will be completed in conjunction with scheduled improvements in the neighbourhood. Priority will be given to communities that are scheduled for roadway rehabilitation in the near future to avoid a long delay between the development of a traffic calming plan and its implementation. Implementation of traffic calming measures in conjunction with existing overlay programs ensures that construction is undertaken in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

Follow-up monitoring and evaluation of the traffic calming measures will be completed within two years of implementation. The same studies used in the data collection to complete the Points Matrix will be repeated. If applicable, studies will also be undertaken on surrounding streets to ensure that the surrounding road network has not been negatively impacted by the traffic calming measures.