TRAFFIC CALMING

Traffic calming refers to geometric strategies to reduce the volume or speed of vehicles traveling on a street. Traffic calming design elements can be implemented as part of Vital Streets projects as a component of a self-regulating design, or alongside other design features that also reduce speeds, such as street trees, pedestrian lighting, and landscaping.

Traffic calming measures may be used to retrofit existing streets experiencing volumes or speeds that are not in line with the form and function of the street network. In this way, they may function as pilot projects that demonstrate a proof of concept and educate drivers and the public on how the street could function with reduced vehicle speeds or traffic volumes. If the results are favorable, a future Vital Street project could provide more permanent and integrated design solutions.

Speed control elements may be accompanied by operational strategies to reduce vehicles speeds such as targeted enforcement efforts or speed display signs.

Traffic calming should be evaluated and possibly implemented on a neighborhood or district scale as volume or speed changes on one segment may adversely impact the surrounding streets. Traffic calming installations should not divert traffic to other Neighborhood Residential streets, but may divert vehicles to higher order streets (Network Residential, Crosstown Connector, and Urban Center). The potential impacts of traffic diversion should be evaluated for all traffic calming installations.

With all traffic calming devices, accommodation of emergency response vehicles, snow plows, or garbage trucks should be a consideration. Delays to emergency response vehicles should be minimized by the appropriate placement and design of traffic calming devices. In some cases, certain traffic calming devices may not be appropriate. For example, vertical traffic calming devices should not be used on expressway, truck, or transit routes.