

## **CITY OF VISTA TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM**

The purpose of the Vista Traffic Calming Program is to reduce speeds of motorists driving through residential neighborhoods. The program does not apply to non-residential zones or streets with posted speeds greater than 25 MPH.

Implementation of the program requires involvement of residents within the impacted neighborhood. It is critical that the majority of residents are heard before decisions are made that could affect their daily lives. Traffic calming procedures should be implemented that are effective, yet do not create such a burden that they have to be removed. Also, cost versus effect must be considered by the City prior to installation of devices.

The Vista Traffic Calming Program is briefly described in Attachment "A" and will serve as an informational flyer for residents. As with programs adopted by other cities, the Vista Traffic Calming Program consists of a phased approach. Each of the four phases requires heavy participation by residents of the neighborhood prior to implementation. Each succeeding phase becomes more aggressive toward speeding vehicles. Optional traffic calming "tools" include curb pop-outs, canalization islands, traffic circles and speed humps. These devices must follow guidelines for approval as outlined in City of Vista Policy 600-07 (Criteria and Procedures for Installation of Speed Humps) which includes a neighborhood petition requiring 75% approval. These devices must be scheduled through the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Knowing that some residents will be more involved than others, it is critical that a petition be signed by all residents before the program becomes more aggressive. Devices that are requested by some are often opposed by others. All devices must meet with the approval of the Sheriff's and Fire Departments in order to maintain adequate emergency response times. Except for signing and striping changes, all will require approval of the City Council. For purposes of funding, these devices will be placed into the Capital Improvement Program and prioritized with other projects on a citywide basis.

Vista's traffic calming program includes a process by which most citizens within a neighborhood provide valuable input. Participation by residents should be continuous before, during and after implementation of the traffic calming program for that neighborhood. This allows an on-going dialogue among the residents, and between residents and City staff. For this reason guidelines for the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program have been prepared and are essential for the successful implementation of the traffic calming program. These guidelines are described in Attachment "B" and generally describe formation of a core committee to represent the neighborhood and organize meetings, while maintaining a commitment from the neighborhood to monitor and maintain the traffic calming program.

# VISTA TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM

# ATTACHMENT "A"

The Vista City Council has established the Vista Traffic Calming Program which employs a comprehensive evaluation and coordination process with heavy citizen input to identify the problems and discuss possible solutions.

The Vista Traffic Calming Program requires the implementation of a Vista Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program. City traffic engineering staff evaluates neighborhood speeding to determine if the speeding traffic is "internal" or "cut-through". Also, the street itself is evaluated to identify existing conditions such as sight distance restrictions, daily traffic volume, length and width of the street, and other physical characteristics.

Results of this evaluation help the city to determine if a calming measure is warranted and what type of measure should be implemented.

There are four phases to the program:

*Phase One* – pass out traffic safety pamphlets, increase police enforcement, use radar speed trailer.

*Phase Two* – Install new traffic signs and pavement legends, stripe narrow travel lanes, implement neighborhood traffic watch program, distribute yard signs (City assisted).

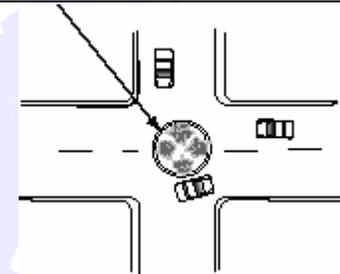
*Phase Three* (requires neighborhood petition) – temporary simulation of improvements such as channelization islands, curb pop-outs and traffic circles.

*Phase Four* (requires neighborhood petition) – examples include permanent channelization islands, traffic circles, curb pop-outs, and speed humps.

Street closures will not be considered. Actual construction of Phase Three or Phase Four of the Vista Traffic Calming Program requires that a neighborhood petition be circulated. The petition must show that at least 75% of affected residents are in favor of the measures. Also, City Council action is required to approve and prioritize construction within the city's Capital Improvement Program.

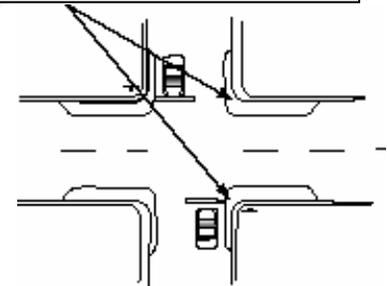
### Landscaped, Traffic Circles

Raised, concrete traffic circle with landscaping slow traffic by narrowing field of travel.



### Curb Pop-Outs

Curb pop-outs slow traffic by narrowing field of travel at uncontrolled intersections.



# ATTACHMENT ‘B’

## THE VISTA NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC WATCH PROGRAM

When it comes to speeding and other traffic safety concerns in residential neighborhoods, enforcement is often the first and best line of defense. However, additional traffic signs are what some residents need to feel safer against speeding in their neighborhood.

Unfortunately, traffic signs do not always make neighborhood streets safer. As part of the Vista Traffic Calming Program, the City of Vista has a process to determine if additional measures should be taken to “calm” traffic. The term “traffic calming” is often used to describe a physical device in the roadway designed to passively force traffic to slow down, modify driver behavior and enhance pedestrian safety. Most traffic calming devices are initially implemented on a temporary basis and evaluated for a period of at least six months to one year before construction of a permanent device.

In some neighborhoods, installation of physical traffic calming devices is not always warranted. In many cases, people that are doing the speeding are often our friends and neighbors. While most people speed out of habit rather than a conscious decision to break the law, the best long-term solution to getting drivers to slow down is increased safety awareness. The Vista Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program, which is supported by the City of Vista and the Vista Sheriff’s Department, is aimed at bringing residents together to work cooperatively among themselves, and with staff from the City and the Sheriff’s Department to increase driver safety awareness through education and enforcement. The program keeps residents thinking about how they’re driving and of the potential hazards of neighborhood speeding. More importantly, through the Vista Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program, residents can remind each other of their mutual responsibility – particularly to the children living in the neighborhood area.

Neighborhood speeders come in two forms: The *Internal* speeder and the *Cut-Through* speeder. Internal speeders are motorists that speed on neighborhood streets that do not provide any significant connection between two major roads. Internal speeders often reside within the neighborhood. Cut-Through speeders are motorists that cut-through your neighborhood to get from one major roadway to another in order to get from point A to point B. Cut-through speeders reside in other neighborhood areas. As a participant of Traffic Watch, you will have the knowledge and resources to notify and report repeat traffic speed and safety offenders.

### ***HOW DO WE START A NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC WATCH PROGRAM?***

The first step in starting a Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program in your area is to call the City of Vista Traffic Engineering Division at (760) 639-6116. Request that the city traffic engineering staff evaluate your neighborhood street for possible traffic calming. Also, request that you be provided a copy of the City of Vista Traffic Calming

Plan. The plan explains the city's implementation policy of physical traffic calming devices and the support available to you for starting a Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program in your area. The following steps show you how to organize a Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program in your area:

### **I. Organize a Preliminary Meeting**

- a. Arrange a small, informal preliminary meeting of several neighbors who are concerned about speeding and traffic safety and are willing to assist in setting up the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program. These neighbors could also form a core group or committee for the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program.
- b. At this preliminary meeting, discuss the need for a Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program, the expected results, and problem areas. Obtain definite commitments of those in attendance to continue service/involvement in the program.
- c. Choose a site for the first formal Neighborhood Traffic Watch meeting. It is important to hold the meeting in the home of a neighbor to encourage an informal atmosphere. If this is not possible, consider the following possibilities:
  - Neighborhood School
  - Church
  - Community Center
- d. Plan the meeting far enough in advance to give everyone adequate notice. Schedule it so that those who wish to attend will be able to do so. Often, the best time for meeting is in the evening. Don't be disappointed if everyone does not show up. While 100% participation is desirable, it is not required for implementation of the program.
- e. Circulate the Vista Traffic Calming Program brochure to neighbors with an announcement of when and where the first Neighborhood Traffic Watch meeting will be held.
- f. If possible, record the names of those individuals who wish to participate in the program.
- g. Prepare a meeting agenda:
  - Purpose & brief background.
  - Have all in attendance introduce themselves (it may be prudent to have a sign in sheet to record name, address, phone number and a specific traffic concern).
  - Introduce law enforcement officer and/or city staff (if in attendance).
  - Discuss neighborhood traffic safety problems.
  - Explain benefits of the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program and how it is to be organized.
  - Select a Neighborhood Traffic Watch coordinator.
  - Select Block or Street captains (representing one block, several blocks, a road, etc., depending on geographical size and number of residents).

*Note: The steps described above can vary depending upon the individual needs of your neighborhood.*

## 2. Conduct First Formal Neighborhood Traffic Watch Meeting

- a. Be sure to contact the City of Vista traffic staff to advise them of your plans and invite them to participate in the first formal neighborhood meeting. At that time, city staff will make arrangements for a representative of the Vista Sheriff's Department to also attend the meeting. Allow staff at least two to three weeks advance notice. You may call Husam Hasenin, Principal Engineer, at (760) 726-1340, ext.1383 and/or send an e-mail to [hhasenin@cityofvista.com](mailto:hhasenin@cityofvista.com).
- b. Request that a presentation be given on traffic calming and what residents can do to increase traffic safety awareness and eliminate speeding.
- c. At the meeting, follow the agenda developed at the preliminary meeting.
- d. Obtain a commitment from the City and Vista Sheriff's Department to work with the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program by agreeing to do the following:
  - o Provide information on traffic speed trends and traffic volumes, which may affect the neighborhood.
  - o When possible, provide the Traffic Watch group with informational handouts and other resource material.
  - o When possible, provide a general traffic safety awareness presentation to the Traffic Watch group.
  - o Provide training to residents so they can assess their own traffic safety strengths and weaknesses and then take appropriate action.
- e. Explain benefits to the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program and how it is to be organized.
- f. Select a Neighborhood Traffic Watch Coordinator and Street/Block Captains (representing one block, several blocks, a road, etc., depending on geographical size and number of residents).
- g. If there is a homeowners association representing the neighborhood, ask the appropriate committee to study the development of the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program and include it in its regular meeting agenda.
- h. Discuss ways in which the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program can be reinforced with regular meetings, informational materials, warning signage, bumper stickers and decals.
- i. Try to discuss all of the traffic safety issues and concerns and attempt to reach an overall consensus as to what the issues are and how they may be addressed. Allow participants to freely express their opinions, fears and expectations. Develop a "team attitude".

## 3. Conduct a Second Neighborhood Traffic Watch Meeting

- a. Give the purpose and brief background for the meeting. The purpose should be to reinforce the roles and actions of all affected and involved residents, the City and law enforcement.
- b. Announce the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Committee (could be same neighbors that attended preliminary meeting).
- c. Have all in attendance introduce themselves.

- d. Introduce law enforcement officer/City staff (in attendance). Listen to their suggestions. Collectively discuss ways in which you keep an eye out on the streets.
- e. Request installation of Neighborhood Traffic Watch Signs by the City and explain the purpose of the various community and neighborhood street signs used by the City of Vista.
- f. If available, distribute informational materials.
- g. Discuss neighborhood traffic safety problems. Allow participants to freely express their opinions, fears and expectations. Develop a “team attitude”.
- h. Develop methods for a collective effort to enforce traffic safety and inform neighborhood speeders (see “Some General Guidelines”).
- i. Again, explain benefits of the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program and how it is to be organized.
- j. Set up a schedule that is convenient for everyone. Two or three meetings every six months or include at homeowners association meetings.

### ***SOME GENERAL GUIDELINES***

#### **1. Follow-up Activity: Neighborhood Traffic Watch Committee Guidelines**

- a. The Neighborhood Traffic Watch Coordinator and the block/road captains are the most crucial positions. They provide leadership and coordination and serve on the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Committee, which has the following responsibilities:
  - o To maintain and expand the program to include as many residents (and adjacent neighborhoods – especially for “cut-through” traffic) as possible.
  - o To set forth objectives and strategies in cooperation with law enforcement that will make neighborhood streets safer.
  - o To plan and implement programs that will be beneficial and appropriate for the neighborhood.
  - o To assess the success of the program and provide feedback to residents, law enforcement, and the City of Vista.

#### **2. Neighborhood Traffic Watch Coordinator Guidelines**

- a. Serves as liaison between the Sheriff’s Department/City of Vista and the neighborhood.
- b. Seeks resources and materials and makes them available to block captains.
- c. Passes information obtained from the Sheriff’s Department/City of Vista to block captains.
- d. Passes information from block captains to Sheriff’s Department/City of Vista, i.e., chronic speeders in neighborhood, problems and concerns.
- e. Maintains a master list of Traffic Watch members.
- f. Arranges neighborhood traffic safety and speed reduction programs in conjunction with Sheriff’s Department/City of Vista. Such programs should be based upon input received at prior meetings.
- g. Obtains signage proclaiming that the neighborhood has a Traffic Watch program.

- h. Provides reports to the homeowners association, if such exists.
- i. Supervises the activities of the block captains.
- j. Establishes subcommittees to develop specific traffic safety and speed reduction projects.

### **3. Block/Road Captains Guidelines**

- a. Serve as liaison between residents and coordinator.
- b. Recruit new Traffic Watch members, striving for 100% participation in the block or blocks within your neighborhood.
- c. Assist coordinator in planning meetings and activities.
- d. Maintain a list of participating members, including name, address, work and home phone numbers, vehicle types and license numbers.
- e. Make maps of neighborhood area showing the name, address and telephone number of every participant's house of apartment.
- f. Distribute block map to each participating member.
- g. Notify residents of meetings and training sessions.
- h. Designate work assignments as needed:
  - o Fund raising, e.g., purchase signs, written materials, etc.
  - o Walking patrol
  - o Speed radar operations and/or
  - o Other appropriate assignments

### **4. Resident Participation Guidelines**

- a. Get acquainted with your neighbors, know their names and be able to identify them and their vehicles by sight.
- b. Maintain your map with names, addresses and phone numbers in an easily accessible location.
- c. Regularly attend neighborhood meetings. They are for your benefit.
- d. Do not allow small children to play in the street.
- e. Do not speed, and drive as safely as possible.
- f. Notify or report neighbors that continue unsafe driving and/or speeding.

### **5. Every Day Guidelines**

- a. Be observant. Keep watch on your street and report unsafe driving behavior to neighbors or Sheriff's Department when appropriate.
- b. Record license numbers and description of vehicles that continue unsafe driving.
- c. Educate your children and instill respect for traffic safety.
- d. Do not try to make citizen arrests. Being a good witness is more important.

## ***ACTIVITIES AND TOOLS***

### **1. Patrols**

- a. Should only be organized after discussions with Sheriff's Department/City Traffic Engineering staff.

- b. Can be accomplished by sitting in your driveway or front yard, walking, bicycle or motor vehicle.
- c. In most cases, one should only observe and report and take no direct action. It may be better to let your block captain or Neighborhood Traffic Watch Coordinator notify the traffic safety offender through letter correspondence. You may also record the license plate numbers of repeat traffic safety offenders and turn them into the Sheriff's Department, who in turn will send a notice to the address of the speed offender.

## **2. Speed Watch**

- a. Upon request, city staff will monitor speeds before and after implementation of Traffic Calming Program.
- b. You may request the Sheriff's Department's mobile speed radar trailer, which displays how fast motorists are driving over the posted speed limit. The speed trailer is an excellent visual deterrent and facilitates continued traffic safety awareness. You can call and request the speed trailer from the Sheriff's Department at (760) 940-4556.

## **3. Telephone Tree**

- a. Each individual in the Traffic Watch group is assigned to contact a specific number of other neighbors to pass on general information.
- b. Each resident must provide his/her block/road captain with sufficient information about his/her household to make the system effective.
- c. Traffic Watch participants should notify the block captain or Neighborhood Traffic Watch Coordinator of an observed speeder/safety violator, who in turn, notifies the traffic violator of his/her unsafe driving.

## **4. Neighborhood Traffic Watch and Keep Kids Alive Drive 25 Yard Signing**

- a. Yard signs could be used to keep area motorists informed of the traffic speeding concern.
- b. Yard signs provide a strong visual impression to motorists that say, "This is not a street for speeding!" and modifies driver behavior through increased awareness.
- c. The yard signs could be used in block party setting in conjunction with other attention getting resources such as homemade signs, police, radar trailer, etc.

## **5. Keep Kids Alive Drive 25 Window Warning Decals and Bumper Stickers**

- a. Can be used to identify homes and motor vehicles belonging to the Neighborhood Traffic Watch Program.
- b. You can order your own Keep Kids Alive products on the internet at [www.keepkidsalive.com](http://www.keepkidsalive.com)

## **6. Neighborhood Map**

- a. Can be used as a guide to report information to law enforcement, fire, rescue or other emergency personnel.

- b. Informs residents of addresses and name of their neighbors.

### ***CREATIVE APPROACHES TO SLOWING DOWN NEIGHBORHOOD SPEEDERS***

1. **Leave your car at home.** Encouraging your family and friends to ride their bicycle, walk, or take the bus/light rail, will reduce the traffic volume and speeding in your neighborhood.
2. **Write letters to the editor or your neighborhood and community papers.** Let drivers know that speeding threatens our sense of community and personal well being.

### ***NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES***

There are a number of creative ways to remind people to observe speed limits. Any action that reminds people to watch their speed will affect potential speeders:

- Circulate traffic safety flyers throughout the neighborhood, telling people to drive more responsibly.
- Walk your neighborhood and place informative door hangers on nearby homes.
- A block party around the theme “Slow Down” gets people thinking and talking about their driving habits.

