



Adams County Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program (NTCP)

Last Updated 3-21-2024

Introduction

Traffic in residential areas is a concern throughout Adams County as well as in most other communities across the nation. Traffic in neighborhoods can affect the quality of life for residents, bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers.

For these reasons, the NTCP was developed to help residents work with the county to implement various traffic calming elements. The program emphasizes the partnership between residents and the county and is set up to objectively respond to reports of speeding or excessive volumes on residential and collector streets. Under this program, traffic calming implies the use of education, enforcement, and/or visual and physical engineering.

Goals of the Program

Adams County has adopted an overall vision to be ***the most innovative and inclusive county in America for all families and businesses***. There is also a Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) goal to support ***quality of life so our residents feel safe and protected in their neighborhoods***. The NTCP works within the overall county vision and goals and has established the following guiding principles:

The vision of the traffic calming program is to:

- Improve neighborhood livability and create safe and comfortable conditions.

There are several sub-goals to accomplish the vision:

- Improve compliance with speed limits, stop signs, etc.
- Educate residents and encourage resident involvement in solutions.
- Implement various calming measures.
- Collaborate with enforcement.
- Ensure fair, equitable, and efficient use of county and/or resident resources.

Program Overview and Funding

Program elements fall within four categories: education, tier 1 engineering – visual elements, tier 2 engineering – physical elements, and enforcement. These categories are intended to be utilized in a sequential process with the least complex and least costly elements to be applied first. The use of tier 2 elements should only be undertaken when lesser actions have not produced the desired results, the

road is deemed eligible through data and prioritization and when supported by the preponderance of residents in the area.

Education: The first step in addressing traffic issues, especially on local residential roads, is to provide awareness of neighborhood concerns. This includes yard signs, brochures, FAQs, staff outreach, neighborhood meetings, and more.

Tier 1 Engineering – Visual Elements: After education actions have been undertaken and ongoing concerns remain, a neighborhood can request further countermeasures. Following a staff evaluation, items may include speed limit signs, pavement markings (including crosswalks where appropriate), or the placement of temporary driver feedback signs.

Tier 2 Engineering – Physical Elements: This is the most costly and complex countermeasure in the traffic calming program. If previous steps have not been satisfactory, a neighborhood may choose to apply for these Tier 2 elements. Implementation of physical elements includes altering the roadway using horizontal tools, such as curb extensions, or vertical tools, such as speed tables, that result in lower vehicle speeds and/or volumes. The process requires an engineering evaluation for appropriateness, a consensus building process within the neighborhood to support the proposal, and prioritization amongst other requests if needed due to available funding.

The program also includes an evaluation component that summarizes the number of requests and what was completed within each tier. Feedback from residents will be welcome and, for Tier 2 implementations, a before and after study will identify the effectiveness in addressing the issues.

Enforcement: This is also an important component of traffic calming. This step involves Adams County Public Works staff coordinating with the Community Safety & Well-Being Department (CSWB) and the Adams County Sheriff's Office. Locations where there are consistent and ongoing concerns by residents will be identified and data will be shared with code compliance and county law enforcement such that targeted enforcement can be completed when staff is available. The enforcement element is somewhat separate from the Education, Tier 1, and Tier 2 elements since it is a partnership with other county departments and offices and is dependent on available staff.

Program Funding

The program is funded through the Adams County Public Works Department. There is no cost to residents for the application or implementation of any traffic calming features. If more applications for physical construction elements are approved than funding is available for implementation, a prioritization process is used to determine which projects are constructed first.

Program Intent and Limitations

Traffic calming implementation combines data-based details such as travel speeds and volumes and a general sense of comfort or livability in a neighborhood. Therefore, the calming program seeks context-sensitive solutions specific to a street and surrounding neighborhood. What is appropriate or needed on a local internal street may be very different than what applies to a higher speed or higher volume collector street.

Intent: The overarching intent of the program is to support residents in their interests by offering a wide range of tools. These tools will be implemented in an appropriately phased and escalating plan of action. All residents and all streets are eligible for some type of countermeasure.

For neighborhoods escalating to Tier 2 physical elements, it is critical to first understand the conditions and context of a given street to then undertake a stepped approach. Only after less costly and complex actions have been exhausted should the physical elements be considered given their cost, disruption, and permanence – and then only with the support of the preponderance of nearby residents.

Limitations: While traffic calming is a countywide interest, there are limitations to where elements can be implemented and the outcomes that various countermeasures will produce. Those requesting action should have realistic expectations as to what can be achieved.

This program focuses on local, residential neighborhood streets or collector roadways within/between neighborhoods with characteristics that place them most at risk from adverse motor vehicle speeds and volumes. There are county roads such as main arteries or primary emergency response routes that, due to their function within the roadway system, are not eligible for Tier 2 – Engineering Physical Elements. Similarly, some collector roadways may be ineligible for Tier 2 – Engineering Physical Elements due to the roadway function and area context it serves.

Sometimes, what may seem like obvious solutions are not viable due to accepted traffic regulations, codes, and/or sound engineering practices. The county must abide by local, state, and federal requirements and cannot approve signage, markings, or infrastructure that are not permitted under such standards.

It is also important to recognize the implementation of some of these tools may not be viewed as universally positive and can have unintended consequences such as a shift in traffic volumes to surrounding streets, noise, sign clutter, elimination of parking, etc. That is why a data-based, measured, and informed approach is the hallmark of this program.

Finally, there are limitations to funding and other resources required for the implementation of traffic calming elements. Depending on the availability of resources, implementation may need to be prioritized against other calming requests.

Detailed NTCP Process

The general program process, steps, and timeframes are shown as a flowchart at the end of this section. It reinforces the important partnership between residents and the county and identifies what each group does through the various program components. Examples of the typical elements in the toolbox are also included. A more detailed toolbox is included as an appendix to this document. As noted previously, the program is set up to be completed in a sequential approach that utilizes the least complex and least costly tools to address concerns. When concerns are not addressed, additional measures and program elements can be considered.

Education

Residents can contact Adams County via email at PWtraffic@adcogov.org or phone at 720-523-6875 with concerns about traffic in their neighborhoods. Staff will explain the traffic calming program and offer immediate options for educational awareness for the neighborhood.

This includes:

- Information on the Adams County website, adcogov.org/traffic-safety.
- Brochures with information and explanation of the program.
- Yard signs available for pick-up, free of charge.
- Sample communication residents can send out to the neighborhood via a Home Owners Association (HOA) or other means.

These materials and resources are available free of charge for all residents in all neighborhoods. The encouragement for residents to pick up yard signs and distribute them in the neighborhood supports the concept of resident awareness and their actions being an important component for addressing concerns. In many neighborhoods, most vehicular trips are made by residents. In some locations, speeding concerns can be alleviated by an awareness campaign.

Tier 1 Engineering - Visual Elements

If concerns persist following an education campaign, a neighborhood can request the use of Tier 1 Engineering – Visual Elements. These tools include items such as signs, pavement markings (striping), and driver feedback signs to provide motorists with visual indicators that support traffic calming.

1. Tier 1 Engineering – Application
Any single resident can contact the county via phone or email with concerns regarding traffic in their neighborhood. If educational elements have been utilized for at least one month, then the resident can submit an application that details the concern. The application is entered into a database at the county for consideration of Tier 1 – Visual Elements.
2. Staff completes a cursory review of the neighborhood and existing data to determine eligibility for Tier 1 tools. Existing data may include but is not limited to the following:
 - Roadway classification
 - Traffic volume – from previous counts or estimated
 - Speeds – if available or estimated based on classification, road width, etc.

- Crash history – number of crashes in the most recent 3–5 years
 - Enforcement – history of traffic enforcement, citations written, etc.
 - Current inventory of signs and markings
3. Identify eligibility for driver feedback signs:
- Volume of at least 500 vehicles per day. The volume can be previously collected data or estimated based on the number of houses utilizing that roadway for access and the Institute for Transportation Engineers trip generation values.
 - If eligible, add to a rotating list for deployment.
 - Feedback signs (or trailers) will be deployed for approximately 1-2 weeks at a time. They may be utilized to collect volume and speed data and, in some instances, left in 'dark' mode for a few days to collect speed data before being turned on.
 - Requests can be made to redeploy the signs to the same location every six months. Residents need to make a new request for the signs to get back on the list. The actual timeline for deployment will depend on the weather and number of current requests.
4. Identify the need for other Tier 1 – Engineering Visual Elements:
- Staff will review the neighborhood for the potential of:
 - Speed limit signs
 - Other signs
 - Markings such as edge lines, stop bars, bike lanes, etc.
 - Roadway changes that do not change roadway functionality, such as signage improvements or marking reflectivity enhancements, will be completed by staff and do not require a neighborhood petition.
 - Roadway changes that do change roadway functionality, such as loss of travel lanes or parking, are Tier 2 elements and must utilize that process of neighborhood consensus before implementation.

Staff will communicate with the resident who submitted the request with the findings of the evaluation and any next steps. The implementation of Tier 1 Engineering – Visual Elements is done free of charge for residents. If no Tier 1 elements are appropriate for the neighborhood, Adams County staff will direct the resident to available options within the educational elements of the program.

Tier 2 Engineering - Physical Elements

If concerns persist following the educational elements and Tier 1 review, the neighborhood is then able to pursue physical construction options. These are called Tier 2 Engineering – Physical Elements and include items such as speed tables and other horizontal or vertical features built into the road to support slower travel speeds.

1. **Application.** Tier 2 Engineering – Application
A neighborhood can apply to Tier 2 of the program by filling out an application and submitting it to the county.
 - The application should detail the neighborhood, roadways, and the concern.

- The application MUST be signed by a lead resident (and main contact for the submittal) and at least three other sponsors from different households in the neighborhood.
- Applications without four sponsors will be returned for additional sponsors. If a neighborhood cannot gather four sponsors, the neighborhood will be entered into the Tier 1 Engineering – Visual Element portion of the program.

2. **Eligibility.** Adams County staff will review the request for basic Tier 2 eligibility.

- Roadways of concern must be classified as a local, residential street, or collector street. There is a need to balance the goals of reduction in travel speed for all vehicles against the importance of efficient emergency response. Therefore, physical devices are limited to local residential and minor collector streets. Roadways classified as arterials are not eligible for Tier 2 elements.
- Speed limit of 30 mph or less.
- Number of lanes is two (one in each direction) or three (one in each direction and a center turn lane). Four lane roads are not eligible for Tier 2 elements unless combined with restriping to three lanes if appropriate.
- Known or estimated daily traffic volumes should be between 500 and 5,000 vehicles per day. Roads with less than 500 vehicles per day are not anticipated to carry enough traffic to be good candidates or competitive in the prioritization process, and roads with more than 5,000 vehicles per day are considered to be major collectors or functioning much as arterials and are not eligible.
- Review of primary emergency services or transit routes. Major emergency routes are not eligible for physical calming devices.
- Roads that meet basic eligibility are then moved to Step 3. Roads deemed ineligible are entered into the Tier 1 or educational program options.

Basic Tier 2 Eligibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification as local or collector road • Speed limit of 30 mph or less. • Number of lanes is 2 or 3 • Volume of 500 to 5,000 vehicles per day • Review of emergency services routes

3. **Engineering Study.** Adams County staff will complete a traffic engineering study to identify issues and provide data to make determinations for potential mitigation. This evaluation includes:

- The classification, geometrics, and characteristics of the roadway:
 - Roadway classification
 - Length and width of roadway, number of travel lanes, and presence of parking and/or bike lanes
 - Roadway design speed
 - All signs and markings including stop signs and crosswalks
- Traffic operations of the roadway:
 - Traffic volumes
 - Traffic speed and percentage of vehicles traveling above the posted speed limit
 - Transit stops
 - Intersections along the roadway under consideration
 - Presence of potential for cut-through traffic

- Safety data:
 - Crash history
- Area land use:
 - Number of driveways along the roadway
 - Pedestrian generators such as retail, bus stops, senior housing, etc.
 - School zones
 - Nearby schools, parks, and places of worship
- Previously completed projects or mitigation

4. **Severity Index.** Adams County staff will then calculate a "severity index." This is an evaluation that assigns points to all the gathered data based on criteria such as adjacent land use, access points, vehicle volumes and speeds, safety data, presence of pedestrians, and more. The higher the total number of points, the greater the level of need for traffic calming. The total number of points can be compared to other locations of interest for physical calming to identify locations anticipated to be good candidates to receive physical calming elements.

Severity Index

The severity index is a calculated number based on a list of items evaluated during the engineering study.

A point system is used to identify those locations with the highest level of concern for prioritization.

5. **Mitigation Plan.** If the roadway is a good candidate for physical mitigation, a mitigation plan is created. This is a basic plan with a map that identifies the type and location of proposed mitigation.

6. **Neighborhood Petition.** Because physical mitigation tools are not universally supported and sometimes generate opposition in a neighborhood, the county requires neighborhood consensus before moving forward. A petition packet is created that includes a cover letter, a map with petition boundaries and the proposed location of mitigation devices, petition signature sheets, details on mitigation devices (such as the speed table design), and the traffic study evaluation report. The petition boundary is determined by the county and will generally include those properties most directly impacted by the installation of the physical measures. The packet is sent to the lead sponsor of the application.

One signature from each household will count toward the signature requirement. For townhomes, condos, or apartment buildings, one signature per unit counts. Either renters or owners may sign the petition. If there are known differing views on the petition between an owner and renter, the owner's signature (or lack thereof) is valid.

The petition requires a simple majority of support (more than 50% of the households in the petition area must be in favor), and 100% support from those properties immediately adjacent to a planned physical device. If mitigation is supported in the neighborhood, but a homeowner immediately adjacent to a proposed device is opposed, the county will work with the neighborhood to adjust the mitigation plan. The responsibility for the petition rests with the neighborhood, and completed petitions are then returned to the county.

The petition must be returned within one (1) year of the county sending it to the sponsor. If a petition is turned in without adequate community consensus, the sponsors of the petition will

be notified and they can continue to gather additional signatures until the requirements are met, or until the petition has exceeded the one-year time limit. A new petition can be attempted after a one-year waiting period.

7. **Location Prioritization and Construction Scheduling.** Each year, toward the end of the calendar year, the county will take all the successful petitions and prioritize them based on the severity index shown in the traffic evaluation study (see details on the annual schedule on subsequent pages). The funding for the upcoming construction season is allocated based on the priority list. If there isn't enough funding to accommodate all successful petitions, the remaining neighborhoods will be rolled over into the following year's program. Petitions turned in after the deadline at the end of the year will be considered for that year's construction only if funding remains, or they will be prioritized for the following year's workplan.
8. **Construction.** All successful applications are intended to be bundled together for construction each year – generally in the summer or early fall. Adams County staff will notify the neighborhood sponsors of construction scheduling and provide a sample construction notice to send to the neighborhood. Note that exact dates for construction are often not available as timelines can change due to workload, weather, etc.
9. **Post Project Evaluation.** Once the construction is complete, the county will complete a post project evaluation, typically 6-12 months after installation. This will provide data for the effectiveness of physical elements.

Roadways not selected for Tier 2 elements – either because they do not meet minimum eligibility criteria, are not good candidates because of high needs and prioritization in other locations, or because of an unsuccessful petition – will still be supported. These neighborhoods may choose to participate in educational or Tier 1 elements of the traffic calming program, or if the petition was not successful, the neighborhood may choose to try again with a new petition after a one-year waiting period.

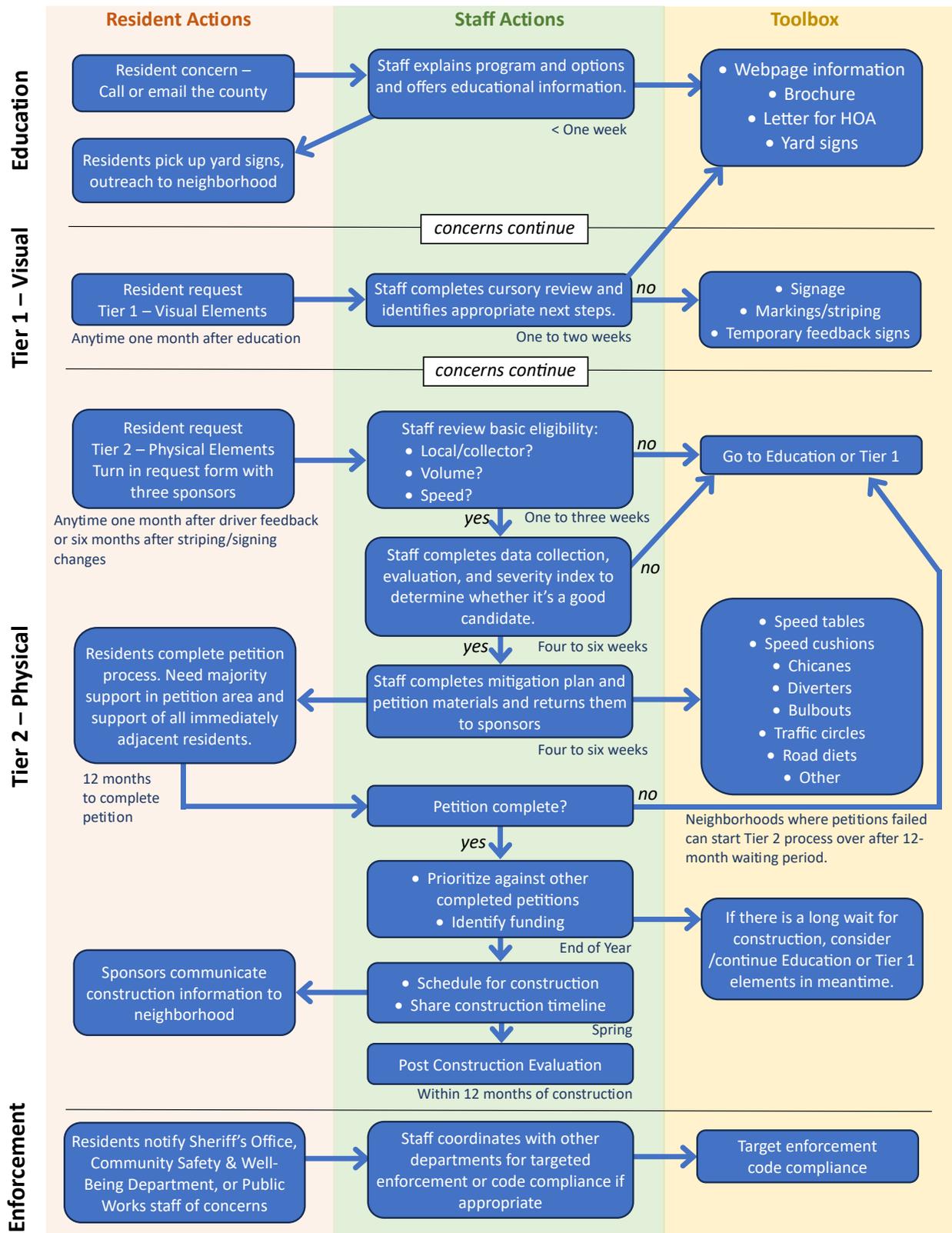
Enforcement and Code Compliance Coordination

Enforcement of travel speeds and code compliance are other available elements in a traffic calming program as the Adams County Sheriff's Office and Community Safety & Well-Being Department are partners in transportation safety. Public Works staff will coordinate and communicate with these other departments on various requests to determine if targeted enforcement or compliance are options.

Consideration for enforcement and code compliance priorities at a particular location will include:

- History of concern
- Available speed data (from previous studies or if driver feedback signs or trailers are deployed and data is collected)
- Volume of vehicles on the roadway
- Crash history
- Availability of enforcement and code compliance staff

Adams County NTCP Process



Annual Schedule for Traffic Calming Program

The NTCP is an ongoing program, and residents can utilize the program at any time. Educational materials and Tier 1 Visual Elements (including the driver feedback signs) are available year-round. Note that installation of striping in Tier 1 mitigation may need to be done during warmer weather months.

Tier 2 can be initiated at any time, and if a neighborhood is eligible and approved to move through the process, the mitigation plan and the petition will be initiated as soon as possible. The petition needs to be turned in within 12 months.

Completed petitions are collected throughout the year for a single prioritization process that occurs shortly after the end of the calendar year. This process is necessary since construction for calming throughout the county is typically done with a single contract. At the end of each year, the county will take all the successful petitions and prioritize them based on the severity index. The funding for the upcoming construction season is allotted based on the priority list. If there isn't enough funding to accommodate all successful petitions, the remaining neighborhoods will be rolled over into the following year's program. Petitions returned after the end of the year will be held for the subsequent year (unless funding is available and construction coordination is possible).

Toolbox

The toolbox of the most frequently used elements for Adams County is included in the appendix of this document. The appendix includes the following:

- The types of tools for each program area (Education, Enforcement, Code Compliance, Tier 1 Visual Elements, and Tier 2 Physical Elements)
- A photo or diagram showing what each tool looks like
- Discussion on applicability or considerations for each tool
- General cost related to the physical Tier 2 elements

Note that these tools represent commonly used elements in Adams County. There could be other options that might be appropriate for a specific location. The appendix provides information on national resources, most specifically Federal Highway Administration's Traffic Calming ePrimer website. Staff are aware of these options and will be diligent in considering them if appropriate.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Frequently asked questions and their answers are included in the appendix of this document.

Appendix A – Toolbox

Appendix B – Typical Speed Table and Speed Cushion Designs

Appendix C – FAQs