



# City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

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STREET MAINTENANCE  
 TRAFFIC ENGINEERING  
 TRANSPORTATION PLANNING  
 REFUSE/ RECYCLING  
 CENTRAL STORES

TO: Eric D. Campbell, City Manager  
 FROM: Erin Yancey, Public Works Planning Manager  
 DATE: April 9, 2009  
 RE: Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program – Sunset Heights Neighborhood

**Summary:** The Public Works Department requests that City Council consider adopting the Traffic Calming Plan for the Sunset Heights neighborhood.

**Background:** The residents of the Sunset Heights neighborhood have been participating in the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program since March 2015. The Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program is a partnership between the Harrisonburg Police Department (HPD) and the Public Works Department that uses a phased approach to reduce speeding and cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods. The first steps include education/encouragement toward drivers to reduce speeds, increased enforcement, and progress into engineered solutions, if the problems persist. The neighborhood participated in the education, encouragement, and enforcements steps, but found speeding and cut-through traffic persistent. City Council officially enrolled the neighborhood into the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program at its June 26, 2018 meeting, allowing it to advance toward exploring physical traffic calming measures (engineered solutions) with the Public Works Department. The table below describes the activities completed by the neighborhood over the past four years.

TRAFFIC CALMING PHASE/ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME
• Education & encouragement	March – May 2015
• Increased enforcement	March 2015
• Neighborhood meeting with Harrisonburg Police Department & Public Works	June 2015
• Traffic study of neighborhood (approved by City Council)	Fall 2015
• Petition of neighborhood	Winter 2015 – Spring 2018
• Enrollment approved by City Council	June 2018
• Neighborhood representative meeting with Public Works (initial plan development)	August 2018
• Neighborhood open-house meeting (open to public) to review and provide feedback on the draft Traffic Calming Plan	January 2019
• Presentation of Plan to Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission	February 13, 2019
• Endorsement of Plan by City Council	April 2019 (future)
• Begin implementation of Plan	Spring 2019 (future)

The traffic calming practices below were identified for exploration and/or implementation. The proposed locations for these practices are identified in Appendix A of the plan. Photos or graphics of the practices can be found in Appendix B of the plan. After the plan is approved, Public Works will begin to implement it, pending available funds. Traffic studies will be conducted after each phase of improvements, to determine their effectiveness in meeting the goals of the program, and the need to implement further measures.

Phase I includes changes to the intersections of High Street at W. Market Street that seek to reduce the tendency for drivers to use S. Dogwood or S. Willow Street to avoid the traffic signal at this intersection. Minor signal timing changes at the High Street/Maryland Avenue signal will improve pedestrian safety. A digital speed radar sign will be installed on Maryland Avenue to display the driver’s speed to the driver. Stop bars will be installed at all stop signs in the neighborhood in Phase I. and a centerline will be painted in the bend on S. Dogwood Drive, north of Dixie Avenue, to guide drivers through the curve.

Phase II of the plan, if needed, focuses on strategies to reduce speeds on S. Dogwood Drive and Maryland Avenue. Changes to on-street parking, as well as the addition of bike lanes to S. Dogwood will narrow the driving lanes to make speeding less comfortable between Maryland Avenue and W. Water Street. A speed hump is proposed for Maryland Avenue, if Phase I fails bring speeds down sufficiently.

Phase III of the plan, if needed, includes a treatment at the intersection of S. Dogwood and Maryland Avenue to reduce speeds. This would be either a miniroundabout or a raised intersection. Additionally, a miniroundabout at the three-legged intersection of S. Willow Street, Chestnut Drive, and W. Grace Street is proposed. Finally, when S. Willow Street is next paved, pavement markings will be modified slightly to remove any unintended indication to drivers that the street is intended for through traffic.

**Key Issues:** N/A

**Environmental Impact:** None.

**Fiscal Impact:** The fiscal impacts are included in the table below. As discussed above, traffic studies will be conducted after each phase of improvements, to determine the need to implement further measures.

	PHASE/PRACTICE	ESTIMATED COST
<b>Phase I</b>		\$11,300
	1) Intersection of W. Market Street and S. High Street: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modify traffic signal operation and reconfigure west approach to increase the level of service for the eastbound right turn onto S. High Street.</li> </ul> <p><u>Support:</u> Improving the level of service for this movement may reduce the tendency for drive to try to avoid the signal delay by using S. Dogwood Drive and S. Willow Street.</p>	

PHASE/PRACTICE	ESTIMATED COST
2) Intersection of S. High Street and Maryland Avenue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add a leading pedestrian phase crossing S. High Street</li> <li>Study intersection to determine if warrants are met for “Turning vehicles yield to pedestrians” signs</li> </ul> <u>Support:</u> The intersection is used as a safe route to school.	
3) Maryland Avenue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital speed radar sign</li> </ul> <u>Support:</u> The expected result is that drivers will reduce their speed when they can see how far above the speed limit they are driving.	
4) Intersections from South Avenue to W. Grace Street and S. High Street to S. Dogwood Drive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add stop bars at all stop signs</li> </ul> <u>Support:</u> Increase compliance with stop signs will improve safety. Stop bars will help correct confused that may be caused by Maryland Avenue being the only east-west street to have no stop signs (since it is the major movement, as a neighborhood collector), while all other east-west streets are stop controlled at every intersection.	
5) S. Dogwood Drive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add centerline in bend north of Dixie Avenue</li> </ul>	
<b>Phase II</b>	<b>\$5,500</b>
1) S. Dogwood Drive – Water Street to Maryland Avenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrict parking to one side. Narrow the travel lanes by adding bicycle lanes to both sides. Create a chicane effect that reduces driver speeds by alternating on-street parking to the other side of the street, by block, transitioning the typical section through the intersections. Add 2 parking spaces on west side of street between park and church to provide a chicane on this segment. Include hatched pavement markings at back side of on-street parking to protect parked cars. Remove sharrows.</li> </ul> <u>Support:</u> Because on-street parking is poorly utilized on much of this stretch, the very wide road encourages drivers to speed. Chicaneing and bicycle lanes will narrow the travel lanes to reduce speeds. Bicycle lanes on this segment are justified by the relatively higher volume of traffic, and the connection to the park, where new bicycle facilities are soon to come online.	
2) Maryland Avenue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speed hump</li> </ul> <u>Support:</u> This speed control measure preserves the on-street parking that is regularly utilized.	
<b>Phase III</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
1) Intersection of Maryland Avenue and Dogwood Drive	

PHASE/PRACTICE	ESTIMATED COST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intersection treatment (miniroundabout or raised median, TBD by neighborhood input)  <u>Support:</u> An intersection control will reduce speeds by inducing yielding on the uncontrolled approaches, and in the case of the miniroundabout, greatly reduce conflict points, thereby increasing safety for all modes.</li> </ul> <p>2) Intersection of Willow Street, Chestnut Drive, W. Grace Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct miniroundabout  <u>Support:</u> The intersection will operate more intuitively, and more safely serve the traffic volumes of the adjacent institutional land use (James Madison University, Memorial Hall) by reducing conflict points.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>With Paving Schedule</b></p>	n/a
<p>1) Willow Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When next paved, remove double yellow line, except at stop or yield controls.  <u>Support:</u> Removing the centerline favors local road design, the intended purpose of which is to provide access to properties, instead of a design more appropriate for a collector street that may encourage through traffic use.</li> </ul>	

**Prior Actions:** City Council approved the request for a traffic study of the neighborhood in the spring of 2015, and enrolled the neighborhood in the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program in June, 2018.

**Alternatives:** Address safety concerns through spot improvements that may be recommended by the Transportation Safety and Advisory Commission. Additional traffic enforcement by HPD.

**Community Engagement:** Public Works and HPD met with neighborhood representatives in June 2015 to discuss neighborhood concerns and introduce the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program, and again in February 2016 to discuss the traffic study and next steps for enrolling in the program. The neighborhood representatives canvassed the neighborhood to share information about the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program, and obtained 186 signatures for the petition to enroll in the program. Staff met with a group of neighborhood representatives on September 27, 2018 to put together the initial Traffic Calming Plan. Staff held an open house meeting on January 30, 2019 that was open to the public to share the Plan. Thirty-three (33) members of the neighborhood attended the meeting and provided input.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends approving the Sunset Heights Traffic Calming Plan.

**Attachments:**

- Sunset Heights Traffic Calming Plan

**Review:**

*The initiating Department Director will place in Legistar, in sequence of transmittal, the names of each department that must initial their review in order for this item to be placed on the City Council agenda. The completion of review only addresses the readiness of the issue for Council consideration. This does not address the recommendation for approval or denial of the issue.*

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