



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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RECENT TRAFFIC CALMING DEVELOPMENTS

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You asked that we update OLR report [2010-R-0020](#) on recent traffic calming initiatives in Connecticut, particularly in the greater New Haven area.

SUMMARY

In 2010, New Haven published a detailed “complete streets” manual addressing traffic calming, among other issues. The manual includes city policies that require that all roadway designs consider the use of streets by pedestrians and bicyclists. The manual includes a street design process for projects, initiated by the city or neighborhoods, that call for citizen involvement to meet the city’s goals. It also includes a tool-box describing a wide range of traffic calming measures.

The city has recently implemented a wide variety of traffic calming measures. These include measures such as a roundabout (small traffic rotary) and speed humps (extended elevated segments of the roadway designed to slow traffic speeds).

Hamden’s town council authorized the use of approximately \$100,000 in Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) funding for traffic calming. The funding will be used to address traffic near schools as well as at pedestrian crossings of Farmington Canal rail trail.

North Haven recently began a traffic speed and safety study of Spring Road and Laydon Avenue, from Middletown Avenue (Route 17) north to Maple Avenue (Route 103).

Outside of the greater New Haven area, there have been recent traffic calming initiatives in Fairfield and West Hartford.

NEW HAVEN

In 2010, New Haven published a “[complete streets](#)” manual. The manual is designed to (1) develop and promote a safe transportation network that serves all users (drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians) and (2) integrate the planning and design of complete streets that foster a livable, sustainable, and economically vibrant community. Among other things, the policies in the manual seek to give priority to traffic calming, walkability, inter-modal transit, and pedestrian-based urban economic development over competing goals. The policies require that all roadway designs consider use by pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

The manual states that traffic injuries and fatalities are predictable and often preventable, and there is a direct correlation between vehicle speeds and injury and fatality rates. It calls for the use of raised intersections, crosswalks, lighting, textured pavement, roundabouts, and other speed mitigating design elements whenever possible to improve the safety for all users.

The manual includes a street design process for projects initiated by the city or neighborhoods that calls for citizen involvement to meet the city’s goals. It also includes a tool-box describing a wide range of traffic calming measures. These include:

1. pavement markings, including painting lines to narrow lanes and “sharrows” (painted signs in the pavement indicating that the streets are used by cyclists),
2. speed humps,
3. refuge islands for pedestrians to use when crossing wide streets,
4. bump outs that extend the curb towards traffic lanes, and

5. chicanes, which shift traffic from one side of the street to another using curb extensions or by alternating the side of the street where parking is allowed.

New Haven has installed a number of traffic-calming measures in recent years. These include (1) a roundabout at the intersection of Elm and West Park streets, (2) a chicane on Vista Terrace, and (3) speed humps on these streets and in various other locations.

Using funds from the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG), the city is currently adding a number of traffic calming measures to major arterial streets. It will add bike lanes and sharrows for the length of Dixwell Avenue to the Hamden town line and repaint lane lines to narrow traffic lanes. In 2008, SCRCOG published a traffic calming guide, available at www.scrkog.org/toc_files/TrafficCalming_ResourceGuide_Final.pdf.

OTHER TOWNS IN THE REGION

Hamden

In April 2011, the town's legislative council authorized the mayor to apply for and use approximately \$100,000 in LoCIP for traffic calming. The funding will be used to address traffic near schools as well as at pedestrian crossings of Farmington Canal rail trail. Among the measures to be installed are speed humps, in-street pedestrian crossing signs, and other additional signage. The town has set up a webpage, www.hamden.com/content/43/79/7047.aspx to solicit public input on the project.

North Haven

This summer North Haven began a traffic speed and safety study of Spring Road and Laydon Avenue, from Middletown Avenue (Route 17) north to Maple Avenue (Route 103). The study will review traffic conditions and resident concerns, prepare options, and conduct public outreach. The data collected by the engineers conducting the study showed that nine accidents were reported on the affected roads since 2008, two of which were attributed to excessive speeds. Among the changes under consideration are signage improvements, pavement markings, and roadway or lane narrowing. The study is being funded by SCRCOG.

OTHER TOWNS IN THE STATE

Fairfield

Fairfield and a neighborhood group have taken steps to promote traffic calming in recent years. The town appointed a Bicycle/Pedestrian Study Plan Advisory Committee. The committee assisted the Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency in conducting a study that collected traffic and accident data, identified neighborhoods with high pedestrian and bike activity, and developed plans to bolster bike and pedestrian trails.

In late 2010, the Fairfield Beach Residents Association sponsored a traffic study of the area south of Old Post Road. The traffic engineer retained by the association recommended a number of traffic calming measures based on the study. These included reducing the width of Fairfield Beach Road by adding shoulder lines, in order to constrict the road and slow down cars. He also recommended adding center medians on three roads (Reef, Beach, and Fairfield Beach). The engineer also recommended the installation of a roundabout on Fairfield Beach Road near Penfield Beach.

West Hartford

The town has (1) expanded its street line painting program to help keep motorists in their travel lanes and (2) provided painted shoulder areas on some streets for cyclists. It has added traffic calming features such as chicanes; planted islands; narrowed through lanes; and left turn lanes to increase driver attention, improve the appearance of the streetscape, and reduce accidents. The town also recently purchased electronic speed display signs to help reduce speeds and a radar camera unit to notify vehicle owners of speeding.

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