

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

COLLEGE TERRACE TRAFFIC STUDY

Wouldn't more stop signs solve our speeding and cut-through problems?

Studies show that stop signs don't work to reduce prevailing speeds, and they certainly don't calm drivers. They also cause more air pollution. Traffic circles and speed tables have been shown to reduce both accidents and speeds more effectively than stop signs, and they are finding widespread acceptance in neighborhoods similar to ours.

What about more police enforcement?

We can get occasional "blitzes" but there will never be enough funding to have a cop on every corner 24/7. Driver behavior reverts to "normal" a few minutes after the squad car disappears, and police chases are also hazardous in residential areas.

Do educational signs and awareness campaigns work? Studies show that the new VCalm© signs reduce peak vehicle speeds somewhat when first installed, but it's unclear whether the effect is permanent. Educational campaigns are most effective when the local drivers rather than commuters are the primary sources of speeding or safety problems.

Won't speed tables and traffic circles on other streets divert traffic onto my street?

Not according to the city's traffic consultant, who has extensive experience with these devices in other communities. But the city will measure before/after volume and speed data just to be sure. Residents will be consulted about possible future modifications if actual results do not line up with predicted results.

What about noise near physical measures?

Portland (Oregon) has found noise impact of installing traffic circles to be "minimal". Boulder (Colorado) found that both peak and average noise levels of raised crosswalks were 10% lower than the measurements done before the crosswalks were installed. Reducing the top speeds also reduces noise levels generated by vehicles.

What's a "raised crosswalk"?

See the description of speed tables in Enclosure C of the city's packet. A raised crosswalk is simply a speed table located at an intersection and striped as a pedestrian crossing. Pedestrians are more visible to drivers and the slower speeds improve safety for the whole intersection.

Will the traffic circles be landscaped?

Attractive but low maintenance landscaping is a high priority for many residents. A working group is forming to hammer out necessary agreements with the city. If you'd like to contribute ideas, energy, landscaping expertise and/or funds, please contact Susan Rosenberg via email (srinpa@earthlink.net) or call her at 424-1448 (daytime only).

Why isn't a fix proposed for the Starbucks corner? The Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program is limited to local and collector streets. Caltrans must approve any changes near El Camino Real. The good news is that a Caltrans project will make the Stanford Avenue/ECR intersection safer for pedestrians and cyclists in 2006. There's hope for dealing with the driveway entrance and exit problem as part of this project.

Where does the money come from?

Up to \$150,000 for traffic calming measures in our neighborhood was funded by Stanford University's Research Park management in 2002 when the redevelopment of 2475 Hanover was approved.

Where can I get more information?

Visit www.ctc.info for data and documents related to the College Terrace Traffic Study, or look for the printed version in the College Terrace library. See also the traffic section of www.ctra.org and www.trafficcalming.org . Or contact Paul Lomio (plomio@stanford.edu) or Kathy Durham (493-2623).

LOST/ NEVER RECEIVED YOUR POSTCARD?

A replacement packet will be mailed out upon request, but don't delay! Email Joe Kott (joseph.kott@cityofpaloalto.org) or phone the city's Transportation Division at 329-2520. Address is required since staff must verify that only one survey card is received per household.