

Traffic Calming Program

Silverado / Merriewood Neighborhood Traffic Calming Project

**City of Lafayette
May 2014**

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Welcome

This newsletter provides an update on the traffic calming project in the Silverado/Merriewood area. In this issue, we summarize the neighborhood concerns, what has happened to date and what to expect in the next few months. We have also included information on speed data collected in the area and some suggestions for improving driving behavior and conditions for pedestrians.



Background

In 2012 the neighborhood surrounding Silverado and Merriewood Drives near Burton Valley School applied for Lafayette's Traffic Calming Program to address speeding and pedestrian safety concerns. Over the past year city staff has been working with a group of 20 neighborhood volunteers, who represent different areas surrounding the project and

offer different perspectives. Together the group discussed specific areas of concerns, explored the feasibility and impacts of various solution options, and worked with area residents to heighten awareness and solicit feedback. In March, the City Council approved a plan consisting of signing and striping enhancements. This plan is being implemented.

Top Neighborhood Traffic Concerns:

- Vehicles Speeding
- Pedestrian Safety - Cars violate pedestrian areas at intersections
- Distracted Driving - Cell phone calls and texts
- Disobedience of STOP Signs and pedestrian crosswalks

Final Plan Elements:

(More on Pg. 2)

- ◇ SPEED LIMIT SIGNS & PAVEMENT STENCILS
- ◇ ENHANCED CROSSWALKS
- ◇ DELINEATED PEDESTRIAN ZONES AT INTERSECTIONS

Neighborhood Measures to Date

Since the project started over one year ago, your neighbors and City staff have been busy working to raise awareness and reduce speeding in the area. You might have noticed some of these measures:



A *Resident's Guide to Anti-Speeding Efforts*, distributed to area residents, highlighting creative approaches to slow down traffic.



Many people in the neighborhood have signed pledges to drive the speed limit and display their commitment with a "Let's Slow Down" decal on their vehicles.



Yard signs (above) have been rotating through the neighborhood to raise awareness.



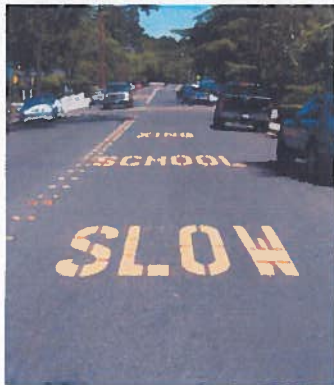
Decals with the "Let's Slow Down" message on waste disposal cans provide weekly reminders to drivers.



A higher level of traffic enforcement presence, targeting speeders and distracted driving.

Next Steps

The City Council approved the final traffic calming plan on March 10, 2014. Implementation is in progress. First, concentrated enforcement was done during the week of March 17, 2014 with more police presence to follow. Second, additional "Before" traf-



fic data and observations were collected in April and May. Third, new speed limit signs and pavement legends (right) will be installed on Silverado and Merriewood Drives within a one-block vicinity of the elementary school. Fourth, area crosswalks

will be repainted using the current standard design. Approaching them, legends will be repainted and some added to alert traffic to slow down (left). Fifth, at intersections, (Cont'd on Pg. 4)





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**TRAFFIC CALMING
PROGRAM**

It's Our Town, Let's Slow Down!

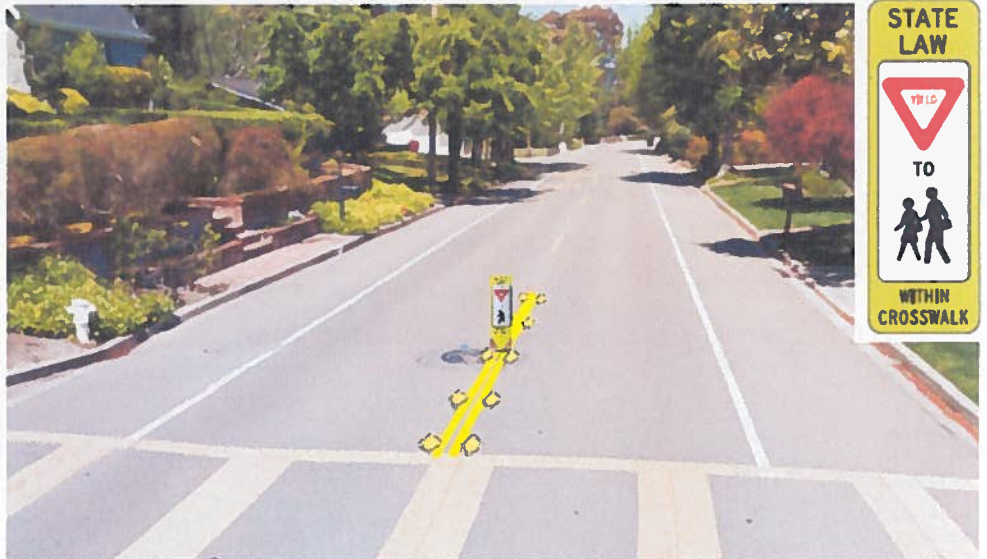
We're on the Web!
www.ci.lafayette.ca.us

To:

Silverado/Merriewood Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan

(Cont'd from Pg. 2)

- white edge lines will be added to reinforce where vehicles belong— keeping away from pedestrians in the shoulder. At the crosswalks on Merriewood Drive by the elementary school and on Silverado Drive at Indian Way, new “paddle-style” signs will alert drivers to the presence of and the need to yield to pedestrians crossing the street. The paddle signs also serve as a form of traffic calming, alerting drivers to slow down as they approach. The precise paddle positions will be determined in the field based on site conditions. For additional details about the adopted Traffic Calming Plan, visit “Hot Topics” at www.ci.lafayette.ca.us.



Traffic Calming Tidbits

- If you drove the entire one-mile length of Silverado Drive at the speed limit of 25 MPH instead of 35 MPH, the difference in travel time is about **40 seconds** longer. Yet people are speeding!

- Accident data show that the chance of a fatal injury **increases by almost 2½ times for vehicles traveling at 35 mph vs. 25 mph.** The statistics for children passengers are even worse: the risk of serious injury or death is **over 7 times greater.** The key to remember here is to **SLOW DOWN.**



- On streets without sidewalks, pedestrians have no buffer from vehicles and tend to feel the impacts of speeding more. **Newer vehicles isolate drivers from the effects of their own speeding** by providing a smoother ride and producing less road noise; so drivers may not even feel that they are speeding, yet those outside of the vehicle feel it.

- The neighborhood efforts over the past year have paid off. Unofficial data on Silverado Drive indicate that prevailing speeds have gone down, but over 2/3 of drivers

are still exceeding the 25 MPH speed limit.

Do your children mimic your behavior?

They learn from watching you. Set a good example, even when you're in a rush:

Don't use your cell phone while driving. Consider requiring that cell phones be shut off when driving.

Come to a **complete stop** at STOP signs.

Slow down!

Observe pedestrian right of way laws. **yield** at crosswalks.

Watch for pedestrians and bikes in the roadway shoulder. **Don't cut them off** when turning at intersections.

In a scientific sampling of 5,600 students in public high schools across the U.S., nearly 90 percent of teens reported seeing peers drive while talking on cell phones, and more than half observed drivers using hand-held games and music players or sending text messages.



In a recent traffic enforcement action in the neighborhood, over 70 warnings and citations were written for violations of basic speed laws, failure to stop at stop signs, and some form of distracted driving involving a personal organizer/phone device.