

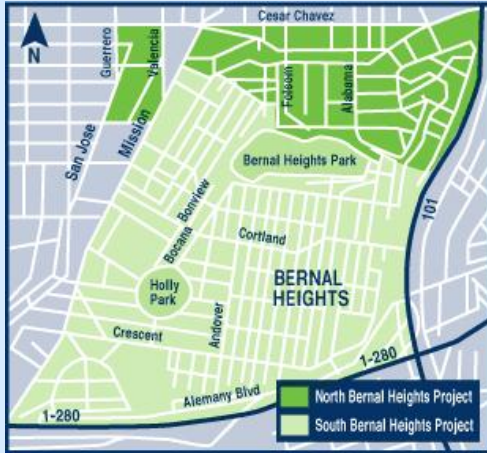
<p><b>JANUARY 2001</b></p> <p><b>NORTH BERNAL HEIGHTS TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECT</b></p>	 <p>SAN FRANCISCO <b>Traffic</b> <i>calming</i> PROGRAM</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Traffic Calming Program</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Study Area</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Common Issues</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Contact us</u></a></p>
<p><b>Bernal Heights is Designated as First Neighborhood Project in SF!</b></p> <p>Are you concerned about traffic safety and speed in Bernal Heights? San Francisco's Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT) wants to help make your streets safer and more livable, and we need your help to make it happen. Please come to our first neighborhood "traffic calming" workshop on Thursday, January 11, 6:30 pm at the Leonard Flynn Elementary School, 3125 Cesar Chavez (at the corner of Folsom and Harrison).</p> <p>Bridget Smith, program director for DPT's Livable Streets Program, notes: "The meeting on January 11 is our chance to connect with people on a grassroots level to see what the prevailing traffic issues are in the neighborhood. We need to know what concerns people about their streets." Smith added, "After all, how can we know the community as well as the people who live there?"</p> <p><b><i>What is "Traffic Calming"?</i></b></p> <p>When we refer to "traffic calming," we're talking about improving neighborhood livability by reducing the impact of traffic on our neighborhoods: speeding, reckless driving, and excessive noise and traffic levels. Traffic calming is not about closing off streets or just adding speed bumps. It comes more in the form of subtle changes to the street layout, educational efforts, and</p>		

enforcement programs--all of which reinforce everyone's right to use their neighborhood streets safely and comfortably.

Traffic calming tries to make cars more compatible with bicycles, pedestrians and other vehicles, and it works to make streets nicer places to live--***without restricting access for anyone.***

Story continued below...





## TWO STUDY AREAS IN BERNAL HEIGHTS

The traffic calming project is being broken down into two areas that stretch across all of Bernal Heights. The first area is your neighborhood, north of the Hill, from Cesar Chavez up to Bernal Heights Boulevard, between Mission Street and US 101. The second is further south, stretching between Mission Street and US 101, including Bernal Heights Park, Cortland Avenue, and continuing south to I-280.

**DPT** has maintained an archive of all the written complaints and observations received from the neighborhood. The most frequently expressed issues are:

- > The overall quality of neighborhood life is adversely affected by high traffic volumes, speeding cars, and reckless driving.
- > Commuters use residential streets such as Precita Avenue and Folsom Street to avoid congestion on Cesar Chavez Street or making turns on Mission Street.
- > Semi-trailer trucks sometimes cut through the local streets.
- > Cars exceed posted speed limits throughout the neighborhood and pose safety threats to local children, especially on streets adjacent to the area's elementary schools.
- > Illegally parked cars sometimes limit vision at steep intersections.
- > Cars often illegally park on sidewalks and streets with restricted parking regulations.
- > Steep streets such as Coso Avenue/Stoneman Street have limited sightlines for crossing traffic. Drivers often make precarious blind turns.
- > The narrowness of many of Bernal Heights residential streets limits their capacity to carry two-way traffic.
- > Speeding cars and high traffic volumes result in high levels of night time noise.
- > Intersections without stop signs are confusing.

### TRAFFIC CALMING CAN TARGET ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

- speeding
- cut-through traffic volume
- excess noise and vibration
- crashes
- safety of pedestrians, cyclists and children

### TRAFFIC CALMING INVOLVES:

- **EDUCATION.** Residents receive the information and tools necessary to become active participants in addressing their neighborhood traffic concerns.
- **ENGINEERING.** Engineering principles are used to develop traffic calming strategies that address community-identified traffic

### TOOLS OF TRAFFIC CALMING MAY INCLUDE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- sidewalk extensions
- landscaped medians
- paint stripes
- traffic circles
- speed humps
- street narrowing

*For details and examples of these traffic calming elements, visit the "What is Traffic Calming" page on this website and check out "Tools" and "Current Tests."*



issues.

- **ENFORCEMENT.** Targeted police enforcement supports the traffic calming plan developed by residents and DPT.

## **First Project continued...**

### ***The Need for Traffic Calming***

The North Bernal Heights Traffic Calming Project is part of an overall Traffic Calming Program in San Francisco. On a citywide scale, this new program will assess how best to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, and reduce speeding on main thoroughfares. In the individual neighborhoods, the Program will develop comprehensive traffic calming plans for the local streets. Bernal Heights is the first neighborhood chosen for this new Program. The Traffic Calming Program is a part of DPT's new Livable Streets effort.

As the first of its kind in the City, the Bernal Heights pilot project will be using innovative tools and methods to address traffic problems. Among these problems, three issues in particular have fueled the need for traffic calming in neighborhoods. First is the problem of traffic spillover from main streets into residential areas. Many drivers use side streets as a way to bypass heavy traffic and connect to major streets more easily. The second issue is unsafe motorist behavior such as speeding or violating pedestrian right of way. Finally there is the growing problem of "road rage," the impact that crowded highways and main streets have on driver behavior. Sometimes that behavior can extend from the highways into the residential roads.

"This is not an anti-car program, but we do want to change the behavior of those aggressive drivers who take their habits with them even once they've made it to the off-ramp," explains Smith. "These drivers bring speeding and other aggressive behaviors to neighborhoods where people live and children play. Naturally, this kind of situation makes people feel unsafe."

Although fairly new to the City, traffic calming has been used across the country and all over the world. In San Francisco, the best example of traffic calming is the Duboce Triangle--particularly Noe and Sanchez north of Market--which has the joint effects of making the local streets safer for pedestrians and others, and discouraging aggressive driving in the neighborhood.

***Traffic circles can make traffic safer  
for motorists and cyclists >***

### ***How the Bernal Heights Project Will Work***

The Bernal Heights Traffic Calming Project is divided into two study areas in the north and south of the neighborhood, roughly divided by Bernal Hill. The two studies will be coordinated and run simultaneously, and your study will begin with the kick-off meeting on January 11. Once we hear from you and others in your community, we can begin work on a comprehensive traffic calming plan for the neighborhood. The planning will involve traffic engineers and residents, including a working group of Bernal Heights volunteers. The planning process should be completed in the next six months.

Once the plan is completed, we will work together to make the plan a reality and construct traffic calming measures to improve traffic conditions in the neighborhood. Throughout the process, you will be receiving updates on what is happening with the project, and will be given opportunities to get involved.