

# Alta Mesa Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan

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# **Background**

The Alta Mesa Neighborhood is a mostly residential neighborhood bounded by Munras Avenue on the west, Fremont Street on the north, and Iris Canyon Road on the east. The neighborhood includes an office area in the quadrant southeast of Munras Avenue and Eldorado Street, and the First Presbyterian Church at Eldorado Street and Alta Mesa Road. Monterey Peninsula College lies east of the neighborhood across Iris Canyon Road.

The City worked with neighborhood residents to develop a traffic calming plan for the Alta Mesa neighborhood to address traffic speed and cut-through traffic in the neighborhood. The planning process followed the approach laid out in the City's Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program, which outlines policies, planning processes, and traffic calming tools approved for use in the city.

# **Existing Conditions**

The Alta Mesa Neighborhood is mainly residential with some commercial development along the north end of the neighborhood. Street widths vary in the neighborhood and most of the streets are fairly narrow with limited curbs and sidewalks. Many of the streets have no designated walkway and include rolled curb, vertical curb, and rural cross sections.

Traffic Data

Table 1 shows recent traffic data collected on local streets in the neighborhood:

**Table 1: Traffic Volumes and Speeds** 

Street	Location	ADT*	Peak Hour	Peak Hour	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed
				Volume	Speed**	
Alta Mesa	Between Eldorado and Alta	485	1:00	55	34	28
Road	Mesa Circle		p.m.			
Via Mirada	Between Mesa Road and	505	5:00	61	39	32
	Copa Del Oro		p.m.			
Don Dahvee	Between Munras and Alta	330	8:00	29	25	19
Lane	Mesa Road		a.m.			
Eldorado	Between Alta Mesa Road	1615	5:00	164	30	25
Street	and Via Mirada		p.m.			
Eldorado	Between Via Mirada and	969	3:00	97	29	23
Street	Iris Canyon Road		p.m.			
Iris Canyon	Between Eldorado and Via	567	3:00	119	39	32
Road	Mirada		p.m.			

<sup>\*</sup> Average Daily Traffic

<sup>\*\* 85</sup> percent of the traffic travels at this speed or below

# **Plan Development Process**

The Alta Mesa Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan was developed following the process laid out in the City's Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program. City staff and neighborhood representatives worked together to:

- Identify residents' concerns with neighborhood traffic
- Identify desired neighborhood outcomes for traffic calming
- Review traffic calming tools that fit the character of the neighborhood
- Consider various traffic calming applications
- Recommend a neighborhood traffic calming plan

The first step in the planning process was to send out surveys to residents in the Alta Mesa Neighborhood. The City received 36 responses to the survey and the results were compiled and presented at the first meeting with the neighborhood. Table 2 shows the results of the neighborhood survey:

**Table 2: Summary of Neighborhood Survey** 

Question	Response		
1. Please rank each of the following	Ranked as most important:		
neighborhood traffic issues in order	Excessive traffic speeds – 50%		
of concern to you.	Non-resident cut-through traffic – 31%		
	Pedestrian safety – 14%		
	Street maintenance –11%		
	Street landscaping – 8 %		
	Bicycle safety – 8%		
	Availability of on-street parking – 6%		
	Traffic noise – 3%		
	Operation of on-street parking – 3%		
	Other – 3%		
2. What, if any, concerns do you	Visibility – 42%		
have about driving safety in your	Right-of-way control – 25%		
neighborhood?	Street width – 25%		
	Signing – 22%		
	Street curvature and grades – 19%		
	Striping – 8%		
	Other – 22%		
3. What activities do you or	Walking – 75%		
members of your household use	Bicycling – 44%		
neighborhood streets for regularly?	Skating or skateboarding – 11%		
	Other – 14%		
4. If there are school children in your	Automobile – 22%		
house, what is the most common	School Bus – 6%		
method of travel to and from school?	Walking – 3%		
	Bicycling – 0%		
	Transit – 0%		

5. What types of traffic control	Signs – 44%		
devices do you feel would be	Pavement markings – 28%		
appropriate for use in your	Physical changes to the street – 25%		
neighborhood?	Devices that restrict movements – 22%		
	Landscaping – 14%		
	Pedestrian crossings – 0%		
	Other – 8%		

The neighborhood met three times (October 20, November 17, and December 15, 2004) to work through each step of the process. Representatives from City Traffic and Police attended all three meetings and a representative from the Fire Department attended the first meeting. The first meeting provided an overview of traffic calming and the tools used available in Monterey to address residential traffic concerns. Residents were also asked to identify the traffic issues in Alta Mesa that should be the focus of the traffic calming planning process.

#### **Problem Identification**

At the first neighborhood meeting, residents of Alta Mesa were asked to identify and prioritize traffic concerns. Residents provided the following list of concerns they wanted to address with traffic calming:

- Alta Mesa Road and Eldorado Street
  - Traffic speeds approaching the intersection on Eldorado Street
  - Safety of pedestrians crossing Eldorado Street
  - Visibility at the intersection
  - Right of way control on Alta Mesa Road onto Eldorado Street
- Visibility restrictions from median landscaping for cars turning into offices from Eldorado Street
- Alta Mesa Circle
  - Upper entrance from Alta Mesa Road is too wide and not well defined
  - The median in the lower entrance is not large enough
  - Traffic speed
- Via Mirada and Eldorado Street experience cut-through traffic between downtown and the college
- Speeding on Via Mirada and Eldorado Street
- Speed and cut-through on Don Dahvee Lane
- Traffic noise from cars speeding on Iris Canyon Road
- Pedestrians crossing Fremont at Via Mirada

### **Neighborhood Priorities**

At the first neighborhood meeting, residents expressed their preferences for certain traffic calming devices and made suggestions regarding locations. The following suggestions were made:

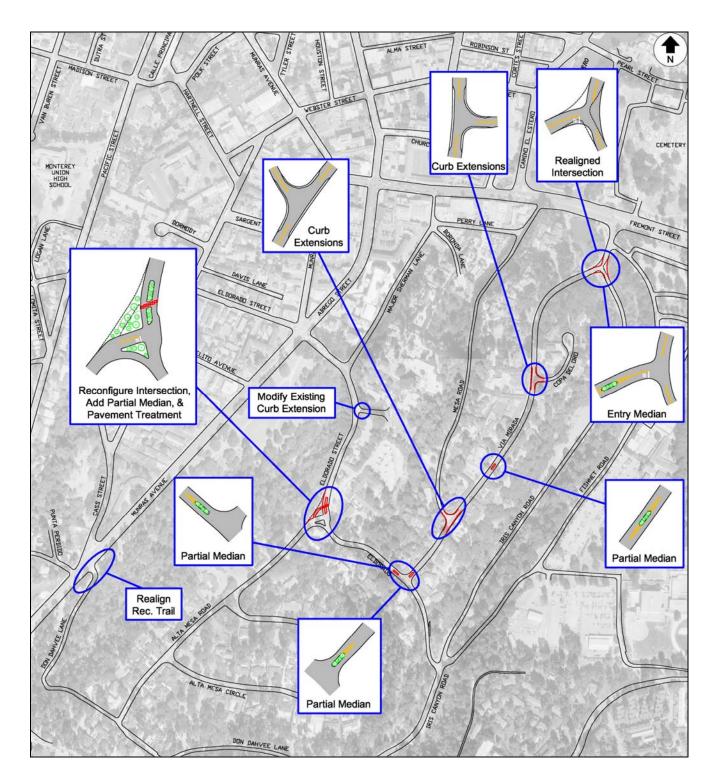
- Alta Mesa Circle and Alta Mesa Road
  - Landscaped median for the upper entrance
  - Expand the median on the lower entrance
  - Reconstruct the intersection to more clearly define entrance and exit
- Alta Mesa Circle
  - Trees and landscaping
  - Neckdowns
- Alta Mesa Road and Eldorado Street
  - Slow traffic in advance of intersection
  - Pedestrian crossing signs
  - Pavement treatment
- Via Mirada
  - Medians
  - Neckdowns
  - Entrance feature on the north end
- Eldorado Street at Iris Canyon Road
  - Entrance feature
  - Partial closure restricting access from Iris Canyon Road
  - Turn restriction from college to limit access to Eldorado Street
- Medians on Iris Canyon Road
- Entrance feature on Don Dahvee Lane

These ideas were combined with those of City staff and the consultant to develop concept plans and variations. These were discussed and revised at the second neighborhood meeting. Additional suggestions were incorporated from that meeting and subsequent meetings with City staff. Several proposals were not supported by residents in attendance, including partial closure at Eldorado Street and Iris Canyon Road and traffic circles on Via Mirada and Eldorado Street.

#### **Final Recommendations**

The Alta Mesa Neighborhood recommended a number of traffic calming devices to be installed on neighborhood streets, shown in the recommended plan in Figure 1. This plan was the result of the neighborhood planning process outlined above. The costs associated with the plan include design and construction costs and estimated loss of on-street parking. The estimated costs are based on similar installations and may vary with actual design and construction costs. These are shown in Table 3.

Figure 1: Traffic Calming Plan for the Alta Mesa Neighborhood



**Table 3: Estimated Costs for Proposed Plan** 

Device	Potential On-Street Parking Loss Per Device	Estimated Cost Per Device*	# of Devices
Entry or Partial Median	4-8 Spaces	\$85,000	5
Ped Crossing w/Pavement Treatment	0 Spaces	\$15,000	1
Reconfigure Eldorado Street & Alta Mesa Road	0 Spaces	\$125,000	1
Realign Iris Canyon Road & Via Mirada	0 Space	\$250,000	1
Curb Extensions – Intersection	8-10 Spaces	\$125,000	2
Modify Existing Curb Extension	0 Spaces	\$15,000	1
Realign Recreation Trail	0 Spaces	\$25,000	1
	Estimate parking loss	~48 spaces	
	Total cost estimate	\$980,000	

Several tools were included to address specific resident concerns with traffic speed, cut-through traffic, and pedestrian safety. The existing intersection of Mesa Road and Eldorado Street is shown in Figure 2. Figure 3 shows a rendering of Alta Mesa Road and Eldorado Street reconfigured to eliminate the right-turn lane from Eldorado Street to Alta Mesa Road and provide a pedestrian refuge median and pavement treatment at the crosswalk on Eldorado Street.

At Eldorado Street and Via Mirada, a median is shown north of the intersection on Eldorado Street and another median is shown east of the intersection on Via Mirada. The intersection of Via Mirada and Iris Canyon Road is realigned to make Iris Canyon Road the clear through movement. The existing intersection is shown in Figure 4 and a rendering of the proposed realignment is shown in Figure 5. An entry median is shown on Via Mirada. The width of the medians on Eldorado Street and on Via Mirada should be designed to maximize the width of the median while maintaining access for emergency response.

The recreation trail at the intersection of Don Dahvee Lane and Munras Avenue is shown as realigned to provide clear delineation of the crossing on Don Dahvee Lane. The entrance to the doctors' offices south of Major Sherman Lane on Eldorado Street is shown with changes to further discourage right turns from Eldorado Street.

### Follow-up Satisfaction Review

It is important that the effectiveness of the plan be monitored and evaluated. Travel patterns before and after installation of the devices should be observed and documented, including traffic speeds and volumes. In addition, resident satisfaction should be evaluated through surveys and neighborhood meetings. The follow-up review should take place after the devices are installed. Results of traffic calming efforts in the Alta Mesa Neighborhood will help the City of Monterey maintain an effective traffic calming program citywide.





Figure 3: Reconfiguration of Alta Mesa Road and Eldorado Street



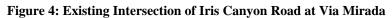




Figure 5: Realignment of Iris Canyon Road at Via Mirada

