



Traffic Calming

Designing Streets to Save Lives

Streets are much more than thoroughfares for cars and trucks. Particularly in poor neighborhoods, they serve walkers, cyclists, and provide recreational opportunities for children. What's more, streets are often the most common place for neighbors to meet and converse, providing vital social and civic functions.

Yet, streets are not safe for the people who use them everyday.

Traffic accidents are the leading cause of death by injury worldwide.

Studies show that slower streets are safer streets, that the probability of injury or death from traffic accidents increases dramatically as traffic speeds increase.

Thus, one of the best ways to increase road safety is to reduce driving speeds.

How Traffic Calming Saves Lives

"Traffic calming" is a set of design-based solutions that reduces speeds and makes streets safer for all users. Traffic calming uses physical design to slow drivers down naturally, make them more aware of their surroundings, and protect the road's most vulnerable users — children, cyclists and pedestrians.

Using low-cost, simple measures, traffic calming is a self-enforcing way to help manage traffic and make the streets safer and more pleasant for all users.

Traffic calmed streets are safer, less noisy, less polluted and more attractive for community activities.

Traffic Death Facts

- 1,170,694 people died from road traffic injuries worldwide in 1998
- Of those deaths, 88% were in developing countries
- Worldwide, up to two-thirds to traffic accident injuries are suffered by pedestrians
- Of those, one-third are children
- In developing countries, the injury rates of pedestrians and cyclists are much higher
- In developing countries, traffic accidents are the second leading cause of death among young people

Goals of Traffic Calming

- Making space available for all street users
- Reducing the number and severity of accidents
- Enhancing quality of life
- Reducing vehicle speeds

Benefits of Traffic Calming

- Inexpensive
- Fewer accidents
- Less severe accidents
- Reduces the need for police enforcement
- Proven effective
- Reduces traffic noise
- Reduces pollution



Photo courtesy of Manfred Breithaupt, GTZ



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