

Traffic Calming in Three European Cities: Recent Experience

Zurich, Munich, and Vienna

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Main Findings

1. Accepted Approach – Traffic calming has been well integrated into the transportation planning process. It is no longer a special case. Many cities are counting on traffic calming to help meet traffic reduction goals.

2. More Funding Needed – Cities are searching for inexpensive ways to implement traffic calming. One approach, linking traffic calming with other (better funded) programs has been successful (e.g. repaving). Zurich's experiment using only painted markings was unsuccessful.



Munich: Children's Transportation Tour

3. Strong Public Involvement – Cities are working closely with the community planning and implementing traffic calming. Three interesting techniques are:

- Citizen Involvement – Neighborhood forums, walking tours, technical assistance.
- Expert Commissions – Objective commissions organized to evaluate traffic calming techniques and programs.
- Partnership Programs – Government working with the private sector and other interest groups to implement traffic calming programs.

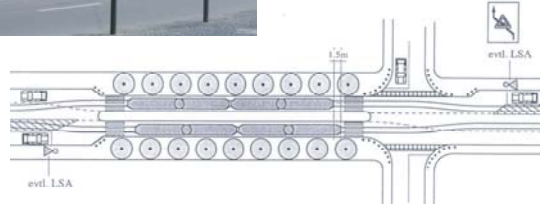
4. Compromise is Critical – Compromise has been very important in implementing traffic calming programs. For example, building underground parking to replace parking lost from traffic calming programs. Removing cars from the surface provides real traffic calming and livability benefits, even if not as environmentally beneficial as simply eliminating them.



5. Additional Research – Experience from these cities shows that we should question 'obvious' solutions to transportation problems, including:

- Can we reduce vehicle space (e.g. narrow arterials) and maintain traffic volumes?
- Can we mix transit and vehicles at tram stops without increasing accidents?
- Can we remove exclusive transit lanes, but maintain transit priority?

What is important about these examples is that while they seem to have minimal impact on traffic they provide enormous benefits for other users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, residents, and businesses on the street. These examples are being tested in some cities – their benefits and impacts are an interesting area for future research.



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