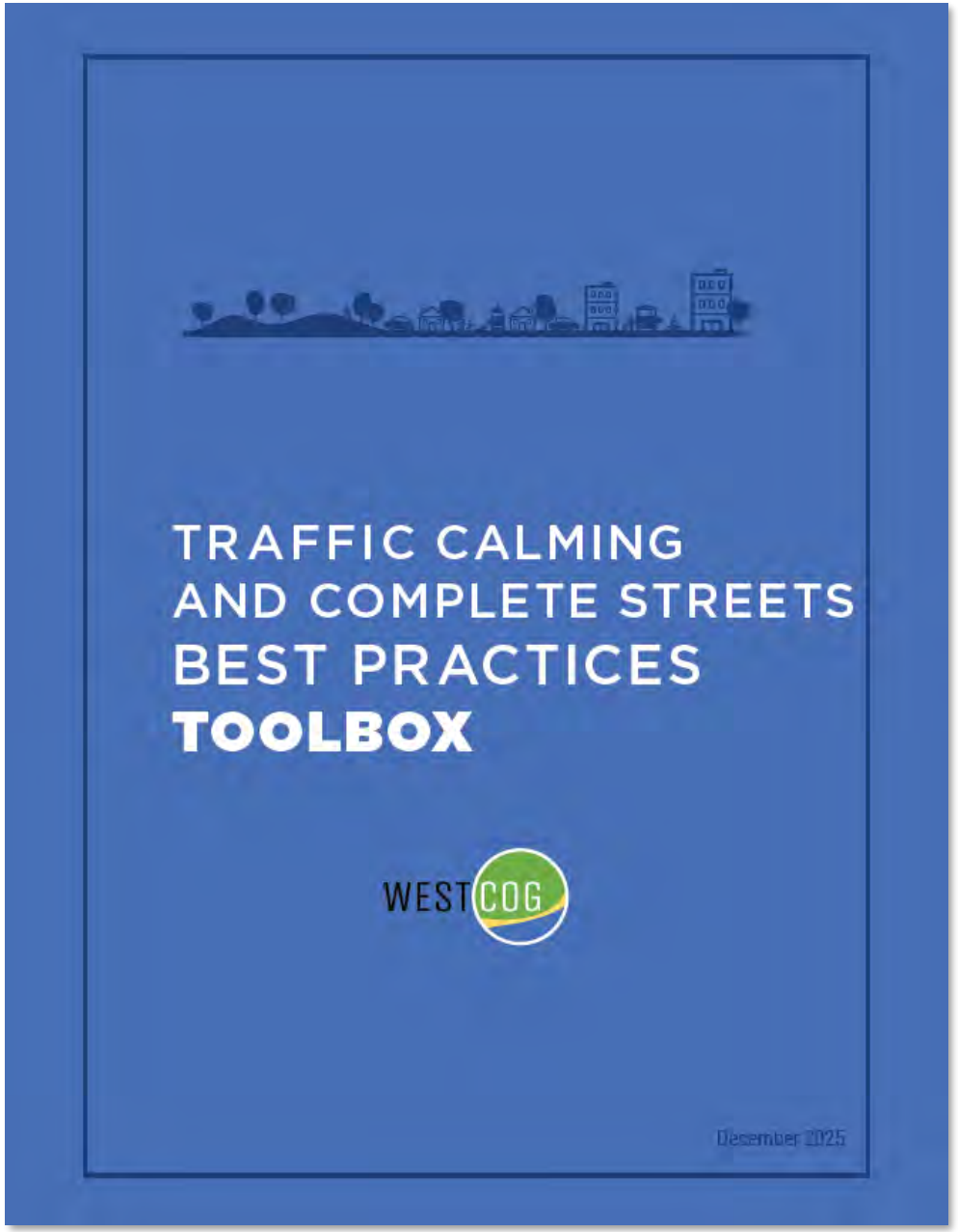
WESTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Traffic Calming and Complete Streets Best Practices Toolbox

Workshop

December 9, 2025



Agenda

1. Welcome!
2. Project Overview
3. Draft Toolbox and Feedback
4. Next Steps

About the Toolbox

- Provides planning precepts and design principles for local and residential roads
- A practical “menu” of traffic calming tools to help WestCOG municipalities plan, design, and implement safer streets

PROJECT PURPOSE

Developing Complete Streets and traffic calming guidance for WestCOG requires a shared understanding of the successes and challenges of the current state of practice. In order to successfully implement traffic calming strategies in WestCOG municipalities, best practices were thoroughly researched nationally and regionally to help shape local recommendations.

Grounded in the principles of context-sensitive design, the Toolbox emphasizes that the selection and application of traffic calming measures must respond to the unique character and functional role of each street and WestCOG municipality. It supports the expansion and connection of the WestCOG region's active transportation network by prioritizing safe, multimodal access to key destinations such as schools. The Toolbox also highlights the importance of well-designed transition zones that communicate shifts in roadway context and reduce speed. It explores opportunities for shared spaces that balance mobility and placemaking, creating people-oriented environments where walking, bicycling, and social activity can co-exist. Finally, the Toolbox encourages a systemic solutions approach rather than spot treatments in a reactive way, focusing on identifying and addressing risk factors, bundling improvements when possible, and advancing proactive, data-driven strategies for implementation.

RESEARCH PROCESS

The research process for this project involved three phases to gather an understanding of the local context, to identify best practices, and to apply these precepts to the WestCOG context in order to create a practical Toolbox. These steps are outlined below.

+ **REGIONAL STATUS QUO:** The project team conducted a preliminary review of local guidance and plans used in the WestCOG region. These documents reflect and respond to a range of contexts and helped the project team to identify shared concerns and opportunities related to improving traffic safety.
+ **FOCUS GROUPS:** Two focus groups were hosted by the project team to engage the local emergency services and responder community, as well as other transportation providers and operators. These discussions helped surface insights incorporated into the toolbox, such as specific operational needs.
+ **BEST PRACTICES REVIEW:** A review of best practices and case studies from around the world was conducted to identify concepts and designs suitable for WestCOG streets.

Project Steps To-Date

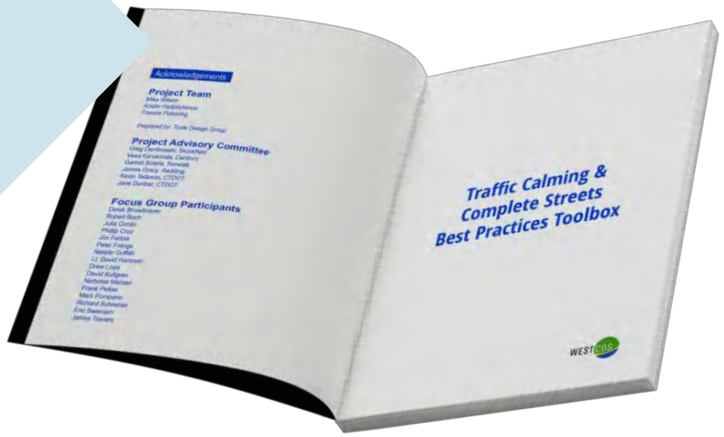
WE ARE HERE!

Regional Status Quo

Focus Groups

Best Practices

Draft Toolbox



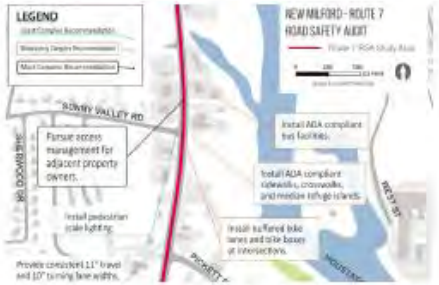
Traffic Calming and Complete Streets Best Practices Toolbox

Research and Process

- Regional Status Quo
  - Researched and reviewed municipal guidance, manuals, and other resources
  - Key themes:
    - Advancing traffic calming & complete streets
    - Realigning intersections
    - Expanding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure
    - Promoting access management
    - Improving parking management

Norwalk developed a series of roundabout concepts for complicated intersections in the City, such as the intersection of South Main Street, Wilson Avenue, Meadow Street, and Meadow Street Extension. (source: City of Norwalk)

The Stamford Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan included a pedestrian activity analysis using Strava data to identify where people are tracking walking and running activity (source: City of Stamford)



New Milford's Route 7 Road Safety Audit assessed a primary community corridor to identify traffic calming measures to reduce speed and improve safety (source: Town of New Milford)

The Glenville Corridor Traffic Improvements Project in Greenwich, CT includes lane realignment, signal upgrades, reduced corner radii, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. (source: Town of Greenwich)

Research and Process

- Focus Groups
  - Local emergency services and responders; Transportation providers and operators
  - Key insights:
    - Challenges w/ rerouting onto local roads
    - Constraints w/ legacy networks
    - Preference for raised crosswalks
    - Coordinating tools w/ development
    - Support education & enforcement tools

Research and Process

- Best Practices Review
  - Key takeaways:
    - Context-sensitive design is fundamental
    - Expand & connect the active transportation network
    - Transition zones are a safety and placemaking priority
    - Evaluate opportunities for shared spaces
    - Promote systemic solutions vs. spot treatments

Toolbox Organization

- Things You Can Do To A Street
  - Physical changes to the right-of-way and traffic control devices such as lane reconfigurations, curb changes, automated enforcement, etc.
- Things You Can Do Beyond A Street
  - Policies and programs such as zoning/guidelines, safety education, transit-oriented development, etc.

UNDERSTANDING THE TOOLBOX

The Traffic Calming and Complete Streets Best Practices Toolbox categorizes the 'tools' into two groups: Things you can do to a street, and things you can do beyond a street.

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO A STREET

Things you can do to a street refers to physical 'on-the-ground' changes to the street itself to reduce speeds, improve safety, and expand mobility.

Examples of measures in this group include lane changes and reconfigurations, curb changes, vertical and horizontal shifts to the travel path, and other self-enforcing geometric changes that reshape the design of the roadway to encourage safer driving behavior and create comfortable spaces for walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

In addition, typical traffic control devices such as speed enforcement and feedback signs, speed limit pavement markings, and automated enforcement are discussed as potential tools for municipalities to incorporate in their traffic calming efforts.

Through design, rethinking the use of the right-of-way, and incorporating elements that help define the area as an attractive space for people to use, the '*things you can do to a street*' can help support community priorities such as mode shift, placemaking, and economic vitality goals.

Curb extensions involve physically installing a measure within the right-of-way: these are a "thing you can do to the street"

THINGS YOU CAN DO BEYOND A STREET

Things you can do beyond a street refers to the tools, strategies, decisions that influence safety and traffic calming beyond the actual design of the street. These measures shape how the street network is used, managed, programmed, and understood.

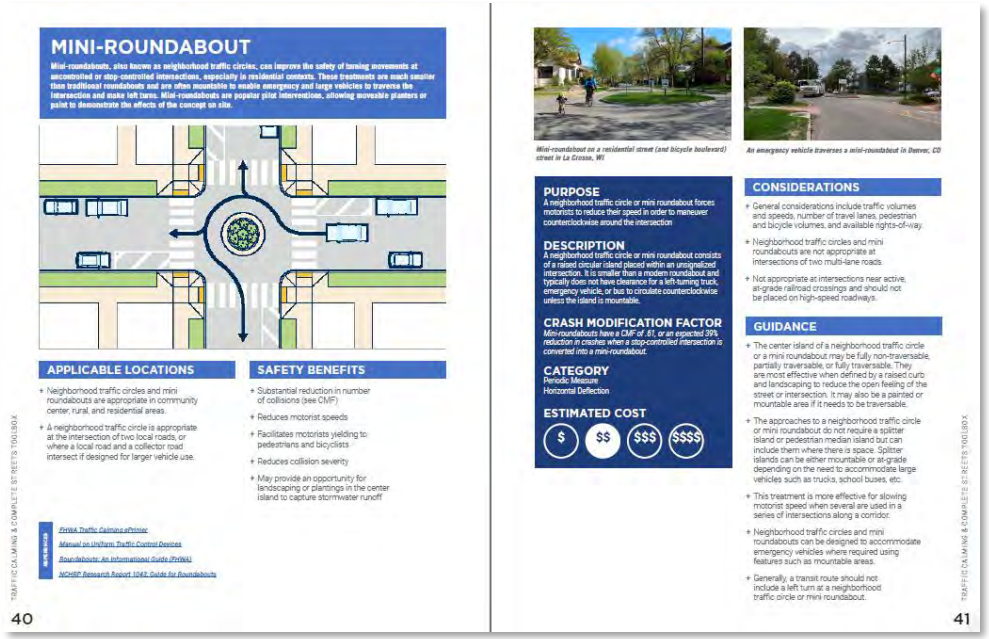
For example, Complete Streets Policies and design guidance can give practitioners a set of standards and requirements to consider in each relevant project. Transit-Oriented Development overlay districts can encourage co-locating housing, businesses, and services adjacent to transit hubs. By linking transportation access and land use, communities in the WestCOG region can support walkable communities and lifestyles, and encourage growth without increasing the demand on the roadway network capacity. As a final example, Safe Routes to School programs can serve as campaigns and focus areas to target traffic calming and safety improvements to school zones as a key safety priority areas.

The '*things you can do beyond a street*' focuses on the surrounding environment and changing the context to shape safer travel patterns and behavior.

Safe Routes to School initiatives can support education and awareness of safe behaviors, but do not change the street design

Toolbox Organization

- Special Street Types
- Periodic Measures
- Cross-section Changes
- Traffic Control Devices
- Softening the Street
- Programs and Planning



Snapshots from the Toolbox

SHARED SPACE

A Shared Space, also frequently referred by the Dutch concept of a *Woonerf*, is a street on which all users share the right-of-way—people walking, biking, rolling, or driving travel at similar speeds and often negotiate movement through visual communication such as eye contact and hand signals. The surface of the street is a single, flush surface, expanding comfortable accessibility, especially for people traveling on foot and allowing the space to support placemaking and programming in a range of residential, commercial, and cultural contexts.

PURPOSE
Shared spaces reduce car throughput and speeds through traffic calming and design features, thus increasing safety and comfort for bicyclists and pedestrians.

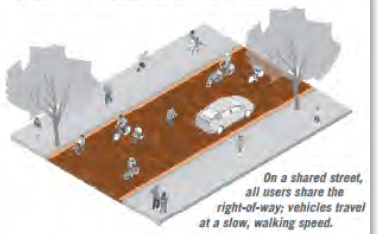
DESCRIPTION
Shared space, sometimes referred to as shared streets, refers to a design concept in which the street surface is level and all users share the public right-of-way. With one level or flush surface, a shared space lacks the formal channelization of modes —i.e., curbs or physical, vertical delineation between spaces for walking, biking, driving, or parking. Shared streets use many traffic calming measures to reduce car throughput and speeds (i.e., to a walking pace), with an emphasis on gateway treatments to alert drivers to the new context, and horizontal treatments such as chicanes.

CRASH MODIFICATION FACTOR
CMF not available; Studies demonstrate a 20% crash reduction on residential streets converted to shared spaces and up to 50% when considering all shared spaces.

CATEGORY
Special Street Type
Highly accessible and slow facility

ESTIMATED COST
$ $$ $$$ $$$$

SAFETY BENEFITS
+ Reduces motorist speeds
+ Facilitates yielding to pedestrians and bicyclists
+ Discourages motor vehicle traffic
+ Curbless design improves accessibility and encourages cautious behavior by all users



On a shared street, all users share the right-of-way; vehicles travel at a slow, walking speed.

CONSIDERATIONS
+ Design must meet ADA standards, including detectable warnings at points where pedestrians should expect to interact with vehicles, and a clear, unobstructed pedestrian access route where no vehicles are allowed
+ Shared street signage, pavement treatments, or other gateway designs should be used at entrances to a shared street to alert all users to the change in environment and expectations
+ Vehicle speeds must be kept very low (i.e., walking speed) to ensure safety
+ Generally inappropriate on streets with through travel
+ Generally, streets with more than 100 vehicles per hour are inappropriate. Where necessary, volumes may be reduced through other traffic calming elements as part of the conversion of a street into a shared environment
+ Emergency access and loading activities must also be considered

APPLICABLE LOCATIONS
+ Shared spaces are appropriate in urban core and community center areas where there are a lot of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other roadways users, with anticipated conflicts with motorists

REFERENCES
- FHWA Accessible Shared Streets
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide
- DVRPC Curbless Streets
- Montgomery County Curbless and Shared Streets Design Guide

RAISED CROSSWALK

A raised crosswalk is a speed table that includes a marked pedestrian crossing. In addition to the speed reduction benefits of a traditional speed table, raised crosswalks have other safety benefits as the added elevation makes pedestrians more visible to drivers and increases drivers' yielding rates. These measures are frequently paired with mid-block crossings that may otherwise be uncontrolled and are mostly applied in areas with high pedestrian activity and demand, such as access points for transit stations, schools, or trails.

PURPOSE
Raised crosswalks provide vertical deflection at crossing locations, requiring motorists to slow on approach to the crosswalk. This treatment also improves visibility between pedestrians and motorists, encouraging yielding to pedestrians at the crosswalk.

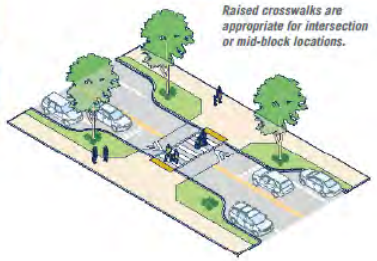
DESCRIPTION
Raised crosswalks raise the crossing area to the same level as the sidewalk, requiring motorists to ramp up to 'sidewalk level' and then back down.

CRASH MODIFICATION FACTOR
Raised crosswalks show a 46% reduction in injury crashes between motorists and pedestrians, and a 51% reduction in crashes between bicyclists and motorists

CATEGORY
Periodic Measure
Vertical Deflection

ESTIMATED COST
$ $$ $$$ $$$$

SAFETY BENEFITS
+ Reduces overall motorist speed
+ Increases visibility of pedestrians to motorists
+ May increase yielding to pedestrians
+ Provides a level crossing, making it easier for people with mobility challenges to cross the street
+ Can be used as a gateway treatment to help highlight that the intersection and approaching area is pedestrian-priority



Raised crosswalks are appropriate for intersection or mid-block locations.

APPLICABLE LOCATIONS
+ Raised crosswalks are recommended for residential local streets or a collector street. They can be placed at mid-block crossing location or at an intersection. They are, typically, installed in locations with a curb.

REFERENCES
- FHWA Traffic Calming ePrimer
- ITE Traffic Calming Fact Sheets
- FHWA Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations
- Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

LANE RECONFIGURATION

Lane reconfiguration, also known as a road diet, provides an opportunity to redesign the right-of-way for significant safety and traffic calming elements without major construction. These projects redesign the roadway to feature fewer but better organized travel lanes, and typically convert a four-lane roadway into a design with one lane in each direction and a center turn lane. The space made available by reducing and narrowing travel lanes can be reclaimed for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, transit, parking, or other streetscaping to support placemaking.

Before and after images of a lane reconfiguration project in Athens, GA

PURPOSE
Removing lanes and reconfiguring space reduces vehicle speeds by visually decreasing and narrowing the roadway.

DESCRIPTION
Lane Reconfiguration or Road Diet refers to the removal of motor vehicle lanes from a street's cross-section which opens up reallocated space to be used for various purposes (e.g., wider sidewalks, landscaped spaces, street trees, stormwater infrastructure, bike lanes, parking, etc.). The FHWA offers a Road Diet Informational Guide for recommended design treatments and configurations depending on the context of the street.

CRASH MODIFICATION FACTOR
In practice, for the typical case of a 4-lane to 3-lane conversion, a road diet has been shown to reduce crashes by 47% in suburban areas and

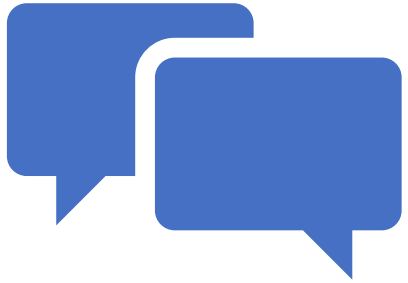
CATEGORY
Cross-section Change
Street Width Reduction

ESTIMATED COST
$ $$ $$$ $$$$

Lane Reconfiguration in Athens, GA

REFERENCES
- FHWA Road Diet Informational Guide
- FHWA Achieving Multimodal Networks

What we've heard

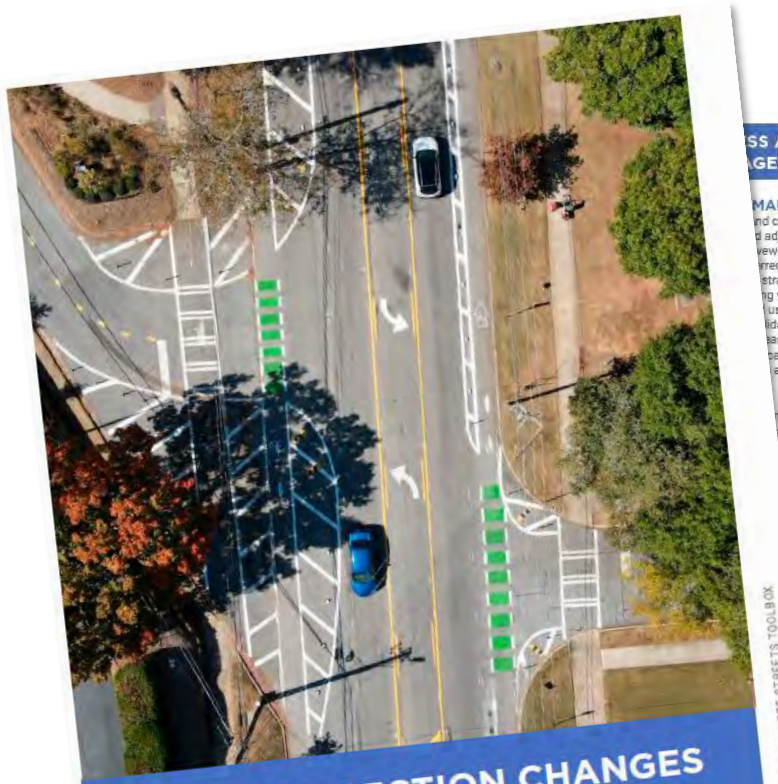


- Integrating **local examples** within the region (call-outs), **guidance,** and **available data** to support decision-making and tool siting
  - *If you have examples or projects you'd like to share – let us know!*
- Expand the discussion of priorities and safety needs especially for **transition zones** and **community priority areas**
- Identify **ownership-based candidacy** (e.g., local state-owned roads)
- Reinforce **Gateway** measures as their own category

Tell Us Your Thoughts!

- What are your **general impressions** of the Toolbox?
- Is the Toolbox **practical** and **user-friendly**?
- Does the **“Things You Can Do to a Street”** and **“Things You Can Do Beyond a Street”** organization feel intuitive?
- Does the Toolbox provide **clear implementation pathways** for projects?
- How would you use this Toolbox moving forward?

Anything else?



CROSS-SECTION CHANGES

- Horizontal Deflection
- Street Width Reduction
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities

TRAFFIC CALMING & COMPLETE STREETS TOOLBOX 49

SS AND NETWORK GEMENT

MANAGEMENT

nd control of access to and from
d adjacent developments through
veways, ingress and egress, and other
rred to as access management. Access
strategies to limit frequent conflicts
g vehicles and pedestrians, bicyclists,
users can be explored to improve safety,
idating curb cuts as much as possible.
easures used for access management
calming also by reducing the speed of
and providing priority to people walking

ment strategies can include minimum
egulations, and turning restrictions.
ents for driveways help reduce
urb cuts and turning movements
oning regulations can require
ccess such that motorists enter at
access multiple properties by foot
e-entering the roadway. Turn lanes
ons (both in policy and in design)
flicts between roadway users.
gies helps reduce the frequency
ts and can support more attentive
motorists and other roadway

Sample recommendations from the Ridgefield, CT Curbcut Plan

NETWORKS AND "A-SIDE" FRONTAGES

Many traditional downtowns use public lots and side- or rear-lot parking to keep storefronts and sidewalks continuous on their primary streets. When buildings have minimal front setbacks and most vehicle access is from side streets or shared lots, the result is a more walkable main street with fewer driveways and a clearer pedestrian realm. This approach can be supported in zoning by allowing shared off-street parking, encouraging rear or side-lot access where feasible, and limiting new curb cuts on key main streets.

Example of connecting network design and land use to strengthen the pedestrian experience and promote "A-side" Frontages

TRAFFIC CALMING & COMPLETE STREETS TOOLBOX 85

SPEED FEEDBACK SIGNS

Speed feedback signs use radar technology to capture the speed of approaching vehicles; this real-time information is then presented on a feedback sign. In some instances, the feedback sign will flash the real-time speed if the driver is traveling faster than the posted speed limit, to bring awareness to this discrepancy and urge drivers to slow down. Feedback signs are often placed in transition zones, especially near School Zones or similar areas with high activity.

PURPOSE

feedback signs provide awareness to motorists
motorists better comply with
k signs are particular
s less congested in order

mic message sign that
o determine the speed of
n displays the speed to the

ATION FACTOR

own to reduce the number of

OST

$$$ $$$$

Speed feedback sign in Saint Paul, MN

MUTCD standards for speed feedback signs (W13-20 and W13-20aP; source: MUTCD)

EFITS

s can reduce speeds and
es by alerting drivers when
ove the posted speed limit

the MUTCD Section 2c.13, the
ack text on a yellow background.

d Intersection Improvement Guide

rom Traffic Control Devices

APPLICABLE LOCATIONS

+ Speed feedback signs may be appropriate in transition zone settings where there is a change in speed limit or land-use expected
+ Signs are appropriate at locations where speeding is observed however, signs should be paired with other traffic calming measures to ensure longer-term compliance
+ Speed feedback signs may also be appropriate in locations where there are changes to the posted speed limit during specific times and days of the week (i.e. during school hours)

REGIONAL EFFORTS AND PRIORITIES

Complete Streets initiatives and improvements, and this Toolbox serves to equip all member municipalities with practical guidance on continuing and expanding these efforts. To understand the current context, a review of regional plans, studies, and priorities was conducted and key themes and strategies are summarized below.

A preliminary gap analysis revealed opportunities for WestCOG and its member municipalities to build greater consistency and depth in applying Complete Streets and traffic calming principles across the region. The analysis underscores the importance of adopting context-sensitive, evidence-based design approaches; requiring pedestrian facilities as the default in new developments and roadway projects; and supporting funding mechanisms such as payment-in-lieu-of-sidewalks (PILOS) programs to close network gaps.

It also highlights opportunities to realign intersections to 90-degree angles, establish preferred rather than minimum facility widths, and develop a regional project prioritization framework to promote data-driven and transparent decision-making.

Additional priorities include integrating national best practices and design guides, advancing access management and right-sized parking strategies, and updating local codes to better support shared street concepts and emerging micromobility technologies. Together, these recommendations form the foundation of the Toolbox, positioning it as a practical resource to help WestCOG municipalities design safer, more connected, and contextually appropriate streets.

...d a series of roundabout concepts for ...ections in the City, such as the intersection of ...Wilson Avenue, Meadow Street, and Meadow ...ource: City of Norwalk)

The Stamford Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan included a pedestrian activity analysis using Strava data to identify where people are tracking walking and running activity (source: City of Stamford)

New Milford's Route 7 Road Safety Audit assessed a primary community corridor to identify traffic calming measures to reduce speed and improve safety (source: Town of New Milford)

The Glenville Corridor Traffic Improvements Project in Greenwich, CT includes lane realignment, signal upgrades, reduced corner radii, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. (source: Town of Greenwich)

TRAFFIC CALMING & COMPLETE STREETS TOOLBOX 3

Thank you

Questions? Contact:

Mike Wilson | *mwilson@westcog.org*

Carrie Long | *clong@tooledesign.com*

TOOLE DESIGN