

Draft Residential Traffic Calming Policy

July 8, 2026

Prepared for:
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This Draft Residential Traffic Calming Policy has been prepared under the direction of a licensed Traffic Engineer. The licensed Traffic Engineer attests to the technical information contained therein and has judged the qualifications of any technical specialists providing engineering data from which recommendations, conclusions and decisions are based.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Residential Traffic Calming Policy (Policy) has been initiated by the City of Atwater (City) to address concerns from the public and provide safe neighborhood transportation citywide. Concerns from the public can include items such as speeding on local roads, insufficient sight lines, pedestrian safety, and cut-through traffic on local roads. This Policy has been created to provide the public with a system to collaborate with the City to ensure safe travel for all residents through the implementation of traffic calming measures. Traffic calming measures can be defined as any physical feature or strategy used to correct undesirable behaviors and provide protection to users of all modes of transportation.

This Policy provides a transparent and engineering-based procedure that residents can utilize to address transportation concerns within their community. All traffic calming measures implemented through this Policy will be made through communication between residents, the City Engineer and various City departments including the Public Works Department, Police Department, and Fire Department.

1.2 Goals and Objectives

With this Policy, the City intends to:

- Establish a productive channel for residents to voice transportation-based concerns within their community.
- Provide City staff with a clear and predictable procedure to process complaints and safety concerns.
- Improve the safety for all modes of transportation within residential areas with special attention to vulnerable groups such as the children, seniors, persons with disabilities, and students.
- Implement traffic calming projects based on residents' concerns and data-based analysis.
- Maintain emergency response times for the Fire Department, Police Department, and medical transport services.
- Minimize undesirable motorist behaviors, cut-through traffic, and reduce speeds in residential areas.

The main objective of this Policy is to provide a procedure that residents can employ to address concerns they have made from observations within their neighborhood. Additionally, this Policy will provide the City with the means to process these complaints and provide the community with traffic calming measures that are implemented when the appropriate analyses indicate the benefits. A safer transportation network for all users can be achieved through the realization of this Policy.

2. Traffic Calming Measure Levels

2.1 Definition of Traffic Calming Measure Levels

Traffic calming measures vary in intensity of cost, timeline, and degree of physical modifications to the roadway. Under this Policy, traffic calming measures are divided amongst three levels which increase in terms of intensity.

- Level 1: Requires no physical modification to existing roadway features and can be implemented rapidly with little to no material cost. Involves concepts such as community outreach and communication, increased enforcement, and additional signage.
- Level 2: Includes the implementation of minor roadway features that can be recommended with minimal analysis and moderate material costs in a reasonable timeline. Measures included in this level consist of striped features that can affect driver, pedestrian, and bicyclist paths and signs that emphasize the control at an intersection.
- Level 3: More major permanent alterations of roadway features that require extensive analysis, higher costs, and extended timelines that vary greatly on the specific measure. These measures expand on concepts in Level 2 by creating more permanent features that alter the physical layout or features of a roadway. Measures included in this level consist of speed humps, traffic circles, and raised medians.

In the procedures of this Policy, Level 1 measures are to be implemented prior to Level 2 or 3 measures and are accompanied with the collection of the relevant data. If the Level 1 measure is deemed unsatisfactory, appropriate analysis through the comparison of data and interdepartmental communication will be required to proceed with Level 2 or 3 measures.

2.2 Level 1 Measures Table

Measure	Description
Increased Enforcement	Increased police presence in the area typically used to address roadways with the issue of driver speed.
Neighborhood Signs	Signs that are specific to neighborhoods used to raise driver awareness of roadway surroundings. Examples include “Children at Play” and “Drive Slow”.
Public Outreach	Use of mailers, door hangers, or neighborhood meetings that promote sound driving behavior appropriate for local roadways.
Speed Limits Signs	Installation of speed limit signs to remind drivers that local roadways are intended to be driven at safe and appropriate speeds.
Crosswalk Visibility	Implementation of signage or high-visibility striping at existing crosswalks to better demonstrate the designated crossing area to drivers and pedestrians.
Turn Restriction Signs	Signs that aim to limit turns during all or specific times to prevent more dangerous movements or cut-through traffic.
Speed Radar Trailer	A portable feedback sign that displays real-time vehicle speeds and flashes when vehicles exceed the posted speed limit.
Corner Sight Distance Clearance	Removing foliage, obstructions, and prohibiting parking near areas of concern to provide appropriate sight line clearances for drivers.

2.3 Level 2 Measures Table

Measure	Description
Stop Signs	Emphasis of traffic controls through the use of stop signs. This can be used to emphasize the stopping approaches or change traffic controls to an all-way stop.
Restriping	Restriping of lanes to establish the travelled way or create narrower lanes to reduce roadway widths and promote slower travel.
Optical Speed Bars	Short white stripes that decrease in spacing as you progress through the roadway that causes drivers to perceive that they are increasing speed.
Painted Chicanes	A series of alternating curves that are painted on the roadway to promote slower speeds from drivers along a roadway segment.
Painted Lateral Shifts	A singular reverse curve that is painted on the roadway to promote slower speeds from drivers at a specific sensitive location.
Pavement Messages	Painted legends with messages used to raise driver awareness of roadway surroundings or conditions. Examples include "SLOW" or "SCHOOL".

2.4 Level 3 Measures Table

Measure	Description
Speed Humps	An abrupt vertical deviation in the roadway elevation that requires driver to slow down to comfortably cross possibly preventing cut-through traffic.
Rumble Strips	Small grooves cut into pavement creating noise and vibrations inside the vehicles. Causing vehicles to stay on a designated path or slow down.
Traffic Circles	Raised islands centered on an intersection used to slow speeds and promote safety.
Chicanes	A series of alternating curves on the roadway that are created from curb extension to promote slower speeds from drivers along a roadway segment.
Chokers	Curb extensions that narrow specific sections of a roadway to promote pedestrian safety and reduced speeds.
Conversion to Cul-De-Sac	Closures of through traffic on a local roadway to completely prevent cut-through traffic.
Raised Medians	Raised islands along the median to physically prevent specific movements that are considered dangerous or promote cut-through traffic.

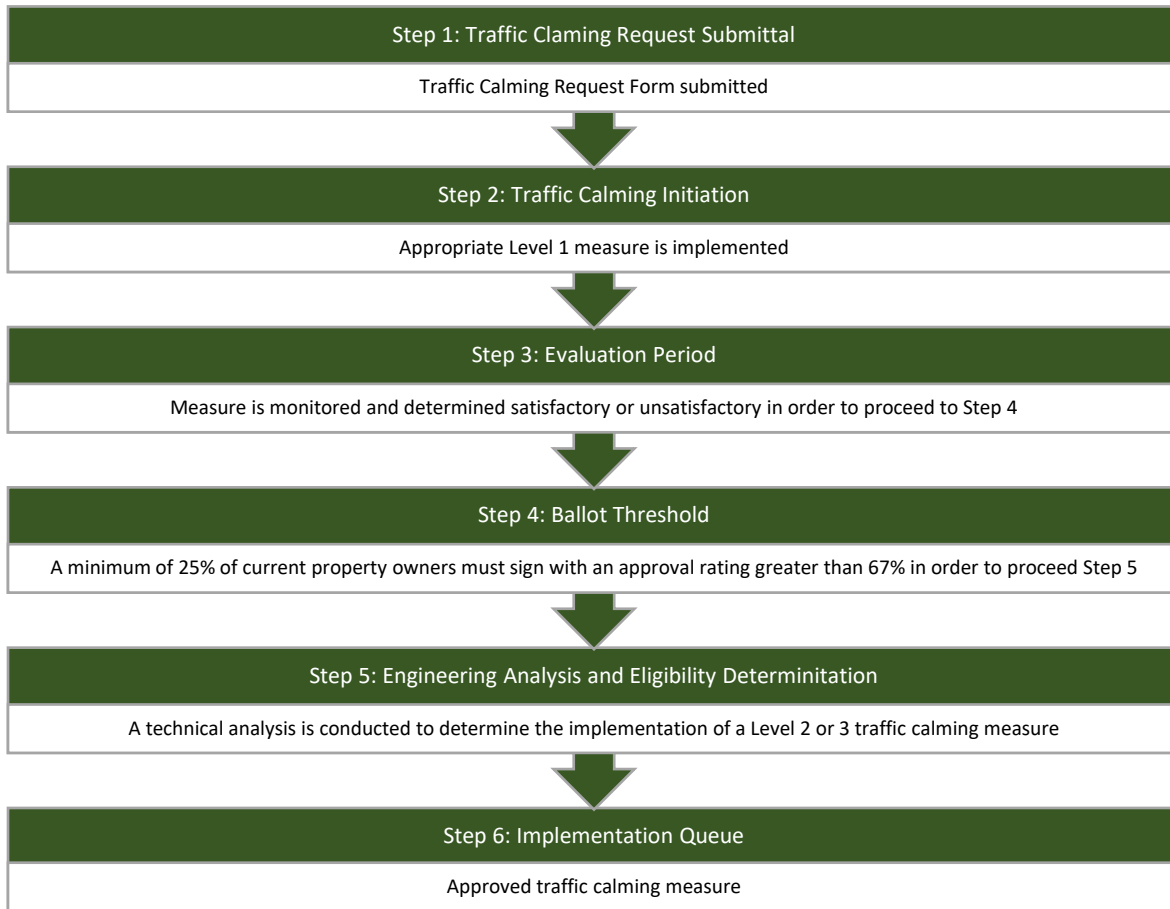
3. Traffic Calming Measure Procedures

3.1 Steps for Initiating Traffic Calming Measure

- Step 1 – Traffic Calming Request Submittal: Applicant submits a completed Traffic Calming Request Form, located in Appendix A, to the City Engineering Division with a description of the concern and personal information. Applicant must be a current resident or property owner located near the area of concern.
- Step 2 – Traffic Calming Initiation: City Engineer reviews request and available information to determine the Level 1 Measure to be implemented and collects the appropriate data if not already available.
- Step 3 – Evaluation Period: Level 1 Measure is monitored over the course of a 60-day period. After this period, it will be determined whether the Level 1 Measure is satisfactory. If satisfactory, the initial complaint will be deemed satisfied and no further action will be taken. If the Level 1 Measure was unsatisfactory, proceed to Step 4.
- Step 4 – Ballot Threshold: An area of Benefit would be determined by the City Engineer. The City will mail a Ballot to the registered property owners of the area of benefit. A minimum of 25% of current property owners must sign with an approval rating greater than 67% in order for the request to advance. If this threshold is not met, the City Engineer will determine that the Level 1 Measure was satisfactory and no further action will be taken. If this threshold is met, proceed to Step 5.
- Step 5 – Engineering Analysis and Eligibility Determination: The City Engineer collects the appropriate information for comparing to original data sets and performs the appropriate technical analysis necessary to determine if and what Level 2 or Level 3 Measure should be implemented. This technical analysis and decision will be made with coordination between the City Engineer and the City Public Works Department, Police Department, Fire Department, and medical transport services. If the area is determined not eligible for a Level 2 or Level 3 Measure, a formal letter will be sent to the applicant explaining the reason(s) behind the decision. If the area is determined eligible for a Level 2 or Level 3 Measure, a City Council meeting will be held to discuss the proposed Level 2 or Level 3 Measure to inform the community of the proposed changes.
- Step 6 – Implementation Queue: Approved traffic calming measure(s) are placed into a queue and prioritized based on severity of concern, cost, time to implement, and effect on vulnerable groups.

3.2 Traffic Calming Measure Initiation Flow Chat

The flow chart below summarizes the steps for requesting the implementation of a traffic calming measure.



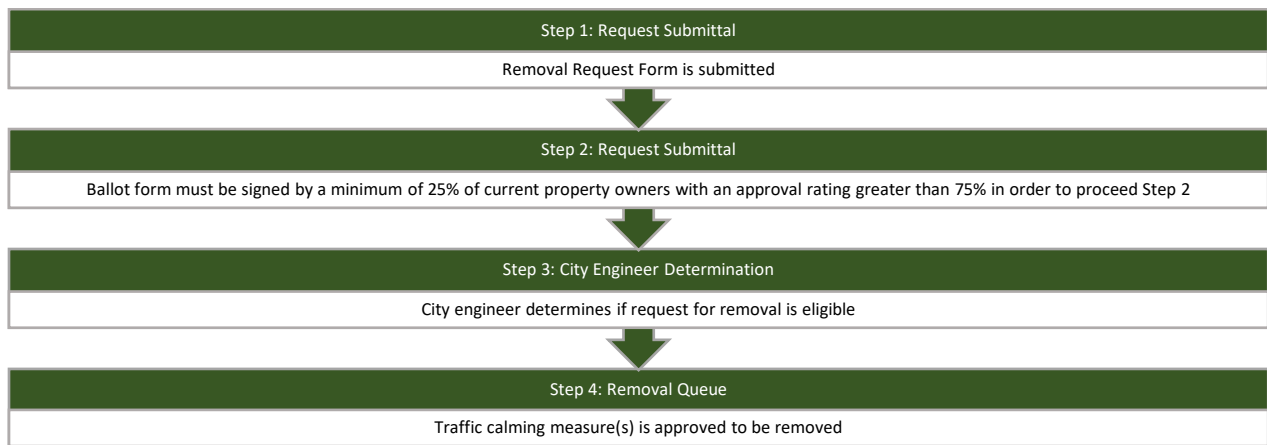
3.3 Steps for Removing Traffic Calming Measure

- Step 1 – Removal Request Submittal: Applicant submits a completed Removal Request Form, located in Appendix B, to the City Engineering Division with a description of the concern and personal information. Applicant must be a current resident or property owner located near the area of concern.
- Step 2 – Ballot Threshold: The City will mail out a Ballot to the property owners within the area of benefit. A minimum of 25% of current property owners must sign with an approval rating greater than 75% in order for the request to advance. If this threshold is not met, the City Engineer will determine that the traffic calming measure(s) is satisfactory and no further action will be taken. If this threshold is met, proceed to Step 3.

- Step 3 – City Engineer Determination: City Engineer will review request and determine whether the request for removal is eligible based on data and reason for implementation. If the City Engineer determines the traffic calming measure(s) is not eligible for removal, a formal letter will be sent to the applicant explaining the reason(s) behind the decision. If the City Engineer determines the traffic calming measure is eligible for removal, proceed to Step 4.
- Step 4 – Removal Queue: Traffic calming measure(s) approved to be removed are placed into a queue and prioritized based on severity of concern, cost, time to implement, and effect on vulnerable groups.

3.4 Traffic Calming Measure Removal Flow Chart

The flow chart below summarizes the steps for requesting the removal of a traffic calming measure.



3.5 Appeals or Denials Processes

If the City Engineer does not approve an application, then the applicant can appeal that decision to the City Manager within a 30-day period. The City Manager will review the application and make the final determination. In the event that a request for installation is denied, a similar request at the same location will not be considered for a period of two (2) years from the submitted request.

4. Traffic Calming Measure Descriptions

4.1 Level 1 Traffic Calming Measure Descriptions

Below are descriptions for the Level 1 Traffic Calming Measures.

Increased Enforcement:

Increased police enforcement targeted for the specific concern. Specific concerns can include, but are not limited to, speeding or illegal movements.

Pros

- No material costs
- Short implementation timeline
- Actively addresses reason for complaint

Cons

- Not implemented in perpetuity
- Dependent on available staffing
- May not fully address underlying issue

Neighborhood Signs:

Signage specific to neighborhoods intended to raise driver awareness of surrounding conditions. Examples include “Children at Play”, “Share the Road”, and “Drive Slow”. This traffic calming measure works best in support of other measures.

Pros

- Low material and maintenance costs
- Short implementation timeline
- Implemented in perpetuity

Cons

- Passively addresses reason for complaint
- Does not address underlying issue
- Potential to lead to sign clutter

Public Outreach:

Use of mailers, door hangers, or neighborhood meetings that promote sound driving behavior appropriate for local roadways. This traffic calming measure works best in support of other measures.

Pros

- Low material costs
- Short implementation timeline
- Builds sense of community and spreads awareness

Cons

- Passively addresses reason for complaint
- Does not address underlying issue
- Dependent on available staffing

Speed Limit Signs:

Installation of speed limit signs to remind drivers that local roadways are intended to be driven at safe and appropriate speeds. Requires an engineering and traffic survey by a registered engineer to propose posted speed.

Pros

- Low material and maintenance costs
- Implemented in perpetuity
- Establishes legal precedent

Cons

- Passively addresses reason for complaint
- Does not address underlying issue
- May require updated engineering and traffic survey if not classified as a residential or central business district

Crosswalk Visibility:

Implementation of signage or high-visibility striping at existing crosswalks to better demonstrate the designated crossing area to both drivers and pedestrians.

Pros

- Low material costs
- Short implementation timeline
- Implemented in perpetuity

Cons

- Passively addresses reason for complaint
- Requires maintenance periodically

Turn Restriction Signs:

Signage that aims to limit turns during all or specific times to prevent more dangerous movements or cut-through traffic.

Pros

- Low material costs
- Short implementation timeline
- Implemented in perpetuity

Cons

- Passively addresses reason for complaint
- Does not address underlying issue
- Potential to lead to sign clutter

Speed Radar Trailer:

A portable feedback sign that displays real-time vehicles speeds and flashes when vehicles exceed the posted speed limit. This traffic calming feature require the City purchase speed radar trailer(s) that can be rotated to areas of concerns.

Pros

- Low material costs
- Short implementation timeline
- Provides immediate feedback to bad driving behaviors

Cons

- Not implemented in perpetuity
- Passively addresses reason for complaint
- Does not address underlying issue

Corner Sight Distance Clearance:

Removing foliage, obstructions, and prohibiting parking near areas of concern to provide appropriate sight line clearances for drivers.

Pros

- Actively addresses reason for complaint
- Addresses underlying issue
- Potentially a low cost and short implementation timeline

Cons

- Potential cost and timelines dependent on type of obstruction
- May require maintenance periodically

4.2 Level 2 Traffic Calming Measure Descriptions

Below are descriptions for the Level 2 Traffic Calming Measures.

Stop Signs:

Emphasis of traffic controls through the use of stop signs. This can be used to emphasize the stopping approaches or change traffic controls to an all-way stop. This is intended to increase safety, not reduce speeds.

Pros

- Low material and maintenance costs
- Actively addresses reason for complaint
- Implemented in perpetuity

Cons

- Requires analysis by a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- Potential to increase congestion
- Changes characteristic of intersection

Restriping:

Restriping of lanes to establish the travelled way or create narrower lanes to reduce roadway widths and promote slower travel.

Pros

- Low material costs
- Implemented in perpetuity

Cons

- Passively addresses reason for complaint
- Requires maintenance periodically

Optical Speed Bars:

Short white stripes that decrease in spacing as you progress through the roadway that causes drivers to perceive that they are increasing speed.

Pros

- Low material costs
- Implemented in perpetuity

Cons

- Passively addresses reason for complaint
- Requires maintenance periodically
- Requires plans from a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer

Painted Chicanes:

A series of alternating curves that are painted on the roadway to promote slower speeds from drivers along a roadway segment.

Pros

- Low material costs
- Implemented in perpetuity
- Actively addresses reason for complaint

Cons

- Requires more roadway width taking from other areas such as bike lanes
- Requires plans from a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- Can be disregarded by drivers leading to potential safety risks
- Requires maintenance periodically
- Potentially unfavorable to residents

Painted Lateral Shifts:

A singular reverse curve that is painted on the roadway to promote slower speeds from drivers at a specific sensitive location.

Pros

- Low material costs
- Implemented in perpetuity
- Actively addresses reason for complaint

Cons

- Requires more roadway width taking from other areas such as bike lanes
- Requires plans from a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- Can be disregarded by drivers leading to potential safety risks
- Requires maintenance periodically
- Potentially unfavorable to residents

Pavement Messages:

Painted legends with messages used to raise driver awareness of roadway surroundings or conditions. Examples include “SLOW” or “SCHOOL”.

Pros

- Low material costs
- Implemented in perpetuity

Cons

- Passively addresses reason for complaint
- Requires maintenance periodically

4.3 Level 3 Traffic Calming Measure Descriptions

Below are descriptions for the Level 3 Traffic Calming Measures.

Speed Humps:

An abrupt vertical deviation in the roadway elevation that requires driver to slow down to comfortably cross possibly preventing cut-through traffic.

Pros

- Actively addresses reason for complaint
- Forces drivers to adhere to measure
- Implemented in perpetuity
- Proven method with available information for guidance

Cons

- Affects emergency response times
- Requires interdepartmental concurrence
- Physical change to roadway features

Rumble Strips:

Small grooves cut into pavement creating noise and vibrations inside the vehicles. Causing vehicles to stay on a designated path or slow down.

Pros

- Actively addresses reason for complaint
- Implemented in perpetuity
- Low material cost

Cons

- Affects emergency response times
- Physical change to roadway features
- Increase in noise levels

Mini-Traffic Circles:

Raised islands centered on an intersection used to slow speeds and promote safety.

Pros

- Implemented in perpetuity
- Actively addresses reason for complaint
- Forces drivers to adhere to measure
- Proven method with available information for guidance

Cons

- Requires plans from a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- High cost and longer implementation timeline
- Physical change to roadway features
- Potentially unfavorable to residents

Chicanes:

A series of alternating curves on the roadway that are created from curb extension to promote slower speeds from drivers along a roadway segment.

Pros

- Implemented in perpetuity
- Actively addresses reason for complaint
- Forces drivers to adhere to measure

Cons

- Requires plans from a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- High cost and longer implementation timeline
- Physical change to roadway features
- Potentially unfavorable to residents

Chokers:

Curb extensions that narrow specific sections of a roadway to promote pedestrian safety and reduced speeds.

Pros

- Implemented in perpetuity
- Actively addresses reason for complaint
- Forces drivers to adhere to measure

Cons

- Requires plans from a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- High cost and longer implementation timeline
- Physical change to roadway features
- Potentially unfavorable to residents

Conversion to Cul-De-Sac:

Closures of through traffic on a local roadway to completely prevent cut-through traffic.

Pros

- Implemented in perpetuity
- Actively addresses reason for complaint
- Forces drivers to adhere to measure

Cons

- Requires plans from a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- Requires analysis by a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- High cost and longer implementation timeline
- Physical change to roadway features

Raised Medians:

Raised islands along the roadway to physically prevent specific movements that are considered dangerous or allow for cut-through traffic.

Pros

- Implemented in perpetuity
- Actively addresses reason for complaint
- Forces drivers to adhere to measure

Cons

- Requires plans from a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- Requires analysis by a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer
- High cost and longer implementation timeline
- Physical change to roadway features

Appendix A: Traffic Calming Request Form



www.JLBtraffic.com
info@JLBtraffic.com

516 W. Shaw Ave., Ste. 103
Fresno, CA 93704
(559) 570-8991

A p p | A

Traffic Calming Request Form

Please complete this form and return it to the City Engineer. A separate form must be submitted for each requested location. This form initiates Step 1 of the process described in Section 3.

Applicant Information

Date:

Applicant Name:

Property Address:

Daytime Phone Number:

Email Address:

Location of Concern

Street Name or Two for Intersections:

Segment Boundaries (from / to):

Nature of Concern

- ☐ Vehicle Speeding ☐ Cut-Through Traffic ☐ Pedestrian Safety ☐ Bicycle Safety
- ☐ Sight Distance / Visibility ☐ Other (describe below)

Description of Concern

Please describe the concern including details such as times of day when the issue is most noticeable:

Certification

I certify that I am a property owner or resident within the vicinity of the location described above and that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix B: Removal Request Form



www.JLBtraffic.com
info@JLBtraffic.com

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A p p | B



Removal Request Form

Please complete this form and return it to the City Engineer. A separate form must be submitted for each requested location. This form initiates Step 1 of the process described in Section 3.

Applicant Information

Date:

Applicant Name:

Property Address:

Daytime Phone Number:

Email Address:

Location of Concern

Street Name or Two for Intersections:

Segment Boundaries (from / to):

Description of Concern

Please describe the traffic calming measure of concern:

Certification

I certify that I am a property owner or resident within the vicinity of the location described above and that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date:
