

## Creating reduced traffic areas in Freiburg/ Germany

### 1. Overview

In the year 1996 the Dep. of Civil Engineering in the City of Freiburg created a new pattern to reduce and calm traffic near residential areas by using simple instruments to change the areas to a place where children have the possibility to play but cars can still pass through. The campaign is both child-friendly and reduces traffic dramatically. Up to this day, the concept has been successfully implemented in more than 150 other streets in and surrounding areas of Freiburg.

### 2. Activity description

#### Background and Objectives

The City of Freiburg turned its back as early as the 1960s to a car-oriented traffic policy. The City's 1979 General Traffic Plan is a clear sign in favour of eco-friendly and sustainable modes of transport. To offer the citizens an alternative to car-based individual traffic, the so-called Umweltverbund (eco-friendly integrated transport system) favours and supports walking, cycling and local public transport.

The idea of creating an area which is both a playground for children and a road for cars has of course existed before. Previous concepts, though, had always concentrated on the fact that the road and the pavement had to be of the same level of height. This fact turned out to be a mayor problem in Freiburg because most of the streets are lined by pavements which are elevated from road surface. If one still wanted to change these roads into areas where traffic is reduced huge costs for reconstruction would have arisen. With the new concept created 1996 in Freiburg it is possible to establish reduced traffic areas using simple methods such as road markings or bollards.

#### Implementation

Residents interested in reducing and calming traffic in their vicinity are motivated by the City of Freiburg to collect signatures from the neighbours in their street and send the list to the city council. An application form addressed to the Dep. of Civil Engineering is available on the municipal website.

On application the Dep. of Civil Engineering then investigates if the specific road is adequate for being transformed to a reduced traffic area. If the conditions are fulfilled there is a vote between the inhabitants in which families with children are especially taken into consideration. If a reduced traffic area is created these rules are applied:

- cars may only move at walking speed
- pedestrians may use the whole width of the street
- children's games are allowed everywhere in the street

- parking is only allowed at specifically marked places
- there has to be special considerateness between all road users

**Obstacles:**

not specified

**Conclusions:**

Experience shows that the new concept meets all demands concerning road safety and acceptance of road users. Still some residents refuse to have such a reduced traffic area near their houses because they fear that children playing in the streets could make too much noise and that parking spaces would be reduced. Despite these concerns the new concept was applied to 150 streets in Freiburg and other town districts. Where new residential areas are being developed, reduced traffic areas are already included in the planning process.

**3. Additional documents/ links**

Stadt Freiburg traffic planning:

[http://www.freiburg.de/servlet/PB/menu/1146874\\_11/index.html](http://www.freiburg.de/servlet/PB/menu/1146874_11/index.html)

Application form:

[http://www.freiburg.de/servlet/PB/show/1146879/antrag\\_verkehrsberuhigter\\_bereic\\_h.pdf](http://www.freiburg.de/servlet/PB/show/1146879/antrag_verkehrsberuhigter_bereic_h.pdf)

[http://www.toblacher-gespraechе.it/downloads/dPraesentationen/p\\_Haag.pdf](http://www.toblacher-gespraechе.it/downloads/dPraesentationen/p_Haag.pdf)

**4. Contact person**

Dr.-Ing. Peter Schick

Garten und Tiefbauamt

Fehrenbachallee 12

79106 Freiburg i. Br.

[peter.schick@stadt.freiburg.de](mailto:peter.schick@stadt.freiburg.de)

**5. Author**

Max Mayrhofer (FGM-AMOR)

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