



CITY OF ABERDEEN

January 30, 2020

Department of Public Works Traffic Calming Policy and Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a structured process to apply traffic calming measures, where appropriate, to improve neighborhood livability by reducing the negative impacts of motor vehicles on neighborhood roadways.

Background

As the City continues to grow and our roadways become more congested, motorists often seek alternate routes by using local roadways. As traffic increases, speeding on local roadways may become an issue. This can impact the safety and livability of neighborhoods. Residents often seek measures to prohibit unsafe driving conditions on local roadways through requests to the City's government. The City's response is a rigorous, unbiased process to determine the impact of traffic and practical steps to alleviate the issue.

Definitions

- Traffic calming- The means by which traffic is slowed. Traffic calming promotes conditions that provide safe neighborhoods for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and residents while maintaining access and services.
- Speed Bump - A bump in the roadway with heights between three and four inches and widths generally less than one foot.
- Speed Hump - Similar to a speed bump but is wider and has more gently sloping pavement protuberances, with heights between three and four inches and widths between twelve and fourteen feet.
- Local Roadway - Roadways whose basic function is access to adjacent properties. For example, Swan Street, Edmund Street and Warwick Drive are all local roadways.
- Minor Collector Streets - Roadways whose basic function is to collect side-street local driveway volumes. They may or may not also have direct driveway access themselves. Examples include Post Road, East Bel Air Avenue and Windemere Drive.
- Neighborhood Traffic Committee - A committee that focuses on a specific traffic issue that is identified on an as needed basis.
- 85th Percentile Speed - The speed at or below which 85% of the vehicular traffic is traveling under free-flowing conditions.

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Provisions

Requests for speed bump/humps will be denied. Speed bumps and speed humps are one of the most requested measures by residents with traffic calming concerns. The DPW does not endorse speed bumps/humps as an effective measure of street calming within the City. The rationale for this is based on:

1. A delay in emergency response vehicles due to the longer wheel-base, stiff suspension and high vehicle weight. In addition to the sensitive equipment and transportation of injured victims requires drivers to slow almost to a stop to negotiate the devices.
2. High cost to install and maintain.
 - a. Installation and maintenance costs of \$4,500 and \$7,000 per speed bump/hump
 - b. Increase wear and tear on residential and service vehicles such as snowplows and delivery trucks.
 - c. Installation or alteration cost to allow for proper drainage for stormwater runoff.
3. Increased noise levels due to scraping of cars, vehicle braking systems and engines revving to maneuver the bumps/humps.
4. Increased air pollution. Studies show that for roadways with speed bumps/humps carbon monoxide emissions increase by over 80%, carbon dioxide emissions double and nitrogen oxide emissions increase by over 30%.
5. Reduced fuel efficiency and increase gas consumption by forcing drivers to break and accelerate repeatedly.
6. The DPW cannot financially maintain the installation and removal of speed bumps/humps with the ever-changing demographics of the City's population as families grow and move.
7. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure the vehicle is operated in a safe manor.

Road signs are often ineffective measures for traffic calming. Moreover, stop signs increase aggressive driving and hinder through traffic. DPW endorses the Maryland Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MdMUTCD) for implementing stop signs and will install them when warranted.

Please see the City of Aberdeen Department Traffic Calming Education Sheet for information on other traffic calming measures. Before any traffic calming initiative will be enacted, the City will conduct a thorough traffic study, including traffic counts and speed monitoring at and/or near the requested site.

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Criteria

The following criteria will be used by the Department of Public Works (DPW) when evaluating the possible use of traffic calming devices. These items are not listed in priority order.

- Roadway must be owned by the City. The City has no legal authority over State, Federal or privately own roadways.
- Roadway must be classified as a local roadway or minor collector street.
- Roadway must be a minimum of ¼ of a mile in length.
- Prevailing traffic speed (85th percentile) must exceed the posted speed limit by at least 10 mph.
- Roadway must have a posted speed limit between 25 mph and 30 mph.
- Roadway must have a traffic volume that is greater than 125 vehicles per hour, during peak hours.
- Properties adjoining the roadway must be residential, park, and/or school uses.

Other factors the DPW will consider are steep grades, road geometry, sight-distance issues, driveway entrances, traffic diversion, traffic volume, available funding etc... School officials, law enforcement agencies, and fire departments may be involved as part of the process to ensure that recommendations of physical traffic calming measures do not hamper the agencies' abilities to perform their respective duties or add any undue risk to personnel, patients or providers.

The following exceptions will be used by the DPW in evaluating the severity of neighborhood traffic concerns. These items are not listed in priority order.

- Enclosed communities and courts will not be considered for speed calming devices.
- Roadways that provide direct access to fire, rescue and police buildings will not be considered for speed calming devices.
- Cul-de-sac streets and other roadways less than ¼ mile long will not be considered for speed calming devices.
- Roadways with posted speed limits below 25 mph or above 30 mph will not be a considered for traffic calming devices.

The City will monitor driver behavior and effectiveness of any traffic calming device after installation. Remedial measures will be taken at the City's discretion if the traffic calming measure is found to be causing hazardous or unsafe conditions.

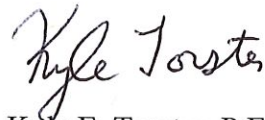
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Procedure

The following procedure shall be used to request an installation of a traffic calming device.

1. Written request
 - a. Residents shall fill out the Traffic Calming Application request form.
 - b. Police departments or other government agencies shall submit written request accompanied by supporting documents. (i.e. traffic accident report)
2. The DPW will conduct a traffic study to evaluate the severity of the traffic concern.
3. A public meeting with residents, police department or government agencies will be scheduled to review the traffic study results and to discuss what, if any, traffic calming measures are warranted.
4. If traffic calming measures are warranted, the DPW will assess a project to determine a solution. The DPW will also assess the probability that installing physical traffic calming measures on a roadway would divert traffic to another local roadway. If significant diversion is probable, those roadways affected by the diversion will be identified and assessed for possible physical and non-physical devices.
5. The DPW will seek funding and approval from the City Council.
6. The DPW will design and construct the approved plans.
7. The DPW along with police will monitor driver behavior and effectiveness of any traffic calming device after installation. Remedial measures will be taken at the City's discretion if the traffic calming measure is found to be causing hazardous or unsafe conditions.



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