

TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY & PROCEDURES



AS ADOPTED BY
MONTCLAIR TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

AUGUST 4, 2009

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1. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purposes of this document are to promulgate policy of the Township Council regarding the deployment of traffic calming measures on those streets for which the Township of Montclair has operational jurisdiction; and set forth uniform application and processing procedures.

TRAFFIC CALMING DEFINITION

“Traffic Calming is the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users” (Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers).

STATEMENT OF TOWNSHIP COUNCIL POLICY ON TRAFFIC CALMING

It is the policy of the Township Council to preserve and enhance, where practicable, mobility within the community for all modes of transportation, while achieving an appropriate balance between traffic circulation, traffic safety, and emergency response, particularly within residential areas. Traffic calming measures shall be employed to protect pedestrians and cyclists' security and primacy, particularly at intersections, in a manner that addresses this quality of life concern while preserving emergency response needs.

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Traffic calming goals of the Township of Montclair include:

- preserving the quality of life
- creating safer and more attractive residential streets
- reducing adverse effects of motor vehicle traffic
- promoting pedestrian and bicycle mobility

Traffic calming policy objectives include:

- achieving legal motor vehicle speeds and volumes on local residential streets
- improving safety and the perception of safety for pedestrians and bicyclists who use Township streets
- reducing demand for traffic enforcement by the Police Department
- maintaining response times for emergency vehicles
- minimizing impacts on public works operations, including snow plowing; street cleaning; leaf, recycling and refuse collections.

PUBLIC SAFETY (EMERGENCY RESPONSE)

The Police and Fire Departments of the Township have determined that due to Montclair's unique street network, varied and often difficult terrain, capacity and connectivity shortcomings of arterial and collector streets, and narrow street widths in various areas, emergency response time requirements must be given priority in considering the design and deployment of traffic calming measures.

FUNDING

Funding for traffic calming will, in general, be identified as appropriations for specific projects within the annual operating and capital improvement budgets of the Community Services

Department. Funding for implementing undesignated projects, following final approval to proceed, will be on a first-come-first-served basis with respect to budget availability.

IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The Township Engineer, with the assistance of the Traffic/Parking Advisory Committee (TPAC), an advisory committee to the Township Council on traffic matters, shall be responsible for implementation of this policy.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For additional information regarding this policy or any traffic calming related question please call the office of the Township Engineer at (973) 509-5707.

2. FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP

ADOPTION

As a part of this Policy the Township Council acknowledges and approves the Functional Classification Map for the Township street system, included as Figure 1. This map, which may be amended from time to time by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, shall be consulted in determining the type of calming device, if any, which may be considered for use on a particular street for which a request has been made. Requests for traffic calming on a street not classified as a minor arterial, collector or local street will require evaluation and a determination of eligibility by the Township Engineer.

3. TRAFFIC CALMING “TOOLBOX”

TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES AND APPLICATION WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP

Calming Device	Device Description	Available For Use
Lane/Shoulder striping (traffic markings)	Traffic striping along the edge line of a street, which narrow the travel lanes at that location.	On any street.
Rumble Strips	A series of raised transverse stripes (traffic markings)	On any street, however, these devices are primarily used on highways and not on residential streets because of the noise generated by vehicles crossing them.
Bump-out (also known as Bulb-out or Choker)	Curb extensions at mid-block or intersection corners that narrow a street by extending the sidewalk or widening the planting strip.	On any street.
Speed Bump	Short raised area of pavement, typically 3 to 4 inches high and 8 to 12 inches wide.	These devices <u>can not</u> be used on public streets, as they can cause serious injury or loss of control at even moderate speeds. They are typically used in parking lots and private drives to maintain very low speeds.

FIGURE 1: FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP



Source: NJ Department of Transportation
<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/>

TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES AND APPLICATION WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP (CONTINUED)

Speed Hump	Rounded raised areas of pavement typically 12 to 14 feet in length; normally installed in a series.	Only on municipal streets in exceptional circumstance as described hereinafter; will not be considered for primary emergency response routes.
Speed Table	Long raised humps with a flat section in the middle, and ramps on the ends; sometimes constructed with brick or other textured materials on the flat section.	On municipal and County streets in exceptional circumstances as described hereinafter; will not be considered for primary emergency response routes.
Raised Intersection	Flat raised areas covering entire intersections, with ramps on Intersections all approaches, and often with brick or other textured material on the flat section and ramps.	Only on municipal streets in exceptional circumstance as described hereinafter; will not be considered for primary emergency response routes.
Closure	Full or partial closures of a street; typically done only after other measures have failed or been determined inappropriate.	Only on municipal streets, after other measures have been determined to be ineffective; NJDOT approval is required.

Limited use of other types of traffic calming devices may be approved in the case of unusual circumstances, following evaluation of measures on the preceding list and a conclusion that such measures would be ineffective or objectionable.

4. TRAFFIC CALMING REQUEST PROCEDURE

REQUEST

Persons requesting installation of traffic calming measures on the street where they reside and/or own real property must submit a written request by petition from not less than 51% of the immediate affected property owners supporting the request. The petition form and map of the affected area will be provided to a single requester by the Engineer. The petition may be signed by only one (1) individual for each affected property. In the absence of a valid petition of support, no further action will be taken on the request.

REVIEW FOR CONSISTENCY WITH POLICY; INITIAL TPAC DISCUSSION

The Engineer shall receive the request, log it in, and review it for consistency with this Policy. In the event the request is not consistent, the requester shall be so notified, and no further action shall be taken.

Requests determined to be consistent with this Policy will be placed on a future agenda of the TPAC for a brief discussion of what type(s) of device(s) may be appropriate, and the scope and schedule for investigations necessary to evaluate the traffic circumstances.

CONCEPTUAL TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN

The Engineer shall prepare a technical report for TPAC consideration, to include a preliminary traffic calming plan. Prior to further TPAC discussion, the Engineer shall route the report to the Police and Fire Departments for their review and comment.

REVIEW OF TECHNICAL REPORT; NOTIFICATION OF AREA RESIDENTS

The TPAC will review the report, and comments of the Police and Fire Departments; decide whether the calming request should proceed further; and if so, discuss the conceptual plan, determine the affected geographical area, and notify residents within a 200 ft. radius of the request. The means of notification will be determined on a case by case basis, and may include letters to property owners and/or a public meeting.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

For the purpose of this Policy, "exceptional circumstances" exist when three (3) or more of the following are met, in the determination of the Engineer and/or Fire and Police Departments, as applicable, the street is functionally classified as local, and is not a primary emergency response route:

- cut-through traffic comprises 60% or more of the total traffic through the site
- other traffic calming means would be ineffective, objectionable, or impractical
- the 85th percentile speed is more than 10 mph over the posted limit
- commercial traffic comprises over 10% of the daily traffic volume
- there are no sidewalks or other defined paths for pedestrian use

SPECIAL PROCEDURE FOR VERTICAL DEFLECTION DEVICES

Speed humps, speed tables (including raised crosswalks) and raised intersections shall only be constructed in exceptional circumstances, as detailed above. At locations where they are being considered, for the request to proceed, the requester must provide petitions from not less than 75% of the immediate affected property owners supporting the request. The petition form and map of the affected area will be provided by the Engineer. The petition may be signed by only one (1) individual for each affected property. In the absence of a valid petition indicating support by not less than 75% of the affected property owners, no further action will be taken on the request.

PUBLIC MEETING AND ACTION BY TPAC

A public meeting regarding the request may be necessary, as determined by the TPAC. This meeting shall be scheduled by the TPAC and at least 14 days notice provided. All owners of properties within the affected area will be notified in writing by the TPAC. The TPAC shall take final action on the request by either adopting an action plan, or determining that no measures should be implemented.

TOWNSHIP COUNCIL REVIEW

The Township Council shall be notified in writing whenever the TPAC approves an action plan contemplating installation of physical traffic calming devices. Any Council member having concerns regarding the plan may request that the action plan be brought to the Township Council for approval. This request must be made in writing through the Township Manager, within thirty (30) days of the date of written notification by the TPAC. The Engineer shall prepare the Council agenda item for this purpose. In the event that no such request is made, installation may proceed as scheduled.

FUNDING AND INSTALLATION

Installation of traffic calming devices is subject to funding availability within the current approved fiscal year budget, and work backlog of the Engineering Bureau.

5. EVALUATION, MODIFICATION & REMOVAL

EVALUATION

Not more than two years after installation of the traffic calming device(s), the Engineer should prepare a report evaluating the safety, effectiveness, and other impacts, if any, of the project. The report shall be provided to the TPAC for discussion, and to the Township Council with a summary of the TPAC discussion as an endorsement.

MODIFICATION

Should, in the determination of the Engineer, a potentially hazardous condition be created by any traffic calming project, immediate action to abate such situation may be taken, to include modification or removal of the device(s). Notice will be sent to affected property owners when reasonable, considering the circumstances.

REMOVAL

Property owners within the previously determined affected area may, upon submission of a petition signed by 75% of such owners, request removal of a traffic calming device. Only one signature per affected property shall be counted.

In the event a valid petition is received, the Engineer, in consultation with the TPAC, shall determine what action should be taken on the petition; and notify the Township Council in writing of any such action planned to be taken. In a manner similar to the installation process, the Township Council may opt to review and act on the request or take no action, in which case the Engineer may proceed with the removal.

