

Town of Smyrna – Public Works Department Policy on Traffic Calming Devices (Speed Tables)

INTRODUCTION

In order to provide safe and efficient transportation facilities, the Town of Smyrna (Town) has adopted a traffic calming program to help meet that mission. The Town recognizes that properly placed and designed traffic calming devices help reduce vehicle speeds and discourage cut through traffic on residential streets. This policy describes the process to determine the location of speed tables to be installed within the Town.

Speed tables shall be installed according to this policy and the design criteria outlined in the following section. Requests for speed tables shall be directed in writing to the Public Works Director for approval.

GOAL OF THE PROGRAM

The goal for this traffic calming program is to improve the overall quality of life for its residents by:

- Improving safety
- Reducing vehicular speeds
- Discouraging cut through traffic
- Improving real and perceived safety
- Improving the aesthetics of neighborhood streets

Whereas physical improvements can help achieve the aforementioned goal, education by homeowner groups is essential in addressing vehicular concerns. Methods such as newsletters, emails, and postings can remind motorists of risks to neighborhood residents if they do not obey speed limits.

In addition, law enforcement assistance with monitoring vehicle speeds and observance of stop signs can have short term benefits.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of the Town's traffic calming program are as follows:

- Encourage citizen involvement in the traffic calming program
- Maintain and improve residents' quality of living in the Town through reductions in vehicular speed and cut-through traffic
- Minimize the adverse impact of causing traffic to divert from one street to another
- Effectively balance traffic calming needs with emergency vehicle responsiveness
- Maintain and improve the safety for all modes of transportation on Town streets

Speed tables may be installed in residential areas if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The residential street has been shown to have a problem with either cut through traffic or vehicular speeding. By default, the street is functioning as a minor collector road but does not have the standard pavement width specified in the subdivision regulations (i.e., minimum 24 feet width) to serve effectively as a collector road. In addition, the street provides either a connection route between two designated arterial or collector streets or permits traffic from another subdivision to pass through the affected subdivision street en route to an outside destination. Additional priority shall be placed on the above streets when a higher density of

housing is present (i.e., lots that are less than 1 acre with front yard setbacks less than 75 feet, thereby creating more potential conflicts with residents and pedestrians).

2. The cut through traffic or speeding problem can be identified by the Town through current traffic counts, speed surveys and projections of future traffic impact in accordance with long range development plans for the area. Cut through traffic shall be defined as the condition where 35% or more of the traffic on the affected street does not originate or terminate in the subdivision. A condition of speeding exists when the 85th percentile speed of traffic on the street exceeds the posted speed limit.
3. To ensure timely response of emergency vehicles, no speed tables shall be permitted on designated arterial or collector streets.
4. An eligible street must be a designated a local street with a projected average daily traffic count not to exceed 2,500 vehicles per day (based on latest version of ITE Trip Generation) at the time of full development of the area. No speed tables shall be installed on any street with a current vehicle count of less than 500 per day. Speed tables may be removed by the Town at any time in the future if the traffic count for the street exceeds 2,500 vehicles per day, the traffic devices create unsafe / hazardous conditions as determined by the Public Works Director or as a result of a determination for removal by the Town Council.
5. A petition shall be provided to the Town with signatures of a representative from 2/3 of the residential units living within 1,000 feet of the proposed speed table location(s), measured along the affected street, supporting the installation of speed tables and agreeing to pay 60% of the direct cost associated with installation including purchase and signage. Where applicable, the petition shall also be endorsed by an officially incorporated homeowners association for the subdivision. If the homeowners association takes no position for or against the tables, the wishes of the affected residents on the street shall prevail.
6. The Town shall assume responsibility and costs associated with traffic engineering review, and in-house approval, and coordination to ensure that the proposed speed tables are located in compliance with this policy and are installed properly on the roadway. This does not prevent petitioning residents from securing at their expense additional professional services from a licensed traffic engineer to provide supplemental information in support of the proposal.
7. The installation of speed tables shall be viewed as a last step in a comprehensive plan for reducing vehicle speeds and for discouraging cut through traffic movements in a residential area. Prior to the installation of speed tables, the Town may address the problem at Town expense through less dramatic measures on the street such as the installation of additional signs, traditional pavement striping and markings, etc. If used, the residents and the Town shall reevaluate the effectiveness of those measures six months after installation. Based on this evaluation, a final decision will be made on the installation of the speed tables.

8. Prior to the installation of the approved speed tables, the petitioning residents shall pay the Town 60% of the cost for the improvements based on an itemized breakdown of estimated expenses plus a 10% contingency for unanticipated expenses. Any funds left over at the completion of the project shall be returned to the petitioning group. Upon installation of the speed bump traffic device(s), regardless of the financial contribution, the petitioners shall not possess any property right in the installed materials.
9. Prior to the installation of the speed tables, a resolution approving the proposed speed table location(s) shall be approved by the Town Council.