

# Traffic Calming Device Policy

## City of Americus

### **Introduction:**

Speeding and unsafe driving practices on the neighborhood streets have led to increasing concerns by the residents of Americus and city agencies charged with ensuring traffic safety. Excessive speed and reckless driving jeopardize both the safety and “livability” of our neighborhoods. Therefore, a standard must be set for the proper selection prior to the implementation of any traffic calming device.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a methodology for selecting, placing and implementing and designing traffic calming devices used by the City of Americus. Until there are federal or state guidelines for the application of these types of devices, this policy shall be used by the City to determine the application of the appropriate traffic calming device.

The decision to use a particular device at a particular location should be made based on a study of the location. The study shall be exercised by the Public Works Director in conjunction with the Police Chief and the Fire Chief.

### **Criteria:**

Traffic calming devices shall be installed only if ALL the following criteria are met:

1. Must be classified as a local residential street or neighborhood collector.
2. Must have a speed limit of 35 mph or less
3. Must have no more than two lanes (one in each direction).
4. Must have a street width of 40 feet or less.
5. Must be able to have a warning sign posted before the device equal to a safe stopping distance.
6. Must not be a cul-de-sac, alley, or service access roadway.
7. Must not be a designated truck route.
8. Must not cause an unacceptable delay in response time to emergency vehicles.

The following should also be taken into consideration:

- Located near a streetlight
- Located near property lines when possible
- Located a minimum of 5-10 feet from driveways
- Not located over manholes or near hydrants
- Not located on sharp horizontal curves
- Not located within 75' of an intersection
- No vegetation to obscure signs

**Speed Bumps** – These are typically found on private roadways and parking lots (at parks). The same placement considerations as speed humps should apply to this traffic-calming device also.

## **Procedure:**

- A. Application** - The requesting party must complete the “Application for a traffic calming device.” (Attached)
- B. Determination** – The Public Works Director in conjunction with the Police and Fire Chiefs will make the determination of the eligibility of the street.
  - 1. If the street is determined ineligible, the Public Works Director will notify the requesting party in writing within 15 days.
  - 2. If the street is determined to be eligible, the Public Works Director will advise the requesting party in writing to submit a petition.
  - 3. Petition – The petition bearing the name, address, email address, and telephone number of 100% of the property owners of the residences immediately adjacent to the proposed traffic calming device and at least 67% of the affected property owners in the neighborhood. Only one vote will be counted per property. (Attached)
- C. Petition** – The sponsor of the petition will contact every resident of the abutting properties on the street. If a resident is against the installation, the word “opposed” will be noted on the petition signature space. If the sponsor is unable to contact a resident, “no contact” will be noted on the signature space with the dates and times contact was attempted. The sponsor must make at least two (2) attempts on separate days to contact a resident.
- D. Verification and Processing of Petition** – The Police Department and Public Works would set up the speed detection device for one week to gather data, such as the number of vehicles traveling on the street each day, the speeds of each vehicle, and the highest traffic volume times. This will assist Council on approving or denying speed bumps for that location.
- E. Notification** – The Public Works Director will notify the sponsor of the council decision and schedule the construction whether approved or denied.

## **Funding and Priority Ranking:**

Traffic Calming device requests will be funded in the order received and approved, unless the City Council determines that conditions on a particular street, as demonstrated by speeds or accident statistics, require greater priority. There is no guarantee that public funding will be available. Approved projects may be privately funded.

The city reserves the right to install traffic controlling devices without a resident petition, as circumstances require.

## **Removal of Traffic Calming devices:**

Devices installed upon resident petition pursuant to this policy may be removed either by the City upon a determination that the removal is required for public safety reasons, or by petition or a substantial majority (67% or more) of occupants of residences within the same geographic area as petitioned for the devices, requesting the removal. If removal is by petition, the residents shall pay the cost of removal, which sum shall be deposited with the city prior to the removal.

## **Liability:**

The ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers) states “Speed humps and other pavement undulations (speed bumps, rumble strips) are not traffic control devices as defined by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. They are, however, geometric design measures of the roadway and should be designed, installed, operated, and maintained using accepted engineering principles and prudent engineering judgment.”

“If speed humps are not installed in a proper manner and with due care, and property damage or personal injury occurs, it is possible that the installing agency could be found to be maintaining a public nuisance, i.e., a known defect in the street system that might result in increased liability exposure. Therefore, complete and proper documents should be retained to justify the decisions made.”

The same section goes on to read “federal, state, and local laws also should be reviewed to identify any regulations pertaining to roadway design, roadway maintenance, traffic control, or other elements that might be related to the use of speed humps or other geometric design features. Implementation of speed humps should be done in accordance with all federal state and local codes and statutes regarding design, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.”

## **Disclaimer:**

Not all types of, or options for traffic calming devices are specified in this policy. However, this does not mean that other alternatives cannot be used. All design, criteria and selection of calming devices shall be based upon engineering judgment.

## Traffic Calming Device Application

To: City of Americus  
Public Works Dept  
1404 East Forsyth Street  
Americus, Ga 31709  
229-924-7111  
Courtney Bowers  
[cbowers@americusga.gov](mailto:cbowers@americusga.gov)

Date Received By PW: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Works Director:  
Mike Sistrunk  
229-815-0003  
[msistrunk@americusga.gov](mailto:msistrunk@americusga.gov)

I (We) hereby request the installation of a traffic calming device on \_\_\_\_\_  
between the intersection of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Please  
diagram by name those streets in the space provided below.

Reasons for the request: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

To be completed by Americus Police Department & Fire Department:

How many traffic accidents have occurred in the past 5 years on this street? \_\_\_\_\_

During which hours is speeding at its worst? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the average speed for this street? \_\_\_\_\_

Police Chief: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Chief Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**PETITION SUPPORTING INSTALLATION OF TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICE**

PETITION SUBMITTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ (Sponsor) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

How many addresses are within the area specified in your application diagram? \_\_\_\_\_

We the undersigned do hereby request the installation of traffic calming devices on \_\_\_\_\_.

By signing this we understand that the devices with related signage may be installed in front of our house and may affect parking in front of the house. We also understand that the installation of these devices may increase traffic noise and decrease emergency response time to our house.

PRINT NAME AND SIGN	PROPERTY ADDRESS	TELEPHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CHECK HERE IF YOU OPPOSE

Signatures are required of all property owners representing 100% of the owners adjacent to the proposed location of the traffic calming device and 67% of the property owners affected by the installation of this device. These signatures are limited to one per household/property.

Please copy this page as needed.

Rev. October 2022

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ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

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