

APPENDIX- J



TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY

Town of Waxhaw
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August 13, 2019

TRAFFIC CALMING MISSION

The Town of Waxhaw's goal is to provide safe and pedestrian friendly streets for all of the residents of the town while balancing the need for an efficient transportation network. As part of that goal we understand that traffic must be able to flow freely but to do so as safely possible. This policy is meant to provide safe design criteria for new developments and avenues for citizens to report unsafe conditions, establish a process for review and development of solutions for unsafe areas on existing roads.

Definitions:

- ❖ Chicane- Curb extensions that alternate from one side of the street to the other, forming S-shaped curves.
- ❖ Chokers- Curb extensions at midblock locations that narrow a street by widening the sidewalk or planting strip.
- ❖ Roundabout- A circular junction requiring traffic to circulate counterclockwise around a center island typically used for large volumes of traffic.
- ❖ Speed Cushions- Rounded raised areas placed across the roadway.
- ❖ Neckdowns- Curb extensions at intersections that reduce the roadway width from curb to curb. Work best for intersections with substantial pedestrian activity.

Program Tools:

The Town of Waxhaw's traffic calming program relies on the "Five E" process; Education, Enforcement, Evaluation, Economics, and Engineering to address problems of excessive traffic speed or volume. These strategies will be implemented using a phased approach, beginning with the least restrictive and least expensive methods (Phase I) and proceeding to more complex solutions (Phase II). Where appropriate, Phase I approaches will be used first. These include targeted enforcement, education, and the use of signs. If these strategies are ineffective, Phase II solutions may be considered. In some cases, based on Town staff evaluation, Phase I may be bypassed in favor of the Phase II approach. In some instances a Phase I approach may be implemented as a temporary mitigation while the Phase II planning process is underway. In either phase, different strategies may be used in combination.

What Roads are covered in this Program?

The control measures provided in this document are intended to be applied to local streets serving predominantly single-family residential neighborhoods. Collector streets that run through neighborhood areas may also be considered for less restrictive traffic calming measures. Streets that are designated as thoroughfares or which are classified as State or Private are not eligible for this program.

All new developments will be reviewed for potential locations where excessive traffic speed may be a concern. Engineering in coordination with the developer will use these strategies in an effort to mitigate future traffic problems.

Paying for Traffic Calming Measures

The cost of the speed cushion installation, maintenance, and signage/markings for the traffic calming device(s) will be the responsibility of the Town. If the subdivision has decorative sign supports, the HOA or homeowners will be responsible for the cost of installation and maintenance of the decorative sign

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supports.

When all petition requirements have been met, the individual or HOA shall execute a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Town to govern the responsibility of the installation of the traffic calming measure(s).

Speed cushion (hump), chicane, choker, or mini round-about locations will be determined by the Town Engineer and only the standard speed cushion installation (See Town Design Standards) will be allowed on Town maintained streets. **Any traffic calming measures must be approved by Fire, Police, and EMS services.**

TRAFFIC CALMING PROCESS FOR EXISTING STREETS

The process consists of two phases. **Phase 1** includes the property owners' request and Town evaluation. **Phase 2** includes a property owner petition process and Town implementation of appropriate traffic calming measure(s).

Phase 1: Traffic Calming Process

Property Owner Request

A minimum of three owners of separate property along a street or residential area must submit a written request to the Town to perform a traffic evaluation on neighborhood/subdivision roadways when the property owners have a traffic concern of vehicle speed that affects pedestrian safety or excessive volumes of through traffic in a residential neighborhood/subdivision. The Town of Waxhaw Engineer will provide an official request form or the form can be found online at www.waxhaw.com. Additionally, any member on the Board of Commissioners, the Town Manager, The Chief of Police, or a Town Staff Engineer may initiate a traffic calming evaluation at any time.

Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine whether or not the street qualifies for one or more of the traffic-calming measures (speed limit reduction/multi-way stop/ electronic radar notifying signage/ speed cushion (hump)/chicanes/chokers/mini round-about). The traffic data collection will occur over a 72-hour period and the evaluation, in its entirety, may take approximately 4 to 6 weeks to complete from the time the completed official request is received. The Town of Waxhaw conducts the evaluation based upon the following criteria:

1. Street must be classified as a two-lane, local residential street.
2. Street must not be a Major or Minor thoroughfare or proposed to be a thoroughfare in the future.
3. Street must have an average annual daily traffic volume that is greater than 250 vehicles per day
4. (VPD) and less than 5,000 VPD.
5. Speed of at least 15% of the traffic on the street exceeds the posted speed limit by at least 5 mph.
6. Street must not operate at a design speed of 40 mph or greater to reduce speeds to 25 mph. (25 mph is the lowest speed limit that will be posted).

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7. Application must not have been denied or become void within last (12) months.

Once the evaluation is completed by the Town Engineer, they will notify the applicants in writing of the outcome. If the street does not qualify, the specific reasons will be included in the notification. If the street qualifies, Phase 2 of the Traffic Calming process will begin.

Phase 2: Traffic Calming Process

Property Owner Petition

Phase 2 begins when the applicants receives from the Town written notice that the requested street has met the requirements for traffic calming. The qualifying street calming measure(s) are listed and an official petition form noting the measure(s) is provided to the applicants. At the same time the Town notifies the applicants of the measures and provides them with a petition, the Town will mail a letter to the property owners listed on the petition. This letter is based on tax records and will be mailed to all property owners included on the petition, notifying them that a traffic calming petition is being provided to the applicants. The letter will identify the type and location of the traffic calming device(s). The letter will give contact information for the applicants initiating the petition request. It is the applicants' responsibility to complete the petition by obtaining all necessary signatures and returning it to the Town Engineer. A qualifying petition must be returned to the Town within 90 calendar days of the start of Phase 2 or the petition becomes void. The installation of traffic calming measures on local residential streets requires the submittal of a petition meeting the following criteria:

1. Traffic Calming Petition must be on forms provided by the Town of Waxhaw. The Town will only provide forms where the qualifying criteria under Phase 1 have been met.
2. Town Engineer will define the area that must be petitioned. Generally, the entire length of the street must be petitioned. The only exception is when a street changes character or is bisected by a major or minor thoroughfare.
3. The Traffic Calming Petition must have a minimum of 70% of the properties, within the area defined in Step 2, signing in favor of the petition. Only one person or entity identified as owners per tax records is required to sign in order to qualify a particular property. For example: If a husband and wife are listed, as owners of a piece of property only one must sign the petition in order for the property to qualify. If a home owners group is listed as the owner of record, the President of the home owners association must sign the petition as President and if a property is shown as being an LLC or Incorporated, the person responsible for signing for these business entities must sign for the property to qualify. This signature is required in order to continue with the process. Properties that have an address on a different street but border on the street affected must be included.

Once a completed petition is received, the Town will verify the signatures match the tax records and notify the applicants and identified signatories to the petition in writing upon completion of all qualifying applications. If the petition is returned to the Town with insufficient signatures, then the Town will notify signatories in writing to this fact.

Notice of Public Information Meeting

Residents within the community of a proposed traffic control measure will be given notice of a Public Information Meeting and an opportunity to provide written comments so their views and opinions may be expressed regarding the traffic control measures being proposed. The Town Manager will determine which notifications will be utilized. The notification method(s) selected may include the following:

1. Advertisements in local publications
2. Legal Notice
3. Letters sent to the residents/property owners
4. Posted on Public Bulletin Boards and at the Public Library.
5. Notifications on the Town of Waxhaw website and other electronic outlets but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, etc.
6. Attempts to work with the local HOA (if there is one) or other groups of residents to communicate to the residents of the upcoming meeting and requesting participation.
7. Flyer/notification placed in the Town Newsletter.

Upon receipt of the information from the Town Manager the Board of Commissioners shall consider at a scheduled meeting and make a determination to approve the request as presented, deny the request or modify the request.

TYPES OF TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

The Town of Waxhaw may utilize several types of traffic calming measures when a residential street qualifies for traffic calming: speed limit reduction, multi-way stops, electronic radar notifying signage, speed cushions (humps), chicanes, chokers, and/or mini round-about.

Electronic radar notifying signage are designed to be installed analogous with normal speed limit signs. These electronic radar signs are meant to notify the vehicle operator of their speed and, when appropriate, adjust their speed.

Chicanes, chokers, and mini roundabouts are horizontal traffic calming measures that are designed to limit or narrow the travel lanes. These horizontal measures diminish the linearity of traffic flow, forcing vehicles to slow as the travel lanes narrow and/or curve. **Temporary installation of these horizontal traffic calming measures will be implemented and tested before permanent action is taken. A public input period, which conforms to Phase Two's public information meeting parameters, will be held to determine if these horizontal measures will be permanently installed.**

Other criteria, in addition to the standards previously listed in this policy, may be required for each measure to qualify for implementation. The additional criteria for each measure are listed below:

Multi-way Stops

A common traffic calming measure is the installation of the 3-way or 4-way stop signs. The following, additional, criteria are used to determine if multi-way stops are feasible for any specific location:

1. Speed of at least 15% of traffic must exceed posted speed limit by 5 mph.
2. The longest leg of a side street of the intersection being considered must exceed 400 ft. in length.
3. The intersection being considered must be at least 300 ft. from another stop condition.

Multi-way stops are limited in effectiveness and will be limited in application

Speed Cushions and Humps

Speed cushions are a speed control device generally constructed of asphalt and designed to cause a driver to slow to approximately 25 MPH. Greater speeds could cause the driver to feel discomfort as the car hits the cushion. Roads that have these devices typically see a 5% to 10% reduction in speeds. These devices are used on residential streets intended for use by local residents. They are not used on collector types of roads.

Electronic radar notifying signage are designed to be installed analogous with normal speed limit signs. These electronic radar signs are meant to notify the vehicle operator of their speed and, when appropriate, adjust their speed.

1. Speed of at least 15% of traffic must exceed posted speed limit by 5 mph.
2. Grade of the street shall not exceed 8% for vertical traffic calming measures.
3. Speed cushion location shall be located at least 300 ft. from a curve with a horizontal radius of less than 300 ft.
4. Speed limit must be posted at 25 mph.
5. For Speed Cushion (Hump), recommendation(s) and placement(s) must be approved by Fire, EMS, and Police vehicles.

Speed Cushions/Humps have decided disadvantages. Horizontal control will be the preferred method of calming over vertical control

Removal of a traffic calming device

If a minimum of three property owners desire to have a traffic calming device removed, they must follow the same procedures outlined above for the installation of a device. Traffic calming devices cannot be petitioned for removal until a minimum of one year after installation. If petition qualifies for the removal of the device there is no cost to the property owners for speed limit or multi-way stops, however if the device is a speed cushion the applicants requesting the devices to be removed will be required to pay to the Town upfront the cost of removal. If any traffic calming device is petitioned and removed, another device may not be requested for five years from the date of the received removal petition.