



POLICY FOR NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This policy provides a procedure for the consideration, evaluation and implementation of requests for traffic calming measures.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Local Street* – Any two-lane street with a primary purpose of providing direct access to abutting residential properties. Local streets are typically identified as R2U on the City’s Master Thoroughfare Plan.
- B. *Residential “Cut-through” Traffic* – Traffic that uses local streets to travel through a residential neighborhood without having an origin or destination within the neighborhood.
- C. *Pedestrian Generator* – A civic or commercial location such as a playground, park, school, bus stop, train station, shopping center or trail access which is a pedestrian destination.
- D. *85th Percentile Speed* – The speed that 85-percent of vehicles do not exceed. Traffic and Transportation Engineers use the 85th percentile speed as a guide to set the speed limit at a safe speed.
- E. *Speed Study* – A study using specialized equipment to measure, collect, and statistically analyze the speed of one hundred (100) or more vehicles.
- F. *Traffic Study* – A manual or automated count of the number of vehicles traversing a particular street in a given time period.

III. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

While traffic calming measures may be a viable option for reducing speeds on residential streets, residents should be aware of both the advantages and disadvantages of these measures.

Advantages:

- A. Traffic speeds are usually decreased in areas where traffic calming measures are employed.
- B. Traffic calming measures can discourage cut-through traffic.

Disadvantages:

- A. Traffic calming measures may cause delays to bicyclists, motorcyclists, and emergency vehicles, as well as people using skateboards and/or rollerblades.
- B. Traffic volumes on streets adjacent to streets where the traffic calming measures are located may increase as drivers seek alternate routes to avoid reducing their speed.
- C. Certain traffic calming measures may be perceived as the cause of vehicular damage.
- D. Certain traffic calming measures may have a negative impact on air quality and energy consumption, assuming traffic volumes remain constant. This impact, however, is typically less than the effect of a stop sign.
- E. Traffic calming measures, such as speed humps or rumble strips may increase noise levels as vehicles drive over them.

IV. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

General –

For a street to be considered for traffic calming measures in the City of North Richland Hills, the proposed street must meet the following criteria:

- A. The proposed street must be functionally classified as local on the City of North Richland Hills's *Master Thoroughfare Plan* as maintained by the City's Planning Department.

- B. The proposed street should have no more than two traveling lanes, one in each direction.
- C. Traffic volumes on the proposed street must be less than four thousand (4,000) vehicles per day (vpd). Priority shall be given to streets that have traffic volumes that exceed two thousand (2,000) vpd on an average day.
- D. The proposed street shall have a posted or *prima facie* speed limit of 30 mph or less in accordance with the state law.

Speed Hump Specific Information –

- A. At the discretion of the Director of Public Works, speed humps will not be installed if street grades are too steep.
- B. At the discretion of the Director of Public Works, speed humps will not be installed if curves or obstacles would create an unsafe condition for motorists driving at normal speeds under average driving conditions.
- C. Priority for the installation of speed humps shall be given to streets that do not provide direct access to schools or other community facilities.
- D. The installation of speed humps shall not adversely affect travel or safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, or physically handicapped persons.
- E. At the discretion of the Director of Public Works, speed humps will not be installed if it is determined that they will adversely affect street drainage.
- F. No installation of speed humps will be made on streets included in a planned Capital Improvement Project within one (1) year of the request for a speed hump.
- G. If eligible for Tier II consideration, neighborhood participation is required in order for speed humps to be placed. This includes:
 - 1. 80% of impacted residents as determined by City staff support the installation of speed humps
 - 2. Residents to pay for 50% of the cost of the installation. The funds are due prior to installation of the speed humps.

PROCEDURE FOR STUDY APPLICATION

Initiation – A request for a study, to determine if traffic calming measures may be considered for a particular street, must be submitted in writing to the Street Superintendent. This request must contain the signatures of residents (one each) from at least four (4) individual residential units with different addresses facing the block of the particular street upon which the traffic calming measure feasibility study may be performed. See form located in Appendix A for use.

Study – After a request for a study has been received, the City staff will conduct a study to determine whether the operational and geometric characteristics of the particular street meet the eligibility requirements for the traffic calming measures to be considered. Elements of the study shall include the following:

- A. Traffic Volumes (average weekday)
- B. Traffic Speed (average weekday)
- C. Posted Speed Limit
- D. Physical Data (lane configuration, widths, drainage, horizontal and vertical alignment)
- E. Frequency of Cut-through traffic
- F. Accident Data
- G. Presence of bike lanes / designated route
- H. Location of schools and community facilities
- I. Routes of emergency vehicles

A rating system, utilizing the criteria noted above, will be used to determine the eligibility of streets to be considered for traffic calming measures.

V. TIERED APPROACH TO TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

It is understood that not all situations will require the same type of traffic calming measures. The City has determined that a tiered approach to traffic calming is the best method to provide measures to calm traffic that meet the severity of the problem. As a result, the City of North Richland Hills will follow a 2-tiered approach to traffic calming:

<u>TIER:</u>	<u>POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:</u>
I	Improved speed limit signage, police enforcement measures, driver feedback signs
II	Rumble strips, speed humps

VI. PROCESS

A. Request for a Study

A study can be requested as outlined in Section V.

B. Notification of Pending Study

After receiving the request for a Traffic Calming Methods Study, and after determining that the street meets the criteria outlined in Section IV, the Public Works Department staff will notify all residents at addresses fronting the street that a study has been requested and the approximate time frame in which the study will be performed.

C. Study

The study will be performed and the street will be evaluated to determine which tier, if any, might be applied to that street.

D. Notification

As soon as is practical after the study has been performed, the Public Works Department staff will inform those residents at the addresses fronting the street in question of the outcome of the study. This notification will begin a 30-day period in which the Public Works Department staff will accept comments from the public on the study, which will be considered prior to any recommendation being made.

E. Method Determination

The Street Superintendent will evaluate the street and make a recommendation to the Director of Public Works as to the type of traffic calming measure that could be considered.

The Street Superintendent may elect to recommend a traffic calming measure from the tier that a street qualified for, or any lower tier, based on funding availability and experience.

The recommendation shall be based on fund availability, manpower availability, and overall severity of the situation. The Director of Public Works will then make a recommendation to the City Manager regarding the street.

F. Evaluation

After a course of action has been determined, the Street Superintendent shall re-survey the street in question three (3) months after the action has been implemented to determine if the course of action has calmed traffic as expected, or if other measures should be considered.