



# CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

750 LAKESIDE DRIVE SE-EAST GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49506

## TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY

**What is traffic calming?** Traffic calming is a method for reducing speeding traffic on City streets. Design features that alter the physical landscape of the roadway are utilized to impact the driving behavior of motorists as it relates to speed.

**What is considered a speeding problem?** Excessive speed is defined as the 85th percentile speed, the speed at which 85% of the drivers travel, that is greater than 5 miles per hour (MPH) over the posted speed limit.

Several options that have proven to be effective are:

- **Bump-outs/Slots:** These are areas where the curb line is extended into the street, narrowing the street width and impacting driving behavior to slow down. This tool is effective at intersections and mid-block locations. Available for use on PA 51 major and local streets.
- **Traffic circles:** These consist of raised circular islands typically located at four-legged intersections. The traffic circle reduces traffic speeds as vehicles into and out of intersections. Available for use on PA 51 major and local streets.
- **Speed Cushions:** Consist of vertical speed control elements to slow speeds of passenger vehicles on residential local streets while accommodating emergency response and municipal service vehicles. Available for use on PA 51 local streets. See Available Policy for use on PA 51 local streets.
- **Permanent Radar Speed Feedback Signs (RSFS)-**See Policy Available for use on PA 51 major streets.
- **In-Street Signs-**See Policy. Available for use on PA 51 major streets.

Common options requested that are not proven to be effective and are not permitted are:

- **Stop signs:** It is a common belief that the installation of stop signs at intersections will result in slower traffic and fewer collisions. The Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD) states that by law, the purpose of a stop sign is to assign right of way, not to slow vehicles. The MMUTCD discourages the use of stop signs as a traffic calming device. The following are some of things that could go wrong if stop signs are not appropriately placed in residential neighborhood.
  - Traffic studies conducted by MDOT have shown that some drivers once past stop signs increase their speed to make up for lost time.
  - Intersections that have low traffic volumes experience a higher occurrence of rolling stops.
  - Risks of rear end collisions are increased.
  - The increased frequency of stop signs increases violations as the increased placement leads to a decrease in attention to a required full stop.

- Children at Play signs: Studies have shown no evidence that these signs help to prevent accidents or reduce speeding. Installing signs is only effective if a hazard is not already obvious to the average driver. Drivers are generally aware that they are in a residential area and do not need to be notified of this fact. In addition, nearly every residential street has children living on it, therefore, nearly every street would have to be signed. These signs may also suggest to children that playing in or beside a street is acceptable and safe.

## What is the process?

1. Step 1: The first step with respect to speeding concerns is to contact the Department of Public Safety to initiate the Department of Public Safety Speeding Concern/Compliant Process (see below) Public Safety may initiate proceeding to Step 2. Residents may also initiate to Step 2 after completing Step 1.



East Grand Rapids Department of Public Safety  
 770 Lakeside Dr. SE East Grand Rapids MI 49506  
 Telephone: 616-949-7010 Fax: 616-940-4829

### Speeding Complaint Handling Process

1. Complaint received by phone, Comcate, email, in person etc.
    - a. Review recent speed studies from Engineering Department in area of concern
    - b. Review any traffic crashes in area of concern
    - c. Communicate findings with reporting party
  2. Deploy speed trailer or order speed study through Engineering
    - a. Gather data from device placement to determine if speeding is a problem
    - b. Communicate data with reporting party if applicable
  3. Request additional patrol in area of concern based on speed data
  4. Establish directed patrols for speeding violations based on data
    - a. Directed patrol based on problem times and direction of travel
    - b. Evaluate results- ticket counts, Officer observations, traffic stops
    - c. Reevaluate all data to determine directed extension or termination
    - d. Communicate results with Engineering Department if speeding problem persists
2. Step 2: Traffic speed/volume study initiated by the Department of Public Safety (may also include concerns regarding accident history) or resident(s) after Step 1 to Department of Public Works-Engineering. Speed tube studies cannot be completed in the fall when in-street leaf pickup commences until winter maintenance has concluded in the spring due to tubes being placed in the roadway and operations damaging the tubes.
    - If the speed study results reflect that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile does not exceed 5 MPH over the posted speed limit the process concludes.
    - If the speed study results reflect that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile exceed 5 MPH over the posted speed limit, Department of Public Works-Engineering will follow up with a second speed study. If results of the second study come back where the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile does

not exceed 5 MPH over the posted speed, the process concludes. A period one year will be valid for successive concerns.

- If the second speed study results reflect that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile exceeds 5 MPH over the posted speed limit, Department of Public Works-Engineering will follow up with two additional speed studies within a one-year period for a total of four).
- If between the four speed studies, conducted over a one-year period, three of the four studies reflect results that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile of speeds do not exceed 5 MPH over the posted speed limit, the process concludes. If the four speed studies during the noted time period reflect that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile of speeds exceed 5 MPH over the posted speed, then the process moves forward to Step 3.
- All results and disposition from Step 2 will be shared by Department of Public Works Engineering to the Department of Public Safety and resident(s).

3. Step 3: The resident(s) that initiated the process will be provided a petition for traffic calming. Resident(s) must gather signatures and cover the street segment by block pertaining to the traffic calming request. Staff or traffic engineering consultants may require additional blocks be required with respect to the petition based on traffic engineering judgement.

Petition requirements:

- One signature per property/household regardless of home ownership.
- More than 50% of properties/households must sign the petition.

If Step 3 criteria are not completed successfully, the process concludes. If Step 3 criteria are met, the process moves to Step 4.

4. Step 4: City Staff and traffic engineering consultants will review traffic calming option or options. Based on estimated costs for improvements and available funds in the City budget, the process may be delayed until funds are available in the City budget through a budget amendment or subsequent budget year. If funds are not feasible due to cost, residents/property owners can petition for traffic calming improvements via special assessment. If funding is not viable and eligible alternatives are also not available, the process concludes. If funding is available, the process moved to Step 5.
5. Step 5: The City will provide a mailing notice with a summary of traffic calming options to the defined block(s) from the successful petition. A project ballot with comment section will be enclosed with the notice to provide an opportunity for direct feedback to the City. One ballot per property/household regardless of ownership is permitted. The notice will provide for an opportunity for questions whether it be an in-person informal open house, virtual meeting or by electronic communication/phone. The process moves directly to Step 6.
6. Step 6: City Staff will review responses. A high response rate is desired. The City will make two separate attempts via mailed notice with ballots to residents/properties who have not responded. In order to move to Step 7, more than 50% of the properties in the defined block(s) must respond "Yes". Failure to meet this threshold will conclude the process. A period of one-year will be valid for successive concerns.
7. Step 7: The Infrastructure Committee, consisting of three City Commissioners, will review the cumulative results with a summary memo prepared by City Staff. If all information is in order, the process moves to Step 8. If the Infrastructure Committee requests additional information the process will not move to Step 7 until satisfied. The Infrastructure Committee will provide a recommendation to the full City Commission with respect to Step 7.

8. Step 8: A public hearing will be held by the City Commission with a recommendation made by the Infrastructure Committee. A summary memo prepared by City Staff. The City Commission will consider the request for approval and construction. If the City Commission does not approve the traffic calming proposal, the process is concluded. A period of one-year will be valid for successive concerns. If approved, the process moves to Step 9.
9. Step 9: Implementation/construction. After construction, the process moves to Step 10.
10. Step 10: Within one-year of completion of construction, post a post traffic engineering study will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the traffic calming project.

City Commission Approved: 12/7/2020