

TOWN OF BLUFFTON TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY

DECEMBER 2020





Introduction

The Town of Bluffton is proactively improving areas within its town limits and has welcomed the economic revitalization and vitality that has occurred. The Town's growth consists of infill development within its Old Town Bluffton Historic District as well as the development of surrounding commercial generators and residential neighborhoods. With this growth, traffic patterns change and traffic volumes increase; as such, the Town receives numerous requests from citizens to address cut-through and speeding traffic, specifically on roads with a functional classification of minor collectors or local streets. In an effort to address the requests, the Town has developed this *Traffic Calming Policy* as a guide for reviewing these requests and implementing, if warranted, the appropriate traffic calming measure based on an engineering solution.

From the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Traffic Calming Measures consist of four types: horizontal deflection, vertical deflection, street width reduction and routing restriction. These are as follows:

Horizontal Deflections

Horizontal Deflections hinder the ability of a motorist to drive in a straight path by creating a shift and the shift reduces the motorist's comfort to maintain their speed. Horizontal Deflections are:

- Lateral Shift
- Chicane
- Realigned Intersection
- Traffic Circle
- Small Modern Roundabout/Mini-Roundabout
- Roundabout

Vertical Deflections

Vertical Deflections are a change in height to force a motorist to reduce their speed. Vertical Deflections are:

- Speed Hump
- Speed Cushion
- Speed Table/Raised Crosswalk
- Raised Intersection

Street Width Reduction

Street Width Reduction narrows the width of the travel lane or roadway thereby causing a motorist to reduce their speed to maintain an acceptable level of comfort and safety. Reductions are:

- Corner Extension/Bulb-out
- Choker
- Median Island
- On-street parking
- Road Diet

Routing Restriction

Routing Restriction prevents a particular vehicle movement at an intersection to reduce/eliminate cut-through traffic. Restrictions are:

- Diagonal Diverter
- Closure
- Median Barrier/Forced Turn Island



Speed Limit Reduction

Although not considered a traffic calming measure by ITE, another option is Speed Limit Reduction. A Speed Limit Reduction would comply with the Town's Code of Ordinances, Section 26-6 – Speed Limit Variation; Sign Notice. Speed Limit Reduction would be based on engineering reviews and traffic investigations.

Town Roads versus Other Roads

The Town receives numerous requests for improvements to roadways within its limits, but the majority of these roadways are not owned/maintained by the Town. In addition, if a roadway has the following designation: SC xxx, US xxx, or S-7-xxx, it is owned by SCDOT. If no designation or apparent designation, the following sites are available to determine ownership of a roadway:

- Town of Bluffton Road Maintenance Responsibility

<https://www.townofbluffton.sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/451/Road-Maintenance-Responsibility-PDF>

- SCDOT Street Finder

<https://ris.scdot.org/RoadwayInformationStreetFinder.aspx>

- Beaufort County Atlas (2018)

<https://www.beaufortcountysc.gov/county-transportation-committee/Beaufort-County-Atlas-2018.complete.pdf>

If a road is not owned/maintained by the Town, it shall follow the respective entity's policy/guideline, and both Beaufort County and SCDOT have developed one. The documents are available:

- Beaufort County *Traffic Calming Policy*:

<https://www.beaufortcountysc.gov/traffic-operations/documents/Beaufort%20Traffic%20Calming%20Policy%206-11-13%20approved.pdf>

- SCDOT *Traffic Calming Guidelines*

<https://www.scdot.org/business/traffic-calming.aspx>

If a road is privately owned/maintained within the Town, it is the responsibility of the owner (landowner, HOA, POA, etc.) for review and improvement. The Town will not be involved with the review and improvement.



Eligibility Criteria and Process for Town Roads

This policy applies to only roads owned/maintained by the Town that have a posted speed limit of 35 mph or less and have a traffic volume less than 3,500 vehicles per day. Most roads have a functional classification as minor collector or local street but a few are considered major collector and arterial roads.

Requests received by the Town for traffic calming would adhere to this process:

1. Submit an Application for Traffic Calming

The applicant shall complete the form as required to include:

- Description of problem: cut-through traffic, speeding, safety, etc.
- General idea of desired calming measure(s) and location

It is also recommended to include other representatives within the corridor indicating concurrence and signed by at least 75% of property owners. If not provided initially, it shall be obtained prior to project approval.

2. Initial Review by Town staff and/or its representative

This would begin with verification of eligibility and coordination with the applicant(s) to further understand the needs, scope, and project limits. A map designating the project area would be developed to further define the limits. As the Town owns minimal roads, a potential project could require a joint-agency review.

During the initial review, if a project is determined it may be eligible for a traffic calming measure, it would proceed to 3. Data Collection and Studies once a funding source has been identified and the funds have been committed to the project.

3. Data Collection and Studies

The Data Collection would include:

- Functional Classification
- Crash/Accident Data
- Average Daily Traffic Volumes, with directional splits for peak hours
- Average speed and/or 85th percentile speed in both directions
- Existing speed limits
- Graphical representation of all traffic control devices (signs, markings, and signals)
- Description of roadways to include but not limited to:
 - Lane Width
 - Pavement condition
 - Shoulder type: grassed, curb & gutter, valley gutter including width
 - Pedestrian/Bicycle Accommodations – sidewalk, bike lane, shared-use path, cross walks, ADA ramps, signage, etc.
 - Transit accommodations
 - Ditch type
 - Roadway signage



- Project Area Description to include project zoning, current use, facilities (schools, parks, churches, assisted living, hospitals, etc.)
- Additional information could include:
 - Turning Movement Counts
 - Pedestrian/Bicycle Counts
 - Origin/Destination Study to determine percentage of cut-through traffic
 - Intersection control analysis

The Study/Analysis would review potential eligible traffic calming measures and consider the effectiveness of the desired option and other potential options.

4. Public Involvement

A Project Stakeholder Meeting would be conducted with but not limited to the adjacent property owners, Emergency Services representatives, affected homeowners' associations, roadway maintenance personnel, traffic engineering, etc. This meeting would review the potential traffic calming measures and discuss the eligible proposed option(s) to provide the following:

- Effectiveness of the traffic calming measure (i.e. pros and cons) on the corridor as well as surrounding streets
- Address the “Three E’s” – education, enforcement, and engineering

5. Eligible Traffic Calming Measure

From the initial data collection/study and public involvement, the approved viable traffic calming measure(s) would be developed into a set of plans and would include a construction cost estimate.

The approved viable traffic calming measure(s) will require a petition with 75% approval from property owners on the corridor, and dependent on project type and location, it could require 25% approval from property owners within the service area. A service area is defined as all identifiable properties located on a road that are subject to the traffic calming installation and those property owners that must travel through the project corridor to reach their property. The petition will be required prior to “6. Implementation”.

If a Traffic Calming Measure is determined to be eligible, the original applicant shall be responsible for obtaining the required signatures on the petition and it shall be completed within 120 days once notice is provided by the Town representative. Should the petition effort fail to meet the required signature level, no applications for a Traffic Calming Measure would be considered along the corridor for a period of two (2) years from the conclusion of the 120 days.

If the corridor/road does not qualify for a Traffic Calming Measure(s) after the data collection and analyses are completed, the property owners shall be required to wait two (2) years from the date of completion to re-apply for traffic calming. If the Town adjusts the speed limits on the affected corridor, the property owner(s) may re-apply after 90 days from installation of the new signage.

If Speed Hump(s) were the approved and installed Traffic Calming Measure and property owners decide they no longer want the Speed Hump(s), they can request the speed hump(s) to be removed, if the Speed



Hump(s) have been in service for two (2) years from the date of installation. A petition shall be signed by 75% of the property owners on the corridor, and may require 25% approval from property owners within the service area. The entire cost of removal shall be paid by the property owners. If removed from the corridor, the corridor will not be eligible for new Speed Humps for a period of five (5) years from the date of removal.

6. Implementation

The proposed project shall be submitted to Town Council for approval and to obligate the funds for construction. Once approved and funded, the project will be constructed.

Upon completion of the project, an evaluation shall be performed within one year of installation to determine the effectiveness of the measures. If the project creates a safety problem, the Town reserves the right to remove the traffic calming measure(s).

Traffic Calming Measures Criteria

For a traffic calming measure to be considered, it must comply with the following criteria:

Speed Humps

- Posted speed limit of 30 mph or less
- Average Daily Traffic Volume is less than 2,500 vehicles per day but greater than 600 vehicles per day
- 85th Percentile Speed shall exceed 10 mph over the posted speed limit
- Length of road or segment shall not be less than 1,000 LF
- Roadway is classified as Minor Collector or Local Street
- Location will not have a significant effect on emergency services
- If the road is in a subdivision, the subdivision must be at least 80% complete

Raised Crosswalks/Speed Tables

- Posted speed limit of 35 mph or less
- Average Daily Traffic Volume is less than 3,500 vehicles per day but greater than 600 vehicles per day
- 85th Percentile Speed shall exceed 10 mph over the posted speed limit
- Roadway is classified as Minor Collector or Local Street
- Location will not have a significant effect on emergency services

Raised Intersections

- Posted speed limit of 25 mph or less for both corridors
- Average Daily Traffic Volume is less than 3,500 vehicles per day but greater than 600 vehicles per day
- 85th Percentile Speed shall exceed 10 mph over the posted speed limit



- Roadway is classified as Minor Collector or Local Street
- Location will not have a significant effect on emergency services

Other Traffic Calming Measures

For other traffic calming measures such as Lateral Shift, Chicane, Small Modern Roundabout/Mini-Roundabout, Choker, Corner Extension/Bulb-out, etc., the following applies:

- Posted speed limit of 35 mph or less
- Average Daily Traffic Volume is less than 3,500 vehicles per day but greater than 600 vehicles per day
- 85th Percentile Speed shall exceed 10 mph over the posted speed limit
- Roadway is classified as Minor Collector or Local Street
- Location will not have a significant effect on emergency services

For traffic calming measures which require significant improvements such as Realigned Intersections, Traffic Circle, Roundabout, Road Diet, etc., these would comply with the latest design standards.



Acknowledgements:

Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) “Traffic Calming Measures”

<https://www.ite.org/technical-resources/traffic-calming/traffic-calming-measures/>

South Carolina Department of Transportation “Traffic Calming Guidelines”

<https://www.scdot.org/business/traffic-calming.aspx>

Beaufort County, South Carolina “Traffic Calming Policy”

<https://www.beaufortcountysc.gov/traffic-operations/documents/Beaufort%20Traffic%20Calming%20Policy%206-11-13%20approved.pdf>

Greenville County, South Carolina “Traffic Calming Program”

https://www.greenvillecounty.org/PublicWorks/pdf/traffic_calming_policy.pdf

Delaware Department of Transportation “Traffic Calming Design Manual”

https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/DE-Traffic-Calming-Manual_2012.pdf

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) “Methods and Practices for Setting Speed Limits: An informational Report”

https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/speedmgmt/ref_mats/fhwasa12004/fhwasa12004.pdf