



**CITY OF LAUREL  
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 2023-03**

**TRAFFIC SAFETY, SPEED HUMPS AND TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES POLICY**

Effective: April 25, 2023

**I. PURPOSE**

To establish a policy that addresses the need to define, standardize and incorporate traffic calming measures to be installed in neighborhoods identified by citizens and City staff as having traffic or other roadway or pedestrian safety concerns. This policy shall include a process for residents to request speed studies and traffic calming measures in their communities.

**II. OBJECTIVES**

To improve neighborhood livability by reducing speeds and vehicular traffic on neighborhood streets by providing for the safe, efficient, and economical movement of persons and goods throughout the City and its environs. And, to improve neighborhood livability by promoting safer and calmer roadways for residents, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists on neighborhood streets, while preserving access for emergency vehicles, buses, and other users.

**III. BACKGROUND**

In 2021 the City of Laurel Department of Public Works (DPW) embarked on an ambitious project to modernize and upgrade City roadways and pedestrian safety systems including measuring traffic volumes, traffic speed and safety, pedestrian crossings, traffic flow, street design and alternative traffic modalities which resulted in a citywide traffic study and a Bowie Road safety audit.

These studies have led to several recommendations for roadway improvements and traffic calming measure recommendations such as: turn prohibitions, speed humps, speed tables, lane reflective safety bollards, traffic circles, the narrowing of the street widths, and curb "bump outs" that effectively block vehicles from parking at the corners which helps reduce driver "blind spots" when pulling up to narrow intersections.

#### IV. DEFINITIONS

City – is the City of Laurel, Maryland Government

DPW – the Department of Public Works

LPD – the Laurel Police Department

Primary Residential Road – a neighborhood street serving as a collector for local traffic from secondary and tertiary residential roadways, designed to feed traffic to arterial and major highways. Primary roadways provide a moderate level of traffic service and a high level of direct residential property access.

Secondary Residential Street – a neighborhood street providing a high level of direct residential access and a limited level of traffic service; not intended to provide for high flows of traffic traveling through the neighborhoods.

Speed Humps – Speed humps or speed tables are considered "physical features" of a roadway rather than traffic control devices (TCDs), so the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) does not address the height, width, length, or spacing of the actual humps and bumps. Speed humps and speed tables are distinguished from speed bumps in that they are raised sections of pavement designed to reduce speeds on residential streets, may reduce through-traffic volumes where suitable alternative routes are available, and are notably distinguished from "speed bumps" in that they have a more gradual rise and have not been found to create safety or operational problems and are further distinguished in that speed humps are used in a series and are usually spaced from 500 to 1000 feet apart.

Traffic Calming – Measures taken to reduce traffic speed, congestion and potential accidents on roadways.

Traffic Control Devices – Equipment, signage, and roadway markings designed to control traffic volume, reduce speed, unintended accidents, and potential mishaps between vehicles, pedestrians and other alternative transport modalities.

## V. TRAFFIC SAFETY AND CALMING MEASURE POLICY

This policy hereby establishes the guidelines, criteria, and process for determining if traffic safety and calming measures will be installed in a specific location.

**1. Speed Study.** When determined to be necessary DPW will conduct a speed study to determine if speed and volume criteria are satisfied for consideration of engineering-based counter measures. Based on the results of the study:

- Where excessive speeds are verified, DPW and the Laurel Police Department (LPD) will work collaboratively to develop a traffic calming plan.
- The plan may include speed humps, visual reduction cues, small traffic circles, or other traffic control devices.
- Resident concurrence, community meetings and notification will be required prior to implementation of a plan unless there is an imminent safety issue in which case the Department of Public Works and the Laurel Police Department when appropriate shall jointly present to the Mayor a report detailing the emergency need to implement critical traffic safety measures.
- If speed humps or speed tables are determined to be a primary measure, then the Department of Public Works will base its decision on the minimum necessary parameters, engineering design, and support data which are explicitly listed in the section of the policy titled: Criteria for Installing Speed Humps.

**2. Criteria for Installing Speed Humps.** Where speed humps or speed tables are preferred, the following additional criteria will be used as a basis of determination:

- Street(s) must have a designation as a Primary Residential or Secondary Residential and shall have direct residential frontage where the average lot size is 1.5 acres or less.
- Arterial roads, tertiary streets, or very low-density residential streets with houses set far back from the street are normally ineligible for speed humps unless DPW and LPD jointly has determined and documented a critical public need.
- The street's posted speed limit must be either 25 or 30 MPH.
- The prevailing speeds (85th percentile speeds) must be at least 7 miles per hour above the posted or statutory speed limit on secondary residential streets or at least 9 miles per hour above the posted speed limit on primary residential streets.
- Street(s) must have a peak hour traffic volume of at least 50 vehicles (equivalent to approximately 500 vehicles per day).

**3. Traffic Calming Devices.** Traffic calming devices will only be installed to address documented safety or traffic concerns supported by traffic engineering studies, and/or Law Enforcement or State vehicular and pedestrian accident data which indicates a public necessity. Devices can be implemented individually or in conjunction with other traffic calming measures depending upon area conditions and characteristics such as:

- The street carries a higher volume of nonresidential traffic than would normally be expected. Streets considered for traffic calming must be primarily residential with a majority of residential homes and driveways fronting on the street.
- The installation of traffic calming devices shall be assessed for their potential impact on public transportation and fire and rescue operations.
- The potential impact of traffic calming devices on adjacent neighborhoods shall be assessed.
- If a problem is determined during the engineering study, the Department of Public Works will notify the residents of the particular street and develop an alternative plan of traffic calming measures for that particular location.
- The City does incorporate solar stop signs as a deterrent to speeding, which has a positive impact on driver behavior by raising awareness that the need to stop is approaching; however, they are not recognized by the MUTCD officially as traffic calming devices.

**4. Requests for TCDs and Calming Measures.** Requests for a speed study, traffic calming devices or other roadway safety issues should be sent to the DPW email address: dpw@laurel.md.us Any services related to increased patrols, speed cameras, and marked cruiser presence will still be sent to the Laurel Police Department. In any case, please include the following information in the request:

- Name of the person requesting traffic calming measures under this policy,
- A phone number or email address for the person making the request,
- The location of the street, crosswalk or intersection identified as having the issue
- Identify what the issue is.

DPW Staff will review the request, research any necessary data including from State, and law enforcement, previous information, and conduct studies as appropriate. The requestor will receive a response within 30 days.

APPROVED:

Christian L. Pulley, CPM, City Administrator

Date

4/25/2023

**THIS POLICY SUPERSEDES ALL RELATED POLICIES  
APPROVED PRIOR TO ITS EFFECTIVE DATE**