

Town of Scarborough Traffic Calming Policy

[Adopted March 20, 2024]

PURPOSE

The Traffic Calming Policy recognizes the commitment by the Town of Scarborough to promote safe and efficient movement of all modes of transportation throughout our community. The goal of this policy is to provide a path for residents or businesses to request further analysis by Town staff and/or Traffic Engineering Consultants to better understand the issues and provide an appropriate solution taking into consideration the following resources: best engineering practices, Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), Federal Highway Administration (FHA), Maine Department of Transportation (Maine DOT), Scarborough Comprehensive Plan, other relative studies and applicable research.

The proper evaluation of each individual situation will provide an explanation of why no action is necessary, or a recommendation for appropriate methods to be employed to encourage responsible usage of the roadway system. A combination of the methods may be warranted depending on the situation. The general hierarchy would begin with a minimal approach of education and enforcement, and expand progressively to a more intensive approach including engineering design and construction.

Traffic calming and control devices need to balance the effects of the installation with the impact on the users, environment, public safety, and the community benefit. Certain traffic calming devices can be hazardous to motorists, cyclists, and other users if approached in an unsafe manner. The Traffic Safety Review Panel should safeguard against the consequences if the device is improperly used and can cause unintended consequences of a less safe corridor. The Traffic Safety Review Panel consists of Town Staff that are responsible for reviewing issues involving public facilities that may impact the health, safety and welfare of the public. Town staff includes the following Town Departments: Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department, and Engineering & Technical Services Department.

APPLICABILITY

Only streets and local roadways maintained by the Town of Scarborough are covered under this policy. Maine Department of Transportation (Maine DOT) will have final determination on all State and State-aid roadways in town. This includes collectors and arterials. Local roadways are determined as neighborhood streets with direct residential driveway access that do not carry significant volumes of daily traffic.

PROCESS

Consideration of traffic calming measures should be carefully evaluated to establish the need for implementation, proper selection of the most appropriate traffic calming measure, and to maintain compatibility with the goals of this policy. Requests for consideration of traffic calming measures can be initiated in various ways, either internally by staff or externally by the public. The process of evaluating the traffic calming considerations is further described in this policy. The process should be predictable for citizens and those evaluating the potential application of traffic calming.

1. The Traffic Calming Evaluation application can be found on the Police Department's website.
 - a. The applicant shall submit the completed form on the Police Department's website, which will automatically be sent to the Chief of Police or designee.

- b. The request shall include signatures from ten (10) residents who live on the impacted Town street. Additional consideration will be given to residents that can show a direct impact to the area to be added to the signature page. Residents must be:
 - i. At least 18 years of age
 - ii. A resident of the street being evaluated
 - iii. Names, address, and email provided
 - iv. From separate households
2. Upon receipt of the Traffic Calming Request Application, the Chief of Police or designee will confirm receipt with the applicant/point of contact. The Police Department will review the nature of the request to initiate the Field Assessment of Traffic Conditions (FATC). (*Town of Scarborough internal staff can initiate a request for FATC with the Police Department.*)
3. If the Chief of Police or designee determines the application is complete, the FATC will be completed according to the availability of staff and equipment to conduct the assessment.
4. The Scarborough Police Department conducts the FATC.
5. The FATC summary page will be shared with the point of contact via email. The point of contact may request to meet with the Chief of Police or designee if there are questions about the results.
6. The field assessment summary is reviewed with the Traffic Safety Review Panel for determination of next steps.
7. It is the discretion of the Traffic Safety Review Panel to determine the level of traffic devices to be utilized based on the use of Passive, Standard, and Physical Alterations. Any possible recommendations or actions proposed by the Traffic Safety Review Panel will be reviewed with the point of contact. Factors considered by the Panel include but are not limited to: residential density, volumes of bicycle and pedestrian traffic, heavy vehicle traffic, etc.
8. If applicable, traffic calming devices are installed or budgeted for based upon the recommendation of the Traffic Safety Review Panel. Prior to installation of any physical alteration control measures, Town staff will notify by mail residents within 1,000 feet of the traffic calming measures proposed and request feedback from the neighborhood. In order to implement proposed measures, 51% of the respondent residents within the 1,000 feet radius of the proposed permanent device on the street in question or on adjacent streets will need to provide a positive endorsement. The endorsement must specifically include those property owners that will be impacted along their street frontage and within 100 feet of any device or proposed measure.
9. If warrants for traffic calming measures are not met, passive and/or standard measures may be considered by the Traffic Safety Review Panel at their discretion, however permanent physical Alteration Control measures will not be considered under this policy. Additional requests for traffic calming in the same area will not be considered for a 12-month period without sufficient cause including, but not limited to, significant traffic volume increases due to additional real estate development, substantially higher crash rates, etc. These circumstances will be reviewed by the Chief of Police and the Town Manager prior to requesting an additional traffic calming application review.

CRITERIA

The Town of Scarborough's transportation network consists of many different roadway classifications, which range from arterials (high volume roadways) to local roads (low volume neighborhood streets). The use of traffic calming devices will vary depending upon the type of roadway classification and functional criteria of the roadway. Traffic calming devices should be carefully evaluated with special consideration given the potential impact to all users. The necessity of traffic calming devices should be based on criteria and warrants. The basic criteria and warrants for the necessity of traffic calming shall be based on the following minimum warrants:

Warrant 1: Posted speed limit as set by MaineDOT is no greater than 35 mph.

Warrant 2: The roadway cannot be more than two travel lanes or have a width of more than 30 feet.

Warrant 3: 85th percentile speed from FATC is 5 mph greater than posted speed limit.

Warrant 4: Average Annual Daily Traffic Volume of at least 500 vehicles per day, as collected by FATC.

In instances where warrants are not met due to the governing authority being the State of Maine Department of Transportation, the Traffic Safety Review Panel will collaborate with our State partners to seek guidance through other mechanisms to address traffic calming on these higher speed, higher volume corridors. This policy covers local roadways only, where jurisdiction of traffic control measures falls under the Town of Scarborough.

When all warrants are met, the roadway would be evaluated for possible traffic calming measures. An internal evaluation should be conducted to determine the most appropriate method of traffic calming, which would range from Passive, Standard, and Physical Alteration Traffic Control Measures. In-street solutions, or Physical Alterations, are likely to have budgetary and construction related impacts. Prior to in-street improvements being implemented, education and enforcement actions (Passive Traffic Control Measures) may be needed to continually evaluate the situation.

Traffic Calming may also be appropriate when special conditions exist. These conditions may include the following:

- School Zone - Regulated 15 mph speed limit area.
- Pedestrian Generator- Public Facility that generates a significant number of vulnerable users of the street.
- Bicycle Route - Street may be designated as a bicycle route. The conditions under which traffic calming solutions may be appropriate are likely to involve education efforts, which may include signage, lane markings and limited capital improvements.
- Transit Street - Street is designated as a transit route (Trolley stop) on low speed residential streets.
- Accidents - Crash data supports investigating to determine if corrected actions would mitigate potential for future crashes.

TRAFFIC CONTROL MEASURES

The following traffic control measure types include examples of techniques that may be used for traffic calming. The list below is not exhaustive and is subject to change as new research and techniques are deemed appropriate by the Traffic Safety Review Panel.

- A. Passive Traffic Control Measures include educational methods and police enforcement. These measures will be implemented as resources allow. Some examples of measures that can be taken under this level are as follows:
- Police enforcement. Periodic radar enforcement.
 - Speed notification sign board. This device displays a motorist's speed as they approach the sign board in an effort to educate the driver that their speed might be inappropriate and to raise driver consciousness of their travel speed.
 - Neighborhood mailings. A letter sent from the Town to all of the residents of the road or neighborhood asking for their assistance to help control the speed that they travel in the neighborhood.
 - Evaluation for pedestrian and/or bicycle safety improvements.
- B. Standard Traffic Control Measures are traffic organization and control techniques that influence driver performance without substantial infrastructure changes. These measures would be considered by the Traffic Safety Review Panel if the FATC indicated the average speeds exceed 5 MPH or more above the posted speed limit and without meeting the petition criteria for physical alteration control measures as detailed on Page 2. Some examples of measures that may be taken under this level are as follows:
- Signage. The use of advanced warning or enhanced reflective signage can be implemented at low cost to bring attention of motorists to traffic controls and multi-modal infrastructure in our neighborhoods.
 - Pavement markings. Using paint to narrow travel lanes can have a calming effect and provide extra room for bicycles and parked cars. Paint markings can also be utilized to provide a visual reduction in the width of a travel lane. Optical speed bars can be effective on roads where horizontal curve speed reduction desired.
 - Enhancement of Existing Crosswalks. Paint highly visible crosswalks at controlled intersections where pedestrian traffic is likely to cross the street and vehicles are required to stop. Post highly visible signage to bring the motorists' attention to pedestrians in the crosswalk. Mid-block crosswalks will not be considered unless it meets the requirements outlined in the Town's Crosswalk Policy.
- C. Physical Alteration Control Measures are design changes in the road infrastructure that create partial barriers or interruptions in the flow of traffic to slow drivers. These measures are not appropriate for arterial, collector, subcollectors, and rural connector roads where the primary function is to convey traffic volumes. Some examples of measures that can be taken under this level area as follows:
- Plantings. Installation of trees near the roadway can narrow the perceived width of the road, causing a natural decrease in speed from most drivers. Species selection must take into consideration salt tolerance and preservation of sight distance from adjacent roadways (no low hanging branches) as well as the needs for snow plowing/removal efforts
 - Speed Tables. Speed tables are midblock traffic calming devices that raise the entire wheelbase of a vehicle to reduce its traffic speed. Speed tables will be limited in use depending upon the type of street, vehicle operating speeds, and other factors such as high pedestrian-generators in the area.

- Horizontal Deflection. Some examples of horizontal deflections are chokers, pedestrian refuge islands, center medians, curb extensions, and lane narrowing.
- Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB). These enhance pedestrian activated devices can be utilized on a limited basis, as outlined in the Town Crosswalk Policy so that the effectiveness is not diminished. RRFBs have also been shown to increase crashes of vehicles and should be used in very specific circumstances as directed by the Traffic Safety Review Panel.

TERM OF USE

The recommendations of the Traffic Safety Review Panel will define the type of traffic calming device to be deployed and the anticipated duration of use. On occasion, the Town may opt to employ “temporary devices” as a pilot to a more permanent traffic calming solution. Any traffic calming devices proposed for use in the Town of Scarborough shall be compliant with the latest recommendations of the MaineDOT Guidelines for Traffic Calming, Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

Education efforts will vary depending on the nature of the behavior, and consideration and emphasis will be placed on providing a multi-modal approach. The Scarborough Police Department and the Engineering & Technical Services Department will be responsible for disseminating information as part of the education effort. The timeline for education efforts are generally short term for a limited amount of time.

Enforcement efforts fall under the jurisdiction of the Scarborough Police Department. The Police Department will have the sole discretion to determine the method of enforcement and when it will be implemented. The availability of resources will be a primary consideration in determining the level of enforcement.

Design and construction efforts are generally more permanent in nature and will require a more detailed assessment of field conditions. The Public Works Department will be responsible for budget appropriation requests and construction activity.