



## **DOUGHERTY COUNTY TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY**



**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
ENGINEERING DIVISION**

229-430-6120

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## **1. Introduction and General Standards**

Residents are often concerned about excessive traffic volumes and speed through their neighborhoods. The primary function of local streets in residential neighborhoods is to allow for the safe ingress and egress of the local homeowners to the County's roadway network. When neighborhood streets are being used by "cut-through" traffic and are being used with excessive speed, the quality of life and the safety of residents is diminished.

Residents often request the installation of multi-way stops as a solution to neighborhood speeding issues. However, the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), adopted by the Federal Highway Administration and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) states, "STOP signs should not be used for speed control."

In order to enhance the quality of neighborhood life and the safety of the residents of Dougherty County, the Board of County Commissioners, and the Public Works Department is establishing this Traffic Calming Policy.

The goals and objectives of this program are:

- Reducing collision frequency and severity
- Achieving slow speeds for motor vehicles
- Reducing the need for police enforcement
- Increasing the quality of life
- Preserving emergency vehicles access
- Reduce cut-through traffic

It is extremely important to realize that the approach taken by the Traffic Calming Policy is a systematic one. While each situation may be somewhat unique, the same definitions and criteria, as outlined in this guide, are applied. Also, the transportation system of the County must be considered as a whole. Solving one local problem should not cause another problem to appear somewhere else.

In addition, if an engineering study determines that the installation of traffic calming measures on a particular roadway will hinder drainage, the measures will not be installed.

### **1.1 Function of the Dougherty County Traffic Calming Policy**

The main function of the traffic-calming policy is to aid citizens on determining if their street has a speeding problem, and educating them on traffic calming options. Speed tables are installed on residential streets to serve as traffic calming measures. Properly installed,

they should foster a constant speed ranging between 28 and 30 MPH. They should not be misconstrued as enforcement mechanisms. The Institute of Transportation Engineers developed, by special committee, a policy on the use of speed humps/speed tables within the United States.

\*NOTE: While this document primarily addresses the installation of speed tables as a traffic calming measure, the Engineering Department reserves the right to utilize other traffic calming measures, i.e., chicanes, bump outs, semi-diverters, etc., in lieu of speed tables. The selection of the traffic calming measure to be installed will be based on best engineering principles and guidelines as set forth by the Institute of Transportation Engineers.

## 1.2 Street Classification

Traffic Calming Device will only be considered on streets classified as local, residential streets with a posted speed limit of 30 MPH. A physical inspection of the street along with traffic data will be used to determine the effectiveness speed tables will have.

## 1.3 Legal Authority

Traffic Calming Device shall be placed only by the authority of the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners.

## 1.4 Standardization of Application

To assure uniformity with the general guidelines and recommendations, the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and Institute of Transportation Engineers, will be used to select traffic-calming devices. Strict adherence to the standards and guidelines outlined in this manual will help ensure that any given traffic calming measures including, but not limited to, the use of speed tables will be equally recognizable and require the same action on the part of the motorist regardless of where they are encountered.

## **2. Policy Elements**

### 2.1 Speed Criteria

The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile is the indicator used to determine the maximum reasonable speed by performing a traffic study. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed is a speed at or below which 85 percent of people drive at a given location under good weather and visibility conditions.

- ❖ If the study indicates that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile is at least 10 MPH over the posted 30 MPH speed limit, the petition process will proceed if 60% of the homeowners in the petition area sign in favor of the speed tables.

- ❖ If the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed is from 35 to 40 Mph, homeowner may request a waiver. It will require 80% of the petition area to sign in favor of the speed tables.
- ❖ If the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed is less than 35 MPH, speed tables are not advised. The tables are designed to slow traffic to 28 to 30 MPH; therefore, their installation would serve minimal benefit.

## 2.2 Establishment of Defined Service Area

If a street or street section meets the minimum speed classification criteria, the Department will create a defined service area. The defined service area will consist of properties with direct frontage on the street and will include all residences 500 feet to either side of the outermost proposed traffic calming device or to the nearest intersecting street, whichever is deemed most appropriate by Department staff.

## 2.3 Recommendation for Speed Table Device

Department personnel will plan the placement of speed tables on streets meeting program criteria using the following guidelines<sup>1</sup> as detailed on APPENDIX D page 12.

- A. Grade - Speed tables will not be installed on street sections with grades greater than 8%.
- B. Sight Distance - Speed tables will not be placed in locations where sight distance is an issue. Curves are to be avoided. The tables should be visible from a distance of at least 250 feet using the standard AASHTO measurement procedures.
- C. Numbers of Tables in a Series - Speed tables are not to be used to slow traffic at a given “point,” but rather to reinforce a safe, consistent speed. For this reason, a single table is not recommended. Usually, a series of tables should not exceed three quarters of a mile. If the street or street section to be considered exceeds a mile, speed tables may be used in conjunction with other traffic calming measures, such as traffic circles, thus reducing the number of speed tables necessary to achieve targeted speed reduction.
- D. Spacing - Research indicates that spacing tables between 300 and 500 feet apart is most effective at lowering the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed to the targeted range.
- E. Location - The first table in a series must be located in a position where it cannot be approached at a high speed from either direction. To achieve this objective, the first table in a series is typically installed within 100 and 200 feet of a small-radius curve or stop sign. Care should be taken so that speed tables are not in proposed areas that would conflict with existing infrastructure.

<sup>1</sup>Based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers *Guidelines for the Design and Application of Speed Humps* May 1993

## 2.4 Petition for Traffic Calming Devices

To initiate the traffic calming process, a letter detailing the specific concern(s) on the street or street segment must be submitted to the Dougherty County Public Works Department by a property owner who is within 500' of the requested service area. Upon receipt, the Public Works Engineering Department will conduct a traffic study of the area to determine the severity of the issue(s). Upon completion of the study analysis, the study results will be remitted to the neighborhood point of contact as identified in the initial letter.

If a speeding problem is identified, a traffic calming device proposal will be drafted and forwarded along with petition forms, to the homeowners' representative. A properly executed petition is a generally accepted method to effect a public action. The following rules and requirements, which will be included with the petition forms, help ensure the fairness and integrity of the petition process:

The objective of the Dougherty County Traffic Calming Policy is to provide property owners a process to install appropriate traffic calming devices on County maintained neighborhood roads, where engineering studies indicate that their use would meet the desired results of reducing neighborhood speeds and their installation is favored by a majority of the property owners in the area.

To have traffic-calming devices installed, a petition must be submitted to the Public Works office. All of the property owners in the subdivision or defined service area should be contacted and given an opportunity to sign this petition, indicating "yes" or "no" concerning the installation of traffic calming devices. Unless property is undergoing change of ownership, a spouse's signature will not be acceptable if she or he is not the legal owner. If both husband and wife are joint legal owners, both signatures are required. A "Mr. and Mrs." Signature is not acceptable. All owners must sign individually. This includes owners of undeveloped lots. Renting tenants are not an acceptable substitute for the legal homeowner. No signature will be withdrawn from the petition after it is filed with the Public Works Department. The purpose of the witness' signature is to verify the signatures of the property owners, in question. The percentages will be calculated, based on plotted subdivision, units, or "defined service area." Each lot counts as only one vote, regardless of the number of owners signing. At least 60% of the homeowners must vote in favor of the traffic-calming device, before petitions will be presented to the County Commission, unless 80% is required per subsection 2.1.

The completed petition must be signed, notarized, and returned to the Public Works office, where it will be checked against tax records and lot maps to insure that it meets all requirements. Petitions that do meet the requirements will be presented to the Commissioners at their regular meeting. A public hearing will be announced at that time for each petition. At the public hearing, the petition will be approved or disapproved by the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners.

After approval by the Dougherty County Commissioners for the traffic calming device(s), Dougherty County Public Works will initiate the process for installation of the device(s). The process should be completed within 4-6 months

The installation of the traffic-calming device by the contractor will not be considered final until personnel of the Public Works office inspects the tables for compliance with design specifications.

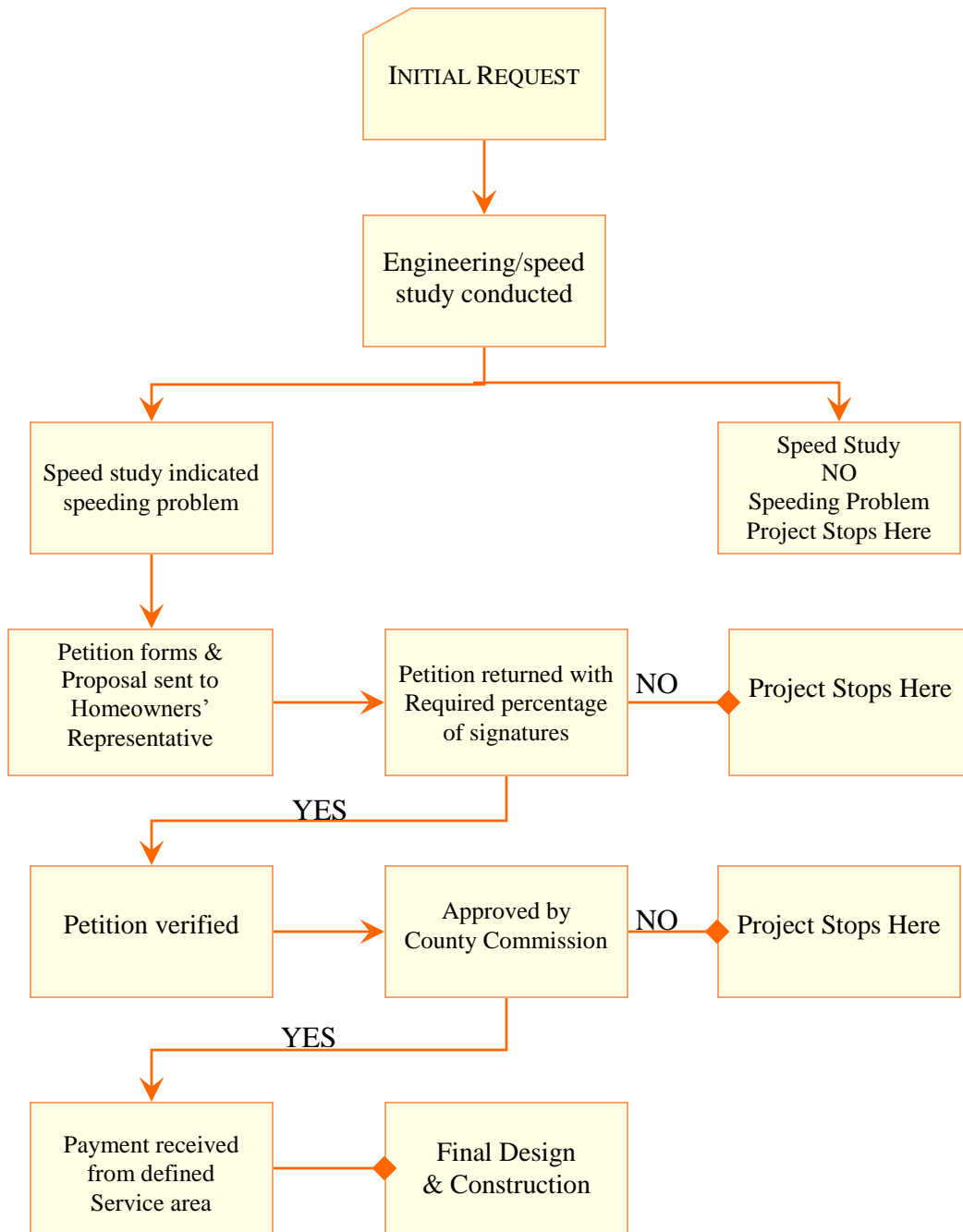
A cost estimate for the project will be provided to the County Administrator who will determine the funding availability. If funding is available, Dougherty County will pay 100% for the recommended traffic calming measures

Removal of traffic calming devices can proceed if the County is presented a petition requesting that traffic-calming devices be removed. At least 80% of the property owners in the service area must vote in favor of removing the traffic-calming device. Petition must be signed by property owners in the service area only. In the case of multiple owners, each owner must sign. Rental tenants are not an acceptable substitute for the legal homeowner. The percentages will be calculated based on individual lots where owners sign in favor of removal of the speed tables, divided by the total number of lots in the plotted subdivision, units, or defined service area. Each lot counts as only one vote, regardless of the number of owners signing. Such a petition for removal will only be considered after traffic-calming devices have been in place for a period of at least one year after installation. The cost for removal of traffic calming devices is to be borne 100% by the homeowners in the defined service area and must be paid in full before removal will take place.

For subdivisions not completely built out, a minimum of 30% of the total units must be occupied before a petition for the installation of traffic calming devices will be considered, and a minimum of 60% of total units must be occupied before a petition for the removal of traffic calming devices will be considered.

For “new” or “proposed” subdivisions, traffic calming devices may be included in the development only after a traffic impact study is completed by the Engineering Department, and meets the requirements of this document. All cost will be the developers’ responsibility.

Appendix A - Flowchart of Policy Elements





**Appendix B - Petition Cover Letter**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dougherty County Public Works  
Engineering Division  
2108 Habersham Road  
Albany, Georgia 31701-3905

Attn: Engineering Manager

Petition for \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

WE THE UNDERSIGNED, ALL BEING PROPERTY OWNERS IN \_\_\_\_\_  
NEIGHBORHOOD, ON \_\_\_\_\_ STREET, DO  
HERBY PETITION THROUGH OUR COMMUNITY FOR INSTALLATION OF  
\_\_\_\_\_ AND AGREE TO PAY \_\_\_\_\_ TO  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY PRIOR TO INSTALLATION OF ANY TRAFFIC CALMING  
MEASURES AS OUTLINED IN THE FUNDING SECTION OF THE TRAFFIC CALMING  
PROGRAM.

THERE ARE \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF LOTS CURRENTLY EXISTING IN  
“ \_\_\_\_\_ ” AND EACH OWNER AS SHOWN  
ON THE TAX RECORDS HAVE AFFIRMATIVELY SIGNED THIS PETITION OR  
THEIR INDICATION FOR DISAPPROVAL IS NOTED HEREIN.

THIS PETITION REPRESENTS \_\_\_\_\_% OF THE PROPERTY OWNERS OF THIS  
SUBDIVISION TO BE IMPACTED JOINING IN THIS REQUEST.

**\*Special Note\***

Your signature on this petition indicates that you have read and fully understand all information concerning the  
traffic-calming program.

Personally appeared before me a Notary Public, the undersigned affiant, who says an oath that  
\_\_\_\_\_ is one of the subscribing witnesses to the within instrument; that each of said  
witnesses saw the execution and delivery of the same by each grantor therein for the purpose set forth; and that  
each of said witnesses signed the same as purported.

Sworn and Subscribed before me.

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Homeowners' Assn. or Neighborhood Rep.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public  
State of Georgia

\_\_\_\_\_  
Subscribing Witness

Page (\_\_\_\_) of (\_\_\_\_)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PETITION  
FOR THE INSTALLATION OF

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\* I understand that my signature on this form reflects that should this project be accepted into the Dougherty County Traffic Calming Program, a total of \$\_\_\_\_\_ must be remitted to Dougherty County prior to the installation of any permanent traffic calming measures. \*\**

(Signature as appears on Tax Bill)

Community, or  
Subdivision Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes No \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name Witness

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Address

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes No \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name Witness

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Address

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes No \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name Witness

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Address

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes No \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name Witness

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Address

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes No \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name Witness

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Address

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes No \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name Witness

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Address





## Definitions

For the Traffic Calming Policy, the following definitions apply:

Average Daily Traffic:	The average amount of traffic, measured in both directions during a 24-hour period. For residential streets, the ADT should be 1000 vehicles or less.
Bike Lane:	A designated part of the roadway or separate paved area delineated exclusively for the operation of bicycles.
Bulb Out:	A bulbous extension of the curb, usually at an intersection, that narrows the vehicular pathway and inhibits fast vehicle turns.
Chicane:	Series of fixed objects, usually extensions of the curb that alter a straight roadway into a zigzag or serpentine path to slow vehicles.
Choker:	A narrowing of the street, often in mid-block, sometimes at an intersection. May be done with curb extensions, landscaping, or islands in the street.
Circle:	A small island in mid-intersection, as small as 16 to 25 feet in diameter that forces traffic to slow and negotiate the curve. Mostly used in residential areas, they can be landscaped or concrete.
Collector Street:	A street that collects and distributes traffic from residential streets to arterial streets and usually has an ADT of 1000 to 5000 vehicles.
Curb Extensions:	Curbs that stick out into the roadway, narrowing the path for vehicles. They reduce pedestrian crossing distances, prevent the passing of turning vehicles, and require no deviation from a straight line.
Diagonal Diverter:	A partition that connects two diagonally opposite curbs, bisecting the intersection, to force motor vehicles to slow down and turn. A traversable barrier allows emergency vehicles, as well as bicycles and pedestrians to crossover.
Diverter:	Road barriers that force traffic to turn. Semi-diverters, one-way chokers, or half-closures are all used to prevent entrance into an otherwise two way street.
Entry Treatments or Gateways:	These are mostly alterations in the pavement surface, such a brick stamped concrete or different colors, which signal to the driver that he or she is entering a residential neighborhood, which has a 30 mph speed limit. Pillars and archways are also used.
Emergency Vehicle:	Any vehicle such as police, fire, or EMS, which if delayed or blocked could result in loss of property or life, or both.
Major Arterial Street:	A street, which connects major activity, centers and usually has an ADT of 15,000 to 50,000 vehicles.

Median:	An island in the center of a street or intersection to protect pedestrians and provide landscaping. Medians prevent passing and left turns, separate opposing travel lanes, and provide visual enhancement.
Median Slow Points:	Center-located barriers dividing opposing roadway travel lanes at either intersections or mid-block.
Minor Arterial Street:	A street which collects and distributes businesses and commercial traffic and usually has an ADT of 3,500 to 15,000 vehicles.
Neckdown:	Curb extensions at the corner of intersections to slow motor vehicles and give pedestrians a shorter distance to cross, also called a “bulb out”.
No Right Turn on Red:	Allows unimpeded pedestrian crossing and paces the traffic flow into the cross street.
Pavement Marking:	Markings on the street or roadway that designate travel lanes, no passing areas, pedestrian crossings, and bike paths.
Peak Hour Volume:	The Maximum amount of traffic measured in both directions during one hour of the day. For residential the PHV should be 100 vehicles or less.
Raised Crosswalk:	A traditional pedestrian crossing area purposely raised like a long, flat-topped speed hump to give better vision of the crossing area. It interrupts a driver’s momentum and signals a yielding to pedestrians.
Rumble strips:	Paving that creates a change of texture in the road surface, alerting the motorist of a roadway condition: stop ahead, sharp curve ahead, etc.
Residential Cut-thru Traffic:	Traffic that uses residential streets to travel through a neighborhood without having an origin or destination within the neighborhood.
Speed Bump, Speed Hump, Speed Table:	Raised pavement designed to slow traffic speeds. The terms are used interchangeably by the public and many municipalities, but most traffic engineers insist that a speed bump is a narrow abrupt strip found mostly in parking lots; speed humps are typically 3 to 4” high and 3’ to 10’ in the direction of traffic, speed tables have a 6’ taper and a 10-foot flat-topped section. A standard speed table is 3 5/8” high.
Traffic Calming:	Methods used to reduce vehicular speed and volume, and increase the sharing of streets by pedestrians and other users. Generally refers to physical measures and roadway design changes, but enforcement and education can be components.
Traffic Calming Measure:	An approved element of the traffic-calming plan, which may be selected to solve a residential traffic problem.
Traffic Calming Study:	A study, based upon a traffic study, which determines if a problem exists and what traffic calming measure(s) is appropriate, if any.
Traffic Mitigation:	Used interchangeably with “traffic calming”.

Traffic Study:	A study conducted by the Traffic Division that measures vehicle speed, types of vehicles, vehicle volumes, and accidents for a particular street and/or intersection.
Traffic Sign:	A sign placed along the roadway to warn motorists of speed limits, traffic laws, or other information.
Truck:	A vehicle as defined under County Ordinance, which must legally travel on designated routes, generally not residential streets unless making a delivery.