



SCHUYLKILL TOWNSHIP TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY

Adopted by Schuylkill Township Board of Supervisors on July 5, 2017

INTRODUCTION

The Schuylkill Township Traffic Calming Program reflects the commitment of the Board of Supervisors to address a wide range of community public safety and transportation mobility goals and objectives.

Purpose, Goals & Objectives

Schuylkill Township Traffic Calming Program addresses neighborhood traffic concerns, such as excessive speed and cut-through traffic, in residential areas of the Township. The goal is to reduce the speed and/or volume of traffic on local streets. The Township's Traffic Calming Policy, working in cooperation with neighborhoods, seeks to provide a safe environment for pedestrians, preserve the residential character of neighborhoods, and improve the overall quality of life. . **The program does not preclude standard requests by residents for temporarily increasing police patrols to monitor speeders nor do these standard requests require the application of the traffic calming policy.**

What is traffic calming?

Traffic calming consists of a combination of physical design and other measures that are put in place on roads for the intention of altering, slowing down, or reducing motor-vehicle traffic, and improving safety and the quality of conditions for non-motorized street users.

The goals of traffic calming include:

- Improving the quality of conditions along the street by making it more safe and attractive;
- Incorporating the preferences and requirements of residents;
- Promoting people to walk, ride a bicycle or take transit;
- Maximize the efficiency of the local roadway network.

Traffic calming objectives include:

- Achieving safe, slow speeds for motor vehicles;
- Reducing cut-through motor vehicle traffic;
- Improving the safety and the perception of safety for non-motorized users of local streets;
- Reducing and redirecting the need for police enforcement;
- Reducing crash frequency and severity; and
- Increasing access for all modes of transportation.

The Township's traffic calming goals and objectives are best achieved by encouraging community involvement in safety conscious traffic management planning in order to promote community acceptance and to ensure successful plan implementation. All traffic calming projects must adhere to the following planning criteria and standards:

- The traffic calming planning and development process must be community-based and supported;



- Traffic calmed streets must incorporate a degree of self-enforcement of motor vehicle speeds through the design of physical features
- Traffic calming must directly affect driver behavior;
- Traffic calming must improve the safety of the street for all roadway users, including pedestrians and bicyclists; and
- Traffic calming techniques must not unduly hamper access by emergency services organizations, such as police, fire and rescue, or public works services, such as plowing and paving.

Applicability

Township residents are often very concerned about traffic problems, real or perceived, in their neighborhoods. Reports from citizens are sometimes the only way the Township becomes aware of specific traffic concerns in residential areas. These concerns may involve speeding, transient traffic, real or potential risk from vehicle crashes, pedestrian safety, and other issues. Because the character of the residential neighborhoods is a Township-wide concern and traffic calming programs affect daily living patterns of area residents and may involve public safety issues, the generally affected area (*a neighborhood area, the boundaries of which are determined by Township staff*) will be informed and involved in the development of any plan which involves major change or the expenditure of significant public funds. All residents in a neighborhood area will be asked to weigh in on proposed traffic calming plans. A minimum number of specifically affected property owners (*those whose properties are located adjacent to the roadway(s) within a neighborhood area who are directly affected by traffic problems and the installation of traffic calming features*) must make the initial request to the Township in order to initiate the process for implementation.

Eligible Streets

A street will be considered by the Township for installation of traffic calming features, provided that the street meets all of the following criteria.

- It is in an area zoned Residential.
- The street is a local road.
- The street is owned and maintained by the Township
- The posted speed limit is 35 MPH or less.
- The street is at least 800 feet in length and the road grade is 5% or less.
- The street has an average peak hour volume in excess of 100 vehicles.
- Two thirds of the street fronts on residences, parks, and/or schools.
- The minimum 85th percentile speeds (or average speeds) are 25 mph on a 15 mph street, 35 mph on a 25 mph street and 45 mph on a 35 mph street.
- The street is not an alley
- If the major issue is transient traffic, cut-through traffic must be a minimum of 40% of the total peak hour single direction volume with a minimum of 100 cut-through trips in one hour in one direction.

Streets that are owned and maintained by a homeowners' association or by a developer may be eligible for traffic calming features, provided that the full cost of installation and on-going maintenance is funded by the association or developer. The consent of the Township is required prior to installation of any traffic calming features. Any features installed shall comply with the



standards for traffic calming published by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, “Pennsylvania’s Traffic Calming Handbook,” publication No. 383, dated January 2012, as amended, and this policy.

Calming Measures

Different types of traffic calming measures are appropriate on different types of streets. Some examples of traffic calming measures include:

- Vertical changes in the street
- Lateral changes in the street
- Constrictions
- Narrow pavement width
- Entrance features
- Route changes

More information on traffic calming measures may be found in the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation’s Traffic Calming Handbook Publication No. 383. (*Available online at:* www.dot.state.pa.us/public/pubsforms/Publications/PUB%20383.pdf)

Traffic lights and stop signs are not considered traffic calming. Requests for these measures should be made to the Schuylkill Township Manager and Chief of Police.

Location Guidelines

- Minimum distance from an intersection to a traffic calming device shall range from 0 to 200 feet.
- Any traffic calming feature shall be visible to oncoming traffic for at least the minimum safe stopping sight distance based on the 85th percentile speed.
- Traffic calming shall take into account existing drainage features and bicycle facilities.
- Where possible, features shall be located to minimize impacts to on-street parking.
- The following shall apply where feasible: features should be placed near street lights and related signage should be placed on property lines.
- Diverters should not be installed where traffic is likely to be rerouted to other residential streets.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Traffic calming measures must be designed to accommodate all people in the community. To accomplish this goal, features that are implemented to improve pedestrian safety, or have an effect on pedestrian traffic, must be designed to meet the requirements of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

Landscaping and Maintenance

Any landscaping required to be installed with traffic calming features shall be determined by the Township which will make a best effort to be compatible with the adjacent area. Landscaping shall not include “fixed objects” which may present a potential hazard if struck by a vehicle. No changes shall be made to the landscaping without the express written consent of the Township. The property owners adjacent to the traffic calming feature shall be responsible for the maintenance and irrigation of the landscaping. Schuylkill Township shall maintain the roadway(s), signs, curbs, pavements and pavement markings for township-installed traffic calming features.



A homeowners' association or developer who funds the installation of traffic calming features shall be responsible for any and all maintenance associated with the traffic calming feature. The Township may require a maintenance agreement to be executed by the responsible party.

What is the process for getting traffic calming on my street?

- **Inquiry:** Initial contact made by residents who are concerned about speeding on their streets will be provided with the Schuylkill Township Traffic Calming Policy.
- **Application:** To be considered for installation of traffic calming features, a Traffic Calming Request Form and Petition must be submitted. For budget consideration, complete applications for potential 2019 installations are due on June 30, 2018.
- **Evaluation & Ranking:** Once applications are received, township staff collect the additional data needed to determine whether an application qualifies and how severe the problem is. This includes conducting speed & traffic counts and reviewing data on the number of collisions for each location. Once this data is gathered for all applications, they are ranked based primarily on speeds, traffic counts, collisions and the land use types within a short proximity to the street, which can include the presence of schools, transit stops, health care facilities and retail activity, among others.
 - **Prioritized Ranking:** *Eligible applications will be ranked to determine the list of locations most in need of traffic calming, and a limited number of the highest ranked locations will be considered for traffic calming based on funding availability. Funding levels will vary from year to year.*

Criteria	Points	Basis for Point Assignment
Speed	0 to 30	Extent by which 85 th percentile speeds exceed posted speed limit; 2 points assigned for every 1 mph
Volume	0 to 25	Average daily traffic volumes; 1 point assigned for every 120 vehicles
Crashes	0 to 10	1 point for every crash reported within past 3 years
Elementary or Middle Schools	0 to 10	5 points assigned for each school crossing on the study street
Pedestrian Generators	0 to 15	5 points assigned for each public facility such as parks, community centers and high schools or commercial use that generates a significant number of pedestrians
Pedestrian Facility	0 to 10	5 points assigned if there is no continuous sidewalk on one side of the street; 10 points if missing on both sides.
Total Points Possible	100	

- **Project Consideration:** Once the evaluation and ranking phase is complete, a list of applications will be presented to the Schuylkill Township Board of Supervisors for consideration of which locations will receive a traffic calming project the following year.



- **Inform Applicants:** Once the evaluation and ranking phase is complete and the Board of Supervisors has selected traffic calming project locations, applicants will be informed of whether or not their location will receive a traffic calming project the following year. Residents who have submitted applications for the 2018 application cycle will be notified of their application status no later than February 15, 2019.
- **Determine Project List:** Township staff then review each of the top locations to determine what traffic calming measure would be an appropriate tool to reduce speeds at that location.
- **Inform & Ballot Neighbors:** All residents within the determined neighborhood boundary of selected locations will be contacted by the Township with information about the project, and asked to vote on whether they would like traffic calming implemented in their neighborhood. A minimum of sixty percent (60%) of generally affected property owners must return a ballot and of those, at least seventy-five percent (75%) of returned ballots must be in favor of the measure for it to go forward – signatures from the original application count as “yes” votes unless a “no” vote is received from the same address. The voting period shall be sixty (60) days from the initial mailing and no ballots will be accepted after the period expires
- **Design & Approval:** If the neighbors vote in favor of the measure, one property owner within the determined neighborhood boundary shall be designated by the neighborhood as the liaison and main contact person between the Township and the neighborhood. The liaison will work with the Township staff to finalize the designs and bring the proposals through the official township public hearing process.
- **Construction:** Traffic calming measures recommended for accepted 2019 applications will begin construction in the township’s roadwork and paving season. Many factors including competing prioritized projects, weather and staffing influence the time line of construction. .
- **Reconsideration of Traffic Calming Petitions:** If the necessary majority has not been achieved within the voting period or the results of the vote are not in favor of the proposed traffic calming plan, the area shall not be reconsidered for traffic calming for a period of three (3) years from the date the petition was received by the Township, unless the Township determines that a significant change in area conditions affecting traffic has occurred. A new petition will be required after the three (3) year waiting period to initiate the traffic calming process.

Why are applications required?

Applications are required to identify locations where there are speeding concerns. Signatures are required as part of the application to ensure that there will be initial community support for traffic calming, before the Township begins the planning process. If a street is selected for traffic calming, residents of the surrounding neighborhood will be given the opportunity to vote on whether or not they would support the recommended traffic calming measure installed on the selected street(s).



Temporary Traffic Calming Features

After a traffic calming plan has been approved by the Board of Supervisors and PennDOT (when liquid fuels monies are involved), the Township may elect to install the feature on either a temporary or permanent basis. Temporary traffic calming features provide an opportunity to review the plan design without a costly removal expense if the plan does not satisfy the original goals. There will be a three (3) to twelve (12) month test period when temporary features are installed. Following the temporary installation period, modifications may be made to the traffic calming plan by the Township.

Removal of Traffic Calming Features

The property owners of an area in which traffic calming has been implemented may request the removal of the traffic calming features subject to the following conditions:

- The traffic calming feature has been in place for a minimum of three (3) years;
- A request for the removal of the feature has been signed by at least 50 percent of the property owners of the distinct addresses on the street where the feature is installed;
- A seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote from the generally affected property owners of the generally affected property owners within the same neighborhood boundaries used for the petition initiating the original traffic calming process is required for removal with a minimum of sixty percent (60%) of the votes returned (i.e., the same voting requirements as above for installation); and
- The removal of one or more traffic calming features may not make the necessary overall traffic calming plan less effective, unless the entire traffic calming project is petitioned to be removed.

If the Township determines that specific traffic calming features are no longer fulfilling their intended purpose or that a traffic calming feature installed under these guidelines has become a hazard, the Township may, at its discretion, arrange immediate removal or modification to a traffic calming feature.

Summary

The Schuylkill Township Traffic Calming Program allows the Township staff and concerned property owners to work together in developing safer neighborhoods with a fair and balanced prioritization process, a participative procedure for development of traffic calming plans, adequate public notice and public meeting requirements, and the promotion of resident involvement in decisions affecting the quality of life in their communities.

This document shall be used in conjunction with Pennsylvania's Traffic Calming Handbook, Publication No. 383, dated July 2012 as prepared by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PENNDOT). Specifically, this document supersedes Chapter 4 of PENNDOT's handbook.

For local roads not subject to State, Federal, or Liquid Fuels funding, PENNDOT approval/involvement is not necessary but may be requested by the local municipality. If deemed necessary, the Township Engineer will make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors requesting PENNDOT's involvement.



Traffic Calming Request Form

Primary Contact Information

Name

Email Address

Phone Number

Street Address

Zip Code

Specify the Location and Concerns

Schuylkill Township will evaluate the need for traffic calming on a street by street basis; a separate application must be submitted for any adjacent streets. Please define your street:

_____ from _____ to _____

Your Street Cross Street Cross Street

The Schuylkill Township Traffic Calming Program addresses speeding and/or traffic volume on residential streets. Feel free to provide more detailed information about concerns on your street.

Neighborhood Petition

To be considered for traffic calming, you must obtain signatures from **50 percent of the property owners of the distinct addresses on your street**, using the petition form attached. One signature is allowed per address. Signatures without a valid address will be discounted.

Signatures are required as part of the application process to ensure community support before the planning process begins. If your street is selected for traffic calming, residents in your neighborhood will be given the opportunity to vote on a traffic calming measure that is recommended by Schuylkill Township staff.

Community Contacts (Optional)

Please use the attached sheet to provide the names, addresses, and primary contact information for any schools, community centers or senior centers on your block, and list any parks or playgrounds. *Locations near schools and other community oriented facilities will receive increased consideration. However this sheet is an optional form to your application.*



Traffic Calming Request Petition

We the undersigned hereby petition the Schuylkill Township Board of Supervisors to perform the necessary evaluation, hold public hearings, and recommend that appropriate traffic calming measures be installed on

_____ from _____ to _____
Street Cross Street Cross Street

A neighborhood ballot will be circulated and a public hearing will be held before physical measures are approved for this location.

By signing this petition,

- I agree to have an appropriate traffic calming measure installed in front of my resident/business if deemed the most appropriate solution by Schuylkill Township staff; and
- My signature here counts as a “yes” vote unless I later submit a “no” vote in a neighborhood ballot which will be distributed if my street is deemed eligible for traffic calming.

	Print Name	Sign (agree to statements above)	Address (one signature will be counted per unit)	Email Address
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				



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	Print Name	Sign (agree to statements above)	Address (one signature will be counted per unit)	Email Address
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				



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	Print Name	Sign (agree to statements above)	Address (one signature will be counted per unit)	Email Address
21.				
22.				
23.				
24.				
25.				
26.				
27.				
28.				
29.				
30.				



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	Print Name	Sign (agree to statements above)	Address (one signature will be counted per unit)	Email Address
31.				
32.				
33.				
34.				
35.				
36.				
37.				
38.				
39.				
40.				



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	Print Name	Sign (agree to statements above)	Address (one signature will be counted per unit)	Email Address
41.				
42.				
43.				
44.				
45.				
46.				
47.				
48.				
49.				
50.				



Traffic Calming Request Community Contacts (OPTIONAL)

Please provide the names, addresses, and primary contact information for any schools, community centers, senior centers, parks and playgrounds on

_____ from _____ to _____
Street *Cross Street* *Cross Street*

Contact information for parks and playgrounds is not needed. Locations near schools and other community oriented facilities will receive increased consideration when evaluating your location.

Name of Facility	Type (e.g. Pre-School, Senior Center, High School)	Address	Contact Person & Title (e.g. Principal)	Email Address