

## Citizen Concern

The City of Norman takes the role of solving traffic problems very seriously, yet the ultimate burden of safety rests with you, the motorist in Norman. Since we receive numerous requests from citizens every year, we cannot always investigate your request as quickly as we would like. However, we will respond after carefully evaluating your request.

*We appreciate your patience and understanding.*



### CITY OF NORMAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT TRAFFIC CONTROL DIVISION

201-A West Gray Street  
P.O. Box 370  
Norman, OK 73070

Phone: 405-329-0528  
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## SPEEDING AND TRAFFIC CALMING



**CITY OF NORMAN  
PUBLIC WORKS  
DEPARTMENT  
TRAFFIC CONTROL DIVISION**

## TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM

### Speeding on Residential Streets

One of the most persistent and emotional complaints that the City of Norman receives is speeding and "cut-through" driving on residential streets. Each year, there are numerous requests received by City council members and other City administration and staff to "do something" about the problem. Proper street design is essential in encouraging lower speeds, minimizing cut-through traffic, and maintaining the integrity of residential neighborhoods. Through the City platting and development process, new subdivisions are now being designed to avoid long straight stretches of streets which encourage higher speeds.

It is on the long segments of existing streets that most of the speeding complaints are generated. In the past, issues of speeding and cut-through traffic could only be addressed through educational efforts, beefed-up police enforcement, and the unwarranted use of regulatory signs. Now, however, traffic calming techniques have been developed to reduce speeding problems and heavy flow on residential streets. By making some residential streets more "calm," it makes the neighborhood more liveable. These physical calming measures have been developed for use when education and enforcement endeavors have failed.

### Why not STOP Signs?

STOP signs are regulatory installations that require enforcement. The *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices [MUTCD]*, which includes policies and guidelines for the installation of STOP signs, has also been adopted by the City of Norman (Section 20-1112 of the City's Code of Ordinances). The policies it contains identify specific traffic and pedestrian volumes, accident history, and any unusual conditions which will result in the desired driver

response once a traffic control device is installed. If those conditions are not present, a percentage of the drivers will ignore the traffic control device. Furthermore, the belief that a device is not needed or warranted tends to jeopardize the effectiveness of all traffic control devices. It is for this reason that *MUTCD* specifically says that STOP signs shall not be used for speed control.

### Calming Toolbox

There is no single measure, such as STOP signs or speed humps, for solving all residential traffic problems. Each location has its uniqueness that must be analyzed to identify solutions. For this reason, the City of Norman, like several other communities nationwide, has developed a calming toolbox for customizing solutions. Among the "self-enforcing" devices in the toolbox are:

Choker Curbs	Offset Choker Curbs
Curb Bulb-outs	Center Island Medians
Chicanes	Divided Residential Entrances
Traffic Circles	Raised Crosswalks
Speed Humps/Tables	Turn Restriction Barriers*
Diagonal Diverters*	Semi-Diverters (Half Closures)*
Mid-Block Closures*	Complete Road Closures*

\* Note: The measures that change traffic circulation patterns require input from emergency responders and City Council discussion and approval.

### Qualifying Criteria

For a street to be eligible for the Traffic Calming Program, certain qualifying criteria must be met:

"85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed" must exceed 33 mph, and

Average Daily Traffic (ADT) must exceed 600 vehicles per day.

If the number of reported speed-related accidents in a 3-year period exceeds 5 accidents, this can be used as a substitute criterion in lieu of either the speed or volume requirement.

### Going through the Process

The first step in the process of getting a traffic calming project is to collect traffic data on the street. This requires a written request, signed by 4 or more residents on the street, to be sent to: **City Traffic Engineer, Public Works Department, 201-A West Gray, Norman, OK 73069**. The data collection is scheduled during the spring months while school is in session so we can get a more typical view of the traffic. After analyzing the data, the City will notify the requester as to whether or not the street qualifies for a calming project. If it does, the next steps will be:

- Deployment of speed feedback radar trailer and/or enhanced police enforcement.
- Second traffic study to evaluate the effect of the enforcement efforts.
- If the problem persists, a neighborhood meeting is scheduled to discuss a more permanent calming plan (typically in late summer and early fall)
- Circulation of a support petition (60% needed) (typically in the fall until the end of the year)
- Hiring of a contractor (typically in January)
- Construction (during the spring and summer months)

The entire process takes approximately one year if all time window deadlines are met.



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