



Traffic Calming Policy (amended October 10, 2023)

Mission Statement

The City of Lowell wishes to have a procedure whereby the City can incorporate traffic calming devices to alleviate speeding, excessive traffic volume, dangerous intersections or other conditions that are of a public safety nature.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to present ways in which the City of Lowell can find solutions to residential traffic problems on City-maintained streets as approved by the Lowell City Council. Consideration is given to a variety of residential traffic concerns on a case-by-case basis. Each situation is reviewed with respect to the available traffic control measures that have been, or could be, found effective to alleviate the traffic concern. The ability to provide traffic control measures is always subject to the availability of City funding.

Traffic calming initiatives may include police enforcement, lower speed limit, parking controls, traffic circles, chicanes, street narrowing, turn restrictions, one-way streets, changed street patterns or design, multi-way stop intersections, speed humps, and/or other traffic calming measures deemed appropriate by the City. The city will exhaust all other initiatives to calm traffic prior to the installation of speed humps.

The following outlines the procedures which can be used to develop the optimum solution or solutions to each situation. There are many factors taken into consideration when reviewing residential traffic concerns to determine the most feasible traffic control measure. These factors include the surrounding roadway network, resident access, speeds, volume of traffic, crash history, provision of emergency services, and budget considerations.

Initiation of Request

1. Any citizen, City staff, or Council Member can make a request for potential traffic calming. This request shall be in writing and addressed to the City Manager.
2. The written request should outline the nature of the traffic/public safety concern the requestor would like the city to investigate. The request shall also indicate the street(s) the issue is being observed on, and any other relevant specifics of the perceived problem (time of day, day(s) of week, etc.)
3. Once the written request is received, the process of analysis of the concern begins.

Qualifying Criteria for Analysis

1. Streets for which traffic calming devices are requested must be residential or serve residential neighborhoods.
2. Streets for which traffic calming devices are requested must be no more than 2 lanes wide.
3. Streets for which traffic calming devices are requested must be no more than 25 MPH posted speed limit.

4. Streets for which traffic calming devices are requested must have an average daily traffic volume of 300 vehicles or more.

Analysis

1. Once the request is received by the City Manager, the information will be provided to the City of Lowell Police Dept. (LPD) to begin the analysis process.
2. Traffic information will be collected according to the protocol of the LPD. This will include the use of traffic monitoring devices to collect information such as speed, and volume on the street(s) in question. Additional information such as incident history, and other relevant traffic/safety data may be included in the analysis as well.
3. Analysis shall begin within 30 business days of the written request being received by the City Manager pending availability of the police department's analysis equipment.

Findings

1. The Police Department will provide all findings of the traffic analysis to the City Manager.
2. City Manager determines if issue is Class A or Class B
 - a. Class A is an 85th percentile speed of 1-9 MPH over posted speed limit.
 - b. Class B is an 85th percentile speed of 10+ MPH over posted speed limit.
 - c. If the 300 average vehicle per day threshold is not met, City Manager will coordinate additionally with Police Department and use discretion to determine the severity of traffic concerns.
3. If the data indicates a Class A issue, the action to be taken is increased random enforcement by the Police Department, or such other measures as deemed appropriate by the City Council in its discretion.
4. If the data indicates a Class B issue, City staff will coordinate with the affected community to assess the type of traffic calming measures that would best address public safety and the nature of the issue.

Actions

1. The City Manager will provide the findings of the study to the City Council.
2. If it is determined the problem falls into Class B, the City Manager will make a recommendation to the City Council on the type of traffic calming measure that would best address public safety. This recommendation will be made based on analysis by City staff, in coordination with the residents of the affected community.
3. The City Council will provide the final approval of the type of traffic calming measure to be implemented.
 - a. Decisions to be made will consider the availability of funds to implement traffic calming on City roads.
4. Public Works and City staff will work to install traffic calming measures on the city-maintained streets as approved by the City Council.
 - a. Based on the type of traffic calming measure being taken, outside contracting may be necessary to complete the work.