

WHAT IS TRAFFIC CALMING?

Traffic calming refers to various physical measures that reduce the negative impacts of vehicles on neighbourhood streets. Discouraging speeding and other related issues create safer and more comfortable environments for all neighbourhood residents and user groups.

Some examples of traffic calming measures are:



SPEED HUMP

A speed hump is a rounded bump built across the entire width of a road to slow down vehicles. It's less abrupt than a speed bump but still effective in reducing speed.

Advantages:

- Installation is relatively easy and cost effective
- Effective at reducing vehicle speeds

Disadvantages:

- Can cause a minor delay to emergency vehicles
- Not recommended for roadways with high volumes of large vehicles
- Not recommended for Frequent Transit Routes



Learn more! Review the traffic calming toolkit at the welcome table.

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RAISED CROSSWALK

A raised crosswalk is like a regular crosswalk, but it's elevated to be more noticeable. It serves as a speed hump and a pedestrian crossing at the same time.

Advantages:

- Reduce vehicle speeds
- Increase rate of driver's yielding to pedestrians
- Increased accessibility
- Effective at reducing vehicle speeds

Disadvantages:

- Can cause a minor delay to emergency vehicles
- Not recommended for roadways with high volumes of large vehicles
- Not recommended for Frequent Transit Routes



CHICANES

A chicane is a series of curves or zigzags added to a straight road to slow down cars. It forces drivers to steer left and right instead of going straight at high speeds.

Advantages:

- Minimal impact to people who bike
- Effective at reducing vehicle speeds and cut through traffic

Disadvantages:

- Drivers may bypass by crossing centreline
- Reduces parking spaces
- Not suitable with many close driveways
- May impact maintenance (street sweeping and snow clearing)

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CURB EXTENSION

A curb extension is when the sidewalk or curb juts out into the street, usually at intersections or crosswalks. It narrows the road a bit, which helps slow down cars and makes it safer for pedestrians to cross.

Advantages:

- Increase pedestrian visibility
- Reduce pedestrian crossing distances
- Tighten intersection corners to reduce speeds

Disadvantages:

- May impact the turning paths of larger vehicles
- May impact maintenance (street sweeping and snow clearing)



SPEED CUSHION

A speed cushion is a raised area on a road designed to slow down cars. Unlike a speed bump, which goes across the entire road, a speed cushion has gaps that allow larger vehicles like fire trucks to pass without slowing down.

Advantages:

- Installation is relatively easy and cost effective
- Effective at reducing vehicle speeds
- Allows emergency vehicles to pass unimpeded

Disadvantages:

- Less effective than speed humps
- Gaps between cushions may allow some large vehicles to bypass a speed cushion

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TRAFFIC CIRCLE

A traffic circle is a circular intersection where cars travel around a central island. Instead of using traffic lights or stop signs, drivers yield to cars already in the circle and then enter when it's safe.

Advantages:

- Reduces traffic conflicts at intersection
- Effective at reducing vehicle speeds
- Minimal impact to parking

Disadvantages:

- Can cause a minor delay to emergency vehicles
- May not be appropriate or feasible at all intersections (e.g., sufficient space required)



MEDIAN

A median is a physical barrier or space that separates lanes of traffic going in opposite directions.

Advantages:

- Installation is relatively easy and cost effective
- Lane narrowing effect reduces vehicle speeds
- Effective at reducing vehicle speeds
- Increases driver alertness causing drivers to slow down

Disadvantages:

- May require removal of on-street parking
- May restrict local access to driveways