

TOWN OF NORTH ATTLEBORO

TRAFFIC CALMING POLICY



Traffic Study Advisory Group

2022

Traffic Calming Policy

Introduction

Our primary goal is to make sure that North Attleboro is a safe community to live, work, and play. One of the ways in which we are seeking to do this is through the implementation of a formalized Traffic Calming Policy.

Traffic calming is a method of employing specific measures to reduce speeding, through local neighborhoods.

The Town has recently adopted MGL Ch 90, Section 17C which grants the town the authority to reduce speed limits on roadways to 25mph. Since the adoption of this law the Town has received numerous requests from residents for the lowering of speed limits on several roadways. This policy has been developed to establish a structured process through which the Town can respond to and address resident concerns regarding these requests.

The purpose of the policy is to verify a concern once it is brought to the Town's attention, evaluate it against set criteria, rank it against other known locations in Town, provide recommendations to address the issue, and determine the effectiveness of the recommendations that are implemented.

Stage 1 Traffic Calming Measures: Use of Speed Monitoring Radar, Increased Traffic Enforcement, Signage and Pavement Markings

Stage 2 Traffic Calming Measures: Physical Modifications to the Roadway/Intersection, Speed Limit Reduction

Any roadway speed reduction or physical modification sought via this process ultimately requires the approval of the Town Manager.

Process and Requirements

Speeding: Reporting the Problem and Remedies to be Instituted

We take issues of Traffic Safety extremely seriously. We want the residents of Town to have a clear understanding of how to report these issues.

If a resident feels that there is a speeding problem on their local residential street, they should report the problem to the Police Department.

Upon notice of a speeding complaint the Police Department will deploy Stage 1 traffic calming measures such as the use of speed monitoring radar and increased traffic enforcement. These measures will be in place for two weeks. ****This time frame is subject to change based on the staffing levels and call volume of the police department.***

If these measures do not provide the satisfaction sought by the resident who submitted the concern that resident may request, via an Action Needed Report, that a data collection board be installed on their street.

At the department's earliest convenience a data collection board will be installed in the area in question. This equipment would remain in place for at least two weeks. Following this data collection period, the information would be reviewed. **If the data reveals that the 85% speed for the collection period is within 5 mph of the speed limit the Stage 1 measures would be deemed a success and those targeted measures will end.** If the difference is greater than 5 mph the Stage 1 measures will continue with enhancements for an additional period of time.

Traffic Study Advisory Group (TSAG)

The TSAG is comprised of a representative of the Police Department, the Fire Department and the Highway Department. The TSAG reviews Action Needed Reports for traffic related issues such as hazards, necessary signage, speed and other varied concerns raised by town residents. The TSAG will meet on a monthly basis to review and discuss old business and new concerns.

Step 1 -- Speed Limit Reduction Request Submission

Speed Limit Reduction Requests should not be submitted unless the requestor has first advised the Police Department of their concern and police interventions have not alleviated the issue.

Any resident interested in requesting that a speed limit reduction be instituted for their home roadway must do the following:

1. Submit a Request for Speed Limit Reduction Form to Town Manager's office
2. Submit a Neighborhood Petition Form to Town Manager's office containing the signatures of **75%** of the residents of the affected area. Eligible signees include:
 - a. those residents of the street identified for speed reduction (if the street is of significant length, additional consideration will be given to determine if only a portion of the street is an affected area),
 - b. residents on adjoining streets whose sole or primary access is the street identified for calming.

The petition shall identify a resident who will serve as the primary contact with the Town.

If the Petitioner is not able to garner 75% of the required signatures, the Traffic Study Advisory Group (TSAG) may either cease any further action for lack of interest on the part of the affected residents, or, at its discretion, the TSAG may continue to move the application on to the next step if it is determined that the concern is a significant problem

After verifying that a concern meets the minimum criteria set forth above, traffic volume, speed data, traffic patterns, existing conditions in the area such as stopping sight distances and accident histories will be collected and analyzed. The findings will then be presented to the TSAG.

Step 2 -- TSAG Data Collection, Evaluation, and Recommendation

Upon advancement from Step 1 to Step 2 a radar data collection board will be installed on the roadway at issue. This board will be in place for two weeks. In a follow up meeting, the TSAG reviews and evaluates the data (traffic volume, speed data, traffic patterns, stopping sight distances and accident history).

If the data meets the minimum criteria as set forth below, the TSAG may recommend Stage 1 traffic calming measures as appropriate. The TSAG may also conclude that no further intervention is necessary. A letter/email will be sent to the Applicant indicating the TSAG's determination.

Requests must have a point total greater than 0 to be further evaluated for any intervention beyond stage 1 traffic calming measures. However, the TSAG may, at its discretion, continue to move the application on to the next step if it is determined that there are other factors involved that indicate the concern is a significant safety hazard.

Each valid request will be evaluated based on the criteria shown below. If multiple potential projects are being considered, they will be ranked by their score to help prioritize the order in which they are completed in relation to available resources, funds and anticipated benefits.

Criteria

Traffic Speeds: The traffic speed criteria will be measured by the amount the 85% speed is above the posted speed limit. **The 85% speed or 85th percentile speed is defined as: the speed at or below which 85 percent of all vehicles are observed to travel under free-flowing conditions past a monitored point.**

Another way to consider this is the speed at which only 15% of traffic violate on average.

Amount the 85% speed is above the posted limit:

1-5 mph	6-10 mph	11-15 mph	16+ mph
0 points	3 points	5 points	7 points

Example: If the speed limit of a road were 20mph and 85% of drivers were going 27 mph this application would receive 3 points, because the 85% speed was 7 mph over the speed limit.

Traffic Volumes: average daily traffic (ADT) measured in vehicles per day (VPD)

<400 vpd	401-1000 vpd	1001-2000 vpd	2001+ vpd
0 points	2 points	4 points	6 points

Other Considerations – (Only become a factor when the two categories above exceed a total of 5 points)

School zone – 4 points

Significant Pedestrian Traffic Year-Round – 3 points

Significant Pedestrian Traffic During Summer – 2 points

No sidewalk on either side of the street – 1 point

Step 3 -- Follow-up Data Collection

If one or more of the Stage 1 traffic calming measures are implemented, the Town will wait approximately six weeks before collecting additional traffic data to determine the effectiveness of the implemented measures.

Step 4-- TSAG Data Review, Evaluation, and Recommendation

The TSAG will review the follow-up data. **If the measures were successful in addressing the concern, then the traffic calming process will end at this point.**

Step 5 -- Neighborhood Support for Stage 2 Measures

If the TSAG determines that Stage 1 measures were not successful the issue may advance to Stage 2 measures (**i.e. reduced speed limit, physical modifications, etc.**). Funding for the design and construction of the proposed improvements will need to be identified.

For permanent measures (Stage 2 Measures), the Applicant must submit signatures of at least **75%** of residents within the subject area to show support for recommended measure (Attachment C).

Step 6 – Neighborhood Site Meeting and TSAG Review

A neighborhood site meeting will be organized by the TSAG and held to present proposed Stage 2 measures which will involve physical modifications to the roadway/intersection. This informational meeting will provide a public forum to solicit comments regarding a proposed project.

The TSAG will review feedback presented at the neighborhood site meeting and determine if design and construction of the proposed recommendations should be pursued.

Step 7 – Design and Construction

Actual implementation of Stage 2 measures will be dependent on a project's point ranking as determined in Step 2 compared to other traffic calming projects and available funding.

Once funding for a specific project is in place, design and construction of the proposed improvements will proceed.

Step 8 – Follow-up Evaluation

After the Stage 2 measures have been in place for approximately six months, additional data may be collected to determine their effectiveness.

Unless Public Works determines that the installed measures are a hazard, once they are installed, measures shall remain for at least 3 years. If a neighborhood decides that it no longer wants the measure in place following the first three years, a process similar to that used for implementation of the Stage 2 measures will be followed, including demonstrating public support for their removal as evidenced by a petition signed by 75% of the residents within the defined area of the improvements, and evaluation by the TSAG.

Appeal Process:

Owners and/or residents abutting a street within the defined impact area may appeal a TSAG traffic calming recommendation by filing a written notice of appeal with the Town Manager. Written appeals must be received within 30 days of the decision.

Appeals will be heard by the Town Manager, who has authority to make all final decisions regarding traffic calming policies.

The only issues that may be raised on appeal are:

1. Whether there is a public justification for the change (public justification defined as meeting the policy's volume and speed criteria).
2. Whether the method chosen to gauge neighborhood consensus was properly completed as required by the traffic calming policy.

Appendix

Attachment A – Request for Speed Limit Reduction Form

Please fill out this form and return to: Town Manager’s Office

This form is used to report a speeding or traffic problem on a residential street. When this form is submitted, Town staff will evaluate the complaint to determine the nature of the problem and will make sure that the location is a town maintained, residential street. After the initial report Town staff will explain how residents may put together a petition to verify that there is a widespread concern for the speeding or traffic issue.

1. Contact Information

Name (Please Print): _____

Address, City, and Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

2. Please describe the location of the traffic concern. Attach a map or picture if necessary:

3. Please describe the nature of the neighborhood traffic problem you are concerned with (attach additional sheets if necessary):

4. Please list possible solutions to the problem that you would like the Town to consider:

Attachment B- Neighborhood Petition Form (Page 1)

Please fill out this form and return to: Town Manager's Office

THE UNDERSIGNED AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. All persons signing this petition do hereby certify that they own property or reside within the following area:

2. All persons signing this petition do hereby agree to the following problem in the defined area:

3. All persons signing this petition do hereby agree that the following contact person(s) represents the neighborhood in matters pertaining to items 1 and 2 above:

Name of key contact person #1 (please print): _____

Address, City, and Zip Code: _____

Telephone (day): _____ Email: _____

Name of key contact person #2 (please print): _____

Address, City, and Zip Code: _____

Telephone (day): _____ Email: _____

Please attach additional pages if necessary to discuss the request.

Date Submitted: _____

Attachment C – Neighborhood Petition Form (Page 1) for Construction of Traffic Calming Measures

Please fill out this form and return to: Town Manager’s Office

THE UNDERSIGNED AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. All persons signing this petition do hereby certify that they own property or reside within the following area:

2. All persons signing this petition do hereby agree to the construction of the following proposed traffic calming measures, the estimated cost of which is indicated in the construction cost estimate below:

(To be completed by Public Works)

3. All persons signing this petition do hereby acknowledge that unless Public Works determines that the installed measures are a hazard, once they are installed, all measures shall remain for at least 3 years. If a neighborhood decides that it no longer wants the measure in place following the first three years, a process similar to that used for implementation of the Stage 2 measures will be followed, including demonstrating public support for their removal as evidenced by a petition signed by 75% of the residents within the defined area of the improvements, and evaluation by the TSAG.

Date Submitted: _____

