



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

Fairfax County Department of Transportation Residential Traffic Administration Program (RTAP) Traffic Calming General Operating Procedures

Intent:

The development of a traffic calming plan is a community-driven process under the leadership of a traffic calming task force and the overall direction of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT). Traffic calming is a program of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and administered in collaboration with FCDOT.

Goal:

The development of a particular traffic calming plan is to reflect community desires that are supported within traditional traffic engineering principles, public safety, and financial affordability.

Initial Contact:

When the Board of Supervisors (BOS) member is initially contacted for a traffic calming project in a community, a review of the basic requirements as they apply to the street(s) is done to determine if the street(s) meets the basic eligibility requirements for an engineering review for acceptance into the traffic calming program. FCDOT will conduct the basic eligibility review.

The basic eligibility requirements are:

1. Street must be classified as a Local or Collector Road.
2. If the street is classified as a collector, then the street must be residential in nature (with at least 12 dwellings per 1000 feet of roadway).
3. Street must have a 25 mph speed limit.

Step 1: Study Initiation

The request for the initiation of an engineering review and traffic calming study is made by the Home Owners Association (HOA) or Civic Association (CA) of the community to the District Supervisor. If there is no HOA or CA, a letter containing signatures from residents of 10 households along the street that is being requested for a review may be accepted. Once received the request is forwarded to FCDOT for study.

The request needs to include the following:

1. The name and termini of the street(s) being requested for a review.
2. Contact information of community members, typically 4 to 5 residents, who can serve as community task force members. One resident needs to be identified as a lead contact for the task force.

Step 2: Traffic Count and Speed Study

FCDOT conducts an engineering review and a traffic count and speed survey of the road to determine if the street(s) qualify for the development of a conceptual traffic calming plan.

- A preliminary field review is made to determine if the geometry of the road can accommodate traffic calming measures, e.g., road grade, sight distances, drainage, and location of road access points.
- Street must have a traffic volume between 600 and 4,000 vehicles per day (VDOT requirement).
- The recorded 85th percentile speed of vehicles must be equal to or greater than 35 mph or the recorded average speed must be equal to or greater than 30 mph. (Street(s) can qualify for the traffic calming program in one or both directions).
- FCDOT provides the results of the study to the District Supervisor, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, and the public schools.

Step 3: Conceptual Plan Development

If the street(s) qualify, FCDOT and the VDOT traffic engineering division, in coordination with the District Supervisor's staff, conduct an engineering review of the street(s) and develop a proposed conceptual traffic calming plan notating the available options based on the traffic calming device spacing, sight distance requirements, roadway geometrics, existing traffic control devices, and existing utility locations.

FCDOT meets with the task force members and District Supervisor's staff, identifies the impacted and ballot areas, reviews the conceptual plan and available options, solicits comments, and seeks concurrence of the plan from the task force members. Adjustments to the conceptual plan may be made at this time. Affected property owners are identified by FCDOT.

Task force members obtain concurrence signatures from the affected property owners

and build community consensus for the plan. Templates will be provided by FCDOT to the task force to obtain the signatures from the affected property owners.

Adjustments to the conceptual plan may be made at this time by FCDOT with concurrence from VDOT. If adjustments are made, consultation with the task force members and District Supervisor is required.

Step 4: Community Meeting

Once the task force obtains the signatures from the affected residents and the task force determines that significant community support has been achieved, then the task force members notify the community at-large of the informational meeting.

Community task force members and FCDOT present the proposed traffic calming plan at the informational meeting and explain the ballot process. The community at-large includes the impacted area as identified by FCDOT.

Step 5: Community Vote

HOA/CA representatives of the task force, in collaboration with the District Supervisor's office, conduct a vote to approve/disapprove the proposed traffic calming plan. The following rules will govern the approval of any traffic calming plan:

- Only residences in the ballot area are entitled to vote on the plan.
- Ballot area is defined by FCDOT as those residents who must use the street(s) to access their residences or who would be inconvenienced greatly if they chose not to incur a traffic calming measure to access their residences.
- Voting shall be conducted by ballot, with only one vote per residence allowed.
- Wording on the ballot must be approved by FCDOT. A sample ballot template will be provided by FCDOT.
- Accompanying the ballot shall be voting procedures, a copy of the tax map based plan, and a letter providing information about the types and locations of all traffic-calming devices.
- Ballots must be received (or postmarked) by a date, as pre-determined by the task force, to the appropriate District Supervisor's office.
- A person who is a renter of a particular residence may vote in lieu of the owner of a particular residence, if such owner currently does not reside at the address, and approved by the HOA/CA or District Supervisor's office.
- Properties that are vacant, bank-owned properties and properties in foreclosure may be considered as vacant and not included in the balloting process.
- The proposed traffic calming plan shall be approved as a whole integrated plan, e.g., a "YES" vote indicates approval for all measures in the proposed traffic calming plan; a "NO" vote indicates disapproval for a least one or more of the proposed measures in the traffic calming plan.
- A minimum of 50% of residences in the ballot area shall cast and return a ballot for the vote to be considered valid (or some higher minimum if required by the local supervisor).
- Out of the total ballots cast, a 60% minimum approval rate is required for the traffic calming plan to be implemented (or some higher minimum if required by the local supervisor).

- Ballots received after the official postmark or ‘received by’ dates are to be unopened and not counted.
- Ballots that do not clearly indicate approval or disapproval for the whole integrated traffic-calming plan, e.g., ballots modified and indicating a partial approval of specific elements in the plan are to be considered as a “non-response”.
- Blank ballots or ballots marked with more than one vote are to be considered as a “non-response”.
- “Non-response” ballots are counted as part of the total eligible residences in the ballot area from which the minimum return and approval rate is required to be determined.
- All costs for ballot production, distribution, and returned postage are the responsibility of the task force.

Step 6: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Endorsement

If the proposed traffic calming plan is approved by the community, BOS action is required to endorse the plan. Upon BOS endorsement, FCDOT notifies VDOT of the BOS action and requests installation of the devices.

VDOT’s schedule for implementation may vary because of the scheduling availability of construction crews and material needed to construct the traffic calming devices.

Responsibilities of task force members will include:

- Informing the community of the request for a traffic calming study. This can be accomplished through a community informational meeting attended by FCDOT staff.
- Providing community expectations prior to the development of the conceptual traffic calming plan.
- Reviewing and approving the conceptual traffic calming plan.
- Securing affected property owners’ signatures.
- Building community support for the conceptual traffic calming plan.
- Presenting the traffic calming plan at the community information meeting.
- Distributing, by mail or in person, the ballots to the property owners in the defined ballot area.
- Providing all costs associated with the production, distribution, and return postage of the ballots.

Definitions:

- *Ballot area* is defined by FCDOT as including those residents who must use the street(s) to access their residences or who would be greatly inconvenienced if they chose another route to avoid a traffic calming measure adjacent to their residences.

- *Impacted area* is the area identified by FCDOT which includes those properties that may use the street(s) where traffic calming is being considered, but have alternate access routes.
- *Affected property owners* are those residents whose properties are adjacent to any physical devices indicated on the plan whose written signatures must be obtained.