

# TRAFFIC CALMING TOOLBOX

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*For the residents of the City of Decatur, Georgia*



# City of Decatur

## Traffic Calming Toolbox

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Decatur, GA 30030  
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# Welcome to your Traffic Calming Toolbox!

*All the tools you need for your neighborhood traffic concerns.*

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Tool Box Welcome letter

(To be placed on Mayor's letterhead and signed by Mayor)

Dear Decatur resident,

Thank you for your interest in traffic calming measures available here in the City of Decatur. Like you, we all share the common priority of ensuring safe streets in our City.

Traffic calming techniques are visual or physical improvements within a street or public right of way space that slows vehicular traffic and increases pedestrian or bicycle safety. These techniques are meant to make driving at speeds above the desired limit excessive speeds in residential areas.

This toolkit provides a variety of traffic calming options which share the common goal of ensuring pedestrian safety and maintaining an active living community that is open to a diverse means of transportation. As there are many different street types with a wide variety of widths that fall within different zoning districts in Decatur, no one size fits all solution will apply in every situation.

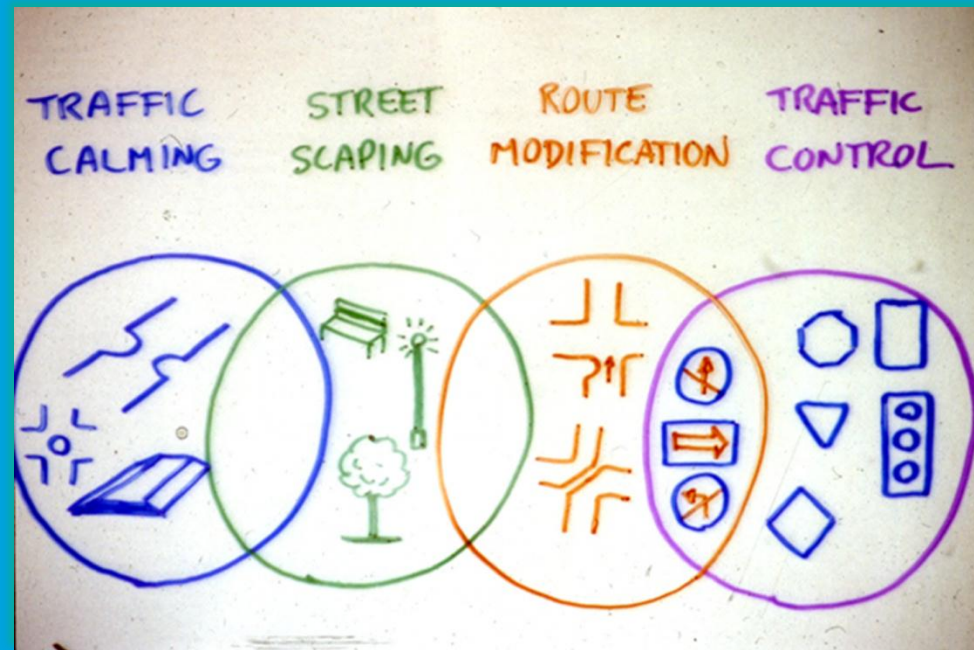
Therefore, the City has worked to identify traffic calming techniques that are applicable to a variety of street types. More information on these different traffic calming techniques can be found in this toolkit. In addition to this toolbox for residents, the City has already installed a variety of traffic calming measures in various neighborhoods. Because of the large and diverse number of stakeholders associated with these decisions - ranging from residents, pedestrians, vehicle operators and property owners - the City has created a fair, balanced, and flexible process for interested neighborhoods to pursue traffic calming.

We would like to thank the Decatur City staff for their efforts in facilitating this important dialogue which ultimately will balance different points of views while keeping our City safe and functional.

Thank you again for taking an interest in our community. We look forward to working with you to assess and resolve your traffic calming issues.

Respectfully,

Mayor Jim Baskett



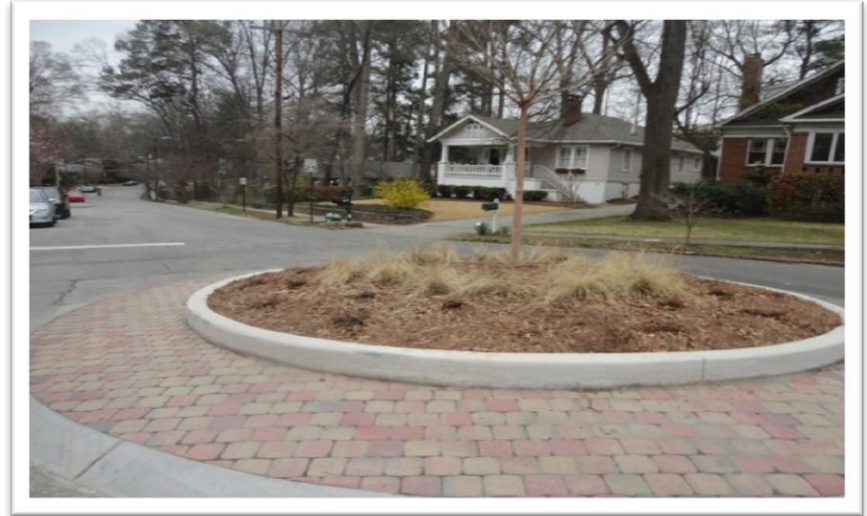
# WHAT IS TRAFFIC CALMING?

Visual and physical improvements within street or public right-of-way that slow vehicular traffic and increase pedestrian and bike safety.

# Traffic Calming in Decatur

Residents of Decatur are invested in creating and maintaining a community that is safe for all street users including pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles. Traffic calming is an important component of this common interest. The City of Decatur has taken measures to install several physical measures to calm traffic in certain residential areas with high volume and high speed traffic.

The City of Decatur has developed this toolbox as a resource for residents interested in exploring traffic calming techniques within their neighborhoods.



Traffic calming measures, such as mini-circles, medians, bulb-outs, and speed humps reduce vehicular speeds by:

- Serving as physical obstacles to speeding vehicles, forcing drivers to maintain reduced speeds in residential areas.
- Reducing the sight line of drivers along residential streets as long, straight-shot roads are interrupted by physical measures.

# WHAT ARE TRAFFIC CALMING TECHNIQUES IN DECATUR?

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*In addition to physical traffic calming measures, the City of Decatur includes education and enforcement as effective techniques.*

# Speed Monitoring and Enforcement

## Advantages

- Increase driver awareness of speeding
- Drivers may alter behavior without physically altering roadway

## Disadvantages

- The effect may diminish over time as drivers become accustomed to the sign. Moving the location of the speed monitor may reduce this effect.



*The Decatur Police Department can assist residents with monitoring speed temporarily and addressing localized issues through raising awareness and enforcement. Temporary speed monitors are used to inform motorists of their actual speed compared to the posted speed limit.*



# Speed Humps

## Advantages

- Effectively reduce vehicular speeds
- Relatively inexpensive
- Flexible designs create crosswalks for pedestrians

## Disadvantages

- Can slow larger vehicles to a greater extent including emergency vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances
- May increase pollution and noise due to braking and acceleration caused by the hump



*Speed humps are rounded, raised areas placed across the street which are usually visually marked and designed to slow traffic as vehicles travel over the hump.*

## Speed Table

### Advantages

- Brick can enhance aesthetics
- Easy feature for bicyclists to navigate

### Disadvantages

- Slow larger vehicles to a greater extent including emergency vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances
- More expensive than speed humps to construct
- May increase pollution and noise due to braking and acceleration



*Speed tables contain flat top, raised surfaces that generally allow a car to be fully on the raised surface before exiting the speed table.*

## Bulb-out

### Advantages

- Reduce vehicular speeds without additional noise or pollution as constant speeds are maintained
- Designed to accommodate easy navigation by emergency vehicles

### Disadvantages

- May be expensive depending on design
- May cause drainage problems on a street
- May result in loss of on-street parking



*Bulb-outs narrow driver sight distance as they physically narrow roadway width.*

## Chicane

### Advantages

- Reduce vehicular speeds without additional noise or pollution as constant speeds are maintained

### Disadvantages

- May be expensive depending on design
- May result in loss of on-street parking



*Chicanes are a type of horizontal deflection used to reduce the speed of traffic as drivers are expected to reduce speed to negotiate the lateral displacement in the vehicle path.*

## Mini-Circle

### Advantages

- May replace 4-way stop signs as traffic is routed around mini circle
- May include aesthetically pleasing elements

### Disadvantages

- Slow larger vehicles to a greater extent including emergency vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances
- Can be costly depending on design
- Maintenance may be required



*Mini-circles are raised islands placed in intersections typically in residential areas where large vehicular traffic does not occur.*

# Roundabout

## Advantages

- Avoids the need for traffic signal
- Reduces stopping and starting by allowing continuous movement of vehicles yielding to traffic in the roundabout

## Disadvantages

- May be expensive depending on design
- Typically require additional right of way to construct
- May result in loss of on-street parking



*A roundabout is a type of circular intersection similar to a mini-circle however used in higher volume intersections. Road traffic flows continuously in one direction around a central median.*

## Raised Crosswalk

### Advantages

- Pedestrian and bicycle friendly
- May reduce motor traffic speeds
- May be decorative for additional investment

### Disadvantages

- May increase pollution due to stopping and starting before and after the crosswalk
- May slow larger vehicles including emergency vehicles such as ambulances and fire trucks



*A raised crosswalk is essentially a speed table outfitted with crosswalk markings and signage to channelize pedestrian crossings. Raised crosswalks are useful mid-block away from intersections.*

# Raised Intersection

## Advantages

- Calms vehicular speeds on two streets at one intersection
- Pedestrian and bicycle friendly
- May be aesthetically pleasing for additional cost

## Disadvantages

- May be expensive depending on materials used
- May slow larger vehicles including emergency vehicles such as ambulances and fire trucks



*This traffic calming measure raises an entire intersection with elevated approaches from all directions. The raised intersection may include sidewalk crossings near the intersection and it is very useful in areas with high pedestrian traffic.*



# Painted Crosswalks

## Advantages

- No additional costs to alter the street or curbs
- May be visually eye catching depending on design

## Disadvantages

- Over time, the newness of the crosswalk may lose its effectiveness due to drivers becoming accustomed to the painted crosswalk



*Painted crosswalks do not change the vertical or horizontal character of the road. Traffic is slowed as attention is drawn to a pedestrian crossing area.*

## Creative Signage

### Advantages

- Creativity of the sign may draw attention to the message that was previously lost or ineffective due to saturation

### Disadvantages

- The effect may diminish over time as drivers become accustomed to the unique signage. Moving the location of unique signs may help keep them fresh and effective



*Creative signage along the roadway is used to alert motor vehicle drivers of pedestrian traffic.*

# HOW WILL MY CONCERNS BE ADDRESSED?

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*It all starts with your request.*

# The 5-Step Traffic Calming Process

## Step One Contact the City

To begin, a request to meet with a City of Decatur official should be made via the *Request for Neighborhood Assistance Form*. Within 3 business days, a City staff professional will contact you to schedule a meeting for further discussion of your concerns and potential solutions.

## Step Two Increased Monitoring and Enforcement

Over a designated period of time, the City of Decatur Police Department will dedicate additional resources to monitor vehicular speeds and activity within the neighborhood. Speed monitoring devices may be placed within the neighborhood to make drivers more aware of their speeds. Data on accident history, daily traffic volumes, pedestrian activity, and other measures may be collected by the City during this timeframe.

## Step Three Make an Educated Decision on How to Proceed

The City will contact you to discuss the results of the data collection and increased enforcement. In some cases, increased enforcement alone will modify driver behavior sufficiently to resolve residential concerns. If this is the case, the process will end following this conversation with City staff. However, in many cases the increased enforcement and data results demonstrate a larger problem that must be resolved with physical traffic calming measures. Proceed to Step Four.

## Step Four Gather Neighborhood Support

The City of Decatur will work with you to identify the area that may be impacted by the installation of physical traffic calming measures in your neighborhood. Preliminary traffic calming measures will also be identified as options for you to share with your neighbors to obtain support for the initiative. As the leader of the initiative, you must receive signatures of 85% or more of households in the impacted area in support of traffic calming. The petition form is provided on page 23.

Once all required signatures have been obtained, the next step is to submit the petition to the Decatur City Commission. The City Commission meets regularly on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month. The Commission will review the petition and provide direction to City staff to move forward in the development of a Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan.

## Step Five Develop & Submit Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan

A team of City of Decatur staff will work with your neighborhood to develop a Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan to best address the issues that have led to consensus that calming is required. The plan will include physical measures to best meet the needs of the area. Finally, submit your completed plan to the City Commission for consideration.

# Request for Neighborhood Assistance

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Describe the issues that you have observed in your neighborhood that may require traffic calming. Please include street names and be as specific as possible.

Describe some options of traffic calming measures that you have in mind for resolving these issues.

*Please email this information to: [xxxxx@decaturga.com](mailto:xxxxx@decaturga.com) or mail to the Public Works Department at 2635 Talley Street c/o Traffic Calming Committee. Staff will contact you within 3 business days to schedule an initial meeting for discussion.*

# Neighborhood Petition

We, the undersigned, agree that the area defined by the boundaries below requires the installation of physical measures to more effectively calm traffic. We agree that City of Decatur financial and staff resources should be allocated to improve this area.

Boundaries and Potential Options: *To be completed by City of Decatur staff*

Name Signature

Address Date

Name Date

Address

Name Date

Address

Name Date

Address

Name Date

Address

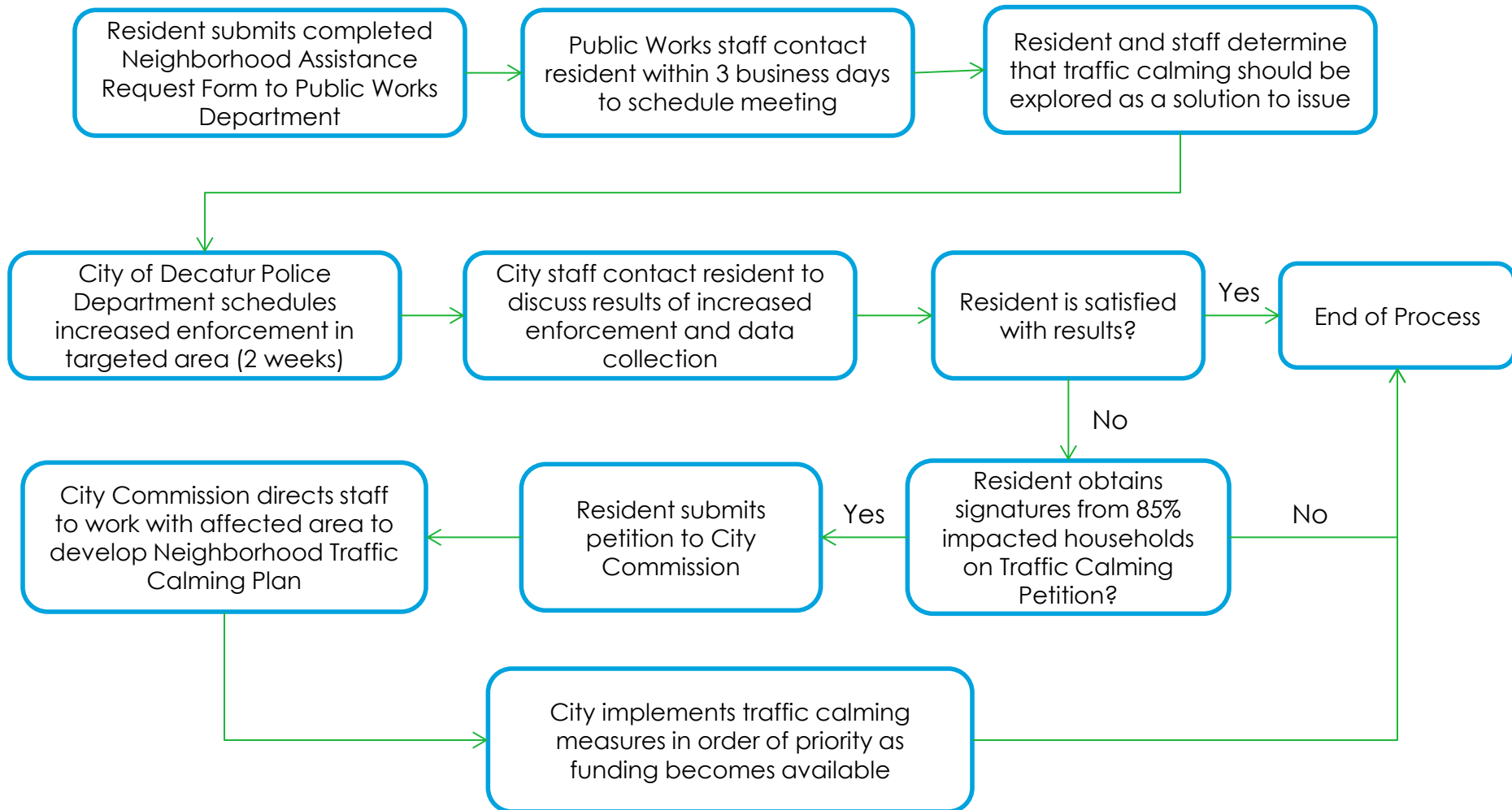
*\*Signatures are limited to one per household. 85% of households within the designated boundaries are required to sign the petition.*

# APPENDIX

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# Traffic Calming Process



## Additional Resources

- [City of Decatur Community Transportation Plan](#)
- [City of Decatur 2010 Strategic Plan](#)
- [City of Decatur 2014-2015 Budget](#)
- [U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration Traffic Calming](#)
- [Institute of Transportation Engineers Traffic Calming Library](#)

# CITY OF DECATUR TRAFFIC CALMING TOOLBOX

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June 2014

Leadership ICMA

Class of 2014