

Town of James Island  
Public Works Department  
Traffic Calming Policy and Procedures  
Guide



UPDATED September, 2014

## Traffic Calming Policy and Procedures

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy and procedures guide is to provide residents of the Town of James Island with a plan and the tools needed to slow traffic in their residential neighborhoods and to improve the quality of their lives. Resources and materials from the Federal Highway Administration, South Carolina Department of Transportation, Charleston County and other local municipalities have been used to put together this comprehensive and locally customized policy and procedures plan.

### **General Policy:**

The general policy of the Town of James Island in regards to Traffic Calming is to encourage and allow methods to be employed that reduce hazards from vehicular traffic, nurture and encourage a neighborhood atmosphere, and maintain public safety. The Town of James Island strives to achieve these goals through sound, accepted engineering practices, community participation in the decision process, and responsible financial stewardship.

### **Procedures for Traffic Calming:**

The Town has adopted a three-point method of addressing neighborhood traffic issues: Education, Enforcement and Engineering. There are several options under each general method that neighborhoods can use to reduce traffic issues. Not every option is right for every neighborhood and the variety ensures that there are several choices to try in order to provide a measured solution.

Traffic calming programs are only implemented in residential neighborhoods under the jurisdiction of the Town of James Island. These programs must be initiated at the request of the Neighborhood Association or by evidence of substantial interest from residents in the neighborhood.

### **Education:**

Education of the public shall be a component of any traffic calming program. There are several ways that the Town of James Island can educate the public about traffic issues. These include the following public awareness measures:

- Distribution of traffic safety brochures within the neighborhood, area schools and businesses.
- Presentations at public events on programs such as child safety seats, seatbelt usage, pedestrian safety, bicycle safety, safe driving tips or Operation Lifesaver.
- Driver education and enforcement presentations to younger drivers.

The Town of James Island will partner with SCDOT and the Charleston County Sheriff's Office through the Island Sheriff's Patrol to provide educational materials to local neighborhoods and institutions. Other groups and agencies will be involved in these programs as appropriate to the overall program.

### **Enforcement:**

The Town of James Island will work with local law enforcement including the Island Sheriff's Patrol to provide participating neighborhoods with increased presence and enforcement activities. Some law enforcement activities will include:

- Increased enforcement by officers, especially during times that residents report most incidents occur.
- Public Service Announcements to remind motorists that speeding will result in tickets and accidents.
- Speed Monitoring Awareness Radar Trailer (SMART) use in neighborhoods and on feeder roads in the area.

### **Reducing the Speed Limit:**

In 2013, Town Council passed an Ordinance that allowed for the reduction of the speed limit on Residential Streets. In the Town of James Island, the speed limit on residential streets can be lowered to 25 mph.

If your neighborhood would like to lower the speed limit on one or more of your residential neighborhood streets, the Town will need to have support for this from your neighborhood. If you have a Neighborhood Association, then you will need to provide evidence of their support, such as minutes from a meeting. If you do not have a Neighborhood Association, then we encourage you to organize a Neighborhood meeting to discuss and vote on the issue. Or, you can submit a petition from your neighborhood with 51% of the residents agreeing to the speed reduction. The Town of James Island will help you determine who needs to be included on the petition.

If you live on a SC Department of Transportation owned and maintained street, then the Town of James Island must perform an in-house traffic study and receive the necessary approval and permits from SCDOT.

## **Engineering:**

One of the best known traffic calming device is the speed “hump”. While this is the first option people think of when considering traffic calming for neighborhoods, there are often several reasons for not using them on many roads and in many neighborhoods. The Town of James Island offers and encourages the use of several other types of physical, engineered methods to address traffic calming measures and recommends serious consideration of these alternatives.

Other engineered devices for traffic calming include:

- All Way Stop Control (AWSC) at intersections – 4-way Stop
- Pedestrian Crossing Signs and Crosswalks
- School Zone Signing
- Raised crosswalks at strategic locations

For any engineered traffic calming device, all applicable SCDOT and FHWA regulations and guidelines must be followed. An engineering study may be required, and for certain devices engineering drawings will be required. Any work within a SCDOT right of way or on a SCDOT road requires SCDOT approval and encroachment permitting.

All roads which are to be considered for traffic calming devices must meet the following criteria:

- Must be either a local residential or minor collector road.
- 30 mph or less existing speed limit
- Two lane paved road (may have parking and may have turn lanes).
- Traffic volume less than 4000 AADT (average annual daily traffic).
- Within the Town of James Island Town Limits.

## **Getting Started:**

The first step for a neighborhood to participate in a traffic calming program is to contact the Town of James Island Public Works Department. A Neighborhood Association representative should schedule an appointment with Town Staff or attend a Town Neighborhood Council meeting and present their request. A copy of the Town’s Policies and Procedures will be provided as well as the forms to begin this process.

The Town of James Island will engage the services of an engineer to perform traffic studies and advise on engineering issues if needed, or perform an in-house traffic study. As part of the overall

program concept, a cost analysis will be performed to determine if funding will be available for construction and maintenance.

Some methods may be initiated at staff level, such as increasing law enforcement in a neighborhood or adding “Children at Play” signs.

For other traffic calming measures such as speed humps, eligible roads and/or neighborhoods must meet the following program criteria and must be approved by Mayor and Council:

- Must have met the eligibility criteria
- Must have approval of Neighborhood Association (if one exists).
- Average speed exceeds posted limit, or the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed exceeds posted limit by 5 mph or more.
- For physical traffic calming devices, must not be on a primary emergency vehicle route or bus route.
- Physical traffic calming devices must not interfere with storm water drainage.
- For SCDOT roads, approval and necessary permits from SCDOT must be secured.
- Must meet engineering criteria for the desired devices if an engineering study is commissioned for the project.
- Funding for traffic calming devices must be available and approved for use by the Town of James Island.

Any recommended traffic devices will go back to the neighborhood for approval. 2/3 or 66.6% of the neighborhood must be in support of the proposed device. The Town will help you determine how many signatures that is by looking at your neighborhood boundaries. This is an important part of the process, because traffic devices on one street can affect residents in the entire neighborhood; especially if the street in question is the only access to and from another resident’s home. Once approval by the neighborhood is obtained, it must go before Town Council for approval. If the road is a SCDOT-owned and maintained road, the proper channels for DOT must then be followed. That includes getting necessary approval and any encroachment permits that may be needed.

Please see below for a Summary of the necessary steps in the process:

#### **Sequence of Events:**

- Neighborhood Association Group agrees there is traffic problem and requests assistance from the Town. A copy of minutes from the meeting where this was discussed, email chains, or substantial interest form the neighbors in the neighborhood is needed.
- Neighborhood representative meets with the Public Works Department. Picks up copies of Town Traffic Calming Policies and Procedures and Traffic Calming Program Application.

- Returns completed Traffic Calming Program Application.
- Public Works makes field inspection of area and starts file including: types of roads, ownership of roads, condition of roads and signage, existing traffic control devices, existing speed limit and posted speed limit, number of effected residents, other jurisdictions involved in neighborhood and traffic incident history of neighborhood.
- Public Works develops appropriate program for the neighborhood. At this point it may be necessary to engage the services of an engineering consultant to do a traffic study. Town Administrator and Mayor are informed of the proposed program details and anticipated costs. In-house traffic studies may also be performed by the Town.
- In order for traffic devices to be installed, traffic studies must show the average speed is over the speed limit or the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile is 5 mph or more.
- Public Works identifies the location of devices and presents proposed program to the Neighborhood Association for approval.
- 2/3 or 66.6% of the neighborhood must be in support of the proposed device. The Town will help you determine how many signatures that is by looking at your neighborhood boundaries.
- The proposed traffic calming program goes to Town Council for approval.
- SCDOT approval and permits must be obtained for DOT-owned roads.



## Town of James Island

# Traffic Calming Program Application

**Please Print Clearly**

Authorized Neighborhood Representative:

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Neighborhood/Subdivision:

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Contact Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Problem Street(s):

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Description of Problem:

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Neighborhood Representative Signature and Date:

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***Please attach any Neighborhood correspondence on this issue.***

***For Office Use Only:*** Inspection Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Photos: \_\_\_\_\_

Posted Speed Limit: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Roads: \_\_\_\_\_