

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



2026

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 regarding 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 variety ensures that there are several choices to try to provide a measured solution.

Traffic calming programs are only implemented in residential neighborhoods under the jurisdiction, or partial jurisdiction, of the Town of James Island. These programs may 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 when residents report most incidents occur.
- Public Service Announcements to remind motorists that speeding will result in tickets and accidents.

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 you live on a SC Department of Transportation owned and maintained street, then there must be a traffic study performed to receive the necessary approval and permits from SCDOT. Part of this approval process will be support for this study 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 or a neighborhood petition. A sample petition form is at the end of this guide. If you do not have a Neighborhood Association, then we encourage you to organize a Neighborhood meeting to discuss and vote on the issue.

Engineering:

One of the best-known traffic calming devices 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 at intersections (AWSC)
- Pedestrian Crossing Signs and Crosswalks
- School Zone Signing
- Raised crosswalks at strategic locations
- Driver Feedback Radar Signs

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 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 and under the Town's jurisdiction.
 - Areas where jurisdiction is mixed between the Town, City of Charleston and/or Charleston County may be considered. However, consultation and possible approvals may have to be obtained from other jurisdiction(s) before any traffic calming measures can be taken.

Getting Started:

The first step for a neighborhood to participate in a traffic calming program is to contact the Town of James Island Mayor. 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. If a formal neighborhood association does not exist, enough resident interest in traffic calming measures may result in further study at the Mayor's discretion.

The Town of James Island will first perform an in-house traffic count and review whether the data warrants further 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 for eligible roads and/or neighborhoods that meet the following program criteria may be considered by The Mayor and Council:

- Approval of Neighborhood Association (if one exists).
- Average speed exceeds posted limit, or the 85th percentile speed exceeds posted limit by 5 mph or more.
- Primary emergency vehicle route or bus route.
- Physical traffic calming devices and any possible interference with storm water drainage.
- For SCDOT roads, approval and necessary permits from SCDOT.
- Criteria are met for the desired devices if an engineering study is commissioned for the project.
- Funding for traffic calming devices is available and approved for use by the Town of James Island.

Any recommended traffic calming program will go back to the neighborhood residents for feedback and approval. A petition of 75% of the owners of properties impacted by the street where the proposed devices would be installed must be in support of the proposed device. Feedback may include public meetings and/or mailouts and should be considered from residents directly impacted by the installation. Council may give more weight to residents along the stretch of road where proposed devices are to be installed. This is an important part of the process because traffic devices installed on one street can impact nearby neighborhoods. Town Staff will present any recommendations to Town Council for consideration. If approved by Town Council, further approval and/or consultation with other jurisdictions may need to be obtained. If the road is an 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.

Sequence of Events:

- A preliminary survey is conducted by the concerned residents to help determine if there are enough impacted residents (75%) on the street where devices are proposed, that agree there is traffic problem and requests assistance from the Town.

- The local Neighborhood Association, if applicable, is approached for their approval. A copy of the minutes from the meeting where this was discussed, email chains, or substantial interest from the neighbors in the neighborhood is needed.
- Neighborhood representative picks up copies or prints from town website (www.jamesislandsc.us) copies of Town Traffic Calming Policies and Procedures, Neighborhood Petition Form and Traffic Calming Program Application.
- Representative returns completed Traffic Calming Program Application.
- Town Staff will investigate the situation by field inspection of conditions, requesting additional law enforcement and/or conducting a traffic count or radar study.
- Town Staff develop an appropriate program for the neighborhood. At this point it may be necessary to engage the services of an engineering consultant to do traffic studies if sufficient funds are available in the budget.
- Traffic studies should show the average speed is over the speed limit or the 85th percentile is 5 mph or more to warrant additional study by the Town.
- If further study or action is warranted, an engineering firm will be engaged to evaluate the situation and develop a strategy for traffic calming. A public meeting will be held to inform the residents of the neighborhood that traffic calming is being proposed and to get their ideas and suggestions as well as hear comments from those who want traffic calming measures and those who do not. Residents not able to attend this meeting can voice their opinions by emailing, writing to or coming to Town Hall to discuss the issues with Town staff.
- Reactions and suggestions from the initial public meeting will be evaluated and studied by the engineering firm and Town staff. If warranted, a neighborhood traffic program will be developed from this information and presented to the residents at another public meeting, and/or mailouts where residents can see what is being proposed, express opinions about the program and suggest changes to the program.
- Mayor and Town Staff identify the location of proposed devices and presents program to the Neighborhood Association for approval.
- 3/4's or 75% of the affected street must be in support of the proposed device and sign the petition for installation.
- The proposed traffic calming program goes to Town Council for approval.
- SCDOT approval and permits must be obtained for DOT-owned roads.
- Plan is put out for bid to contractors.
- The successful, responsible, bidder for the project is determined and approved by Town Council.
- Construction is scheduled.



Town of James Island

Traffic Calming Program Application

Please Print Clearly

Authorized Neighborhood Representative:

Neighborhood/Subdivision:

Contact Address:

E-Mail Address:

Phone Number(s):

Name of Problem Street(s):

Description of Problem:

Neighborhood Representative Signature and Date:

Please attach any Neighborhood correspondence on this issue.

For Office Use Only: Inspection Date: _____ Photos: _____

Posted Speed Limit: _____ Type of Roads: _____

Road Owner: _____ Jurisdiction(s): _____



Proposed Traffic Calming Devices or Methods: (by Staff)

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]