



# **City of Rye Speed Hump Policy**

Adopted by  
The Rye City Council  
February 27, 2002



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## **I. Background and Reference Document:**

The installation of speed humps in the United States has been difficult mainly because engineers and municipalities are not anxious to set up any type of traffic calming device that is not in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). However, speed humps have recently become one of the most popular traffic calming measures in the United States because they are effective in reducing speeds at minimal costs in certain situations.

Some municipalities have been reluctant to install speed humps, because of liability issues possibly related to; (1) potential loss of vehicle control; (2) potential vehicle damage; (3) traffic diversion to other streets; (4) increased emergency vehicle response time; and (5) bicycle safety. Nevertheless, more and more municipalities are experimenting with the design and placement of speed humps in response to citizen concern and protest to reduce the speed and volume of traffic on neighborhood streets. In Westchester County, the Village of Dobbs Ferry, Town of Greenburgh, Village of Port Chester and the City of White Plains have considered and/or installed speed humps in their municipalities.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) has developed a set of guidelines for the design and application of speed humps (Guidelines for the Design and Application of Speed Humps, ITE Traffic Engineering, June 1997)<sup>1</sup>. Speed Humps are also included in the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) design manual. The City of Rye is currently testing the use of speed humps on select city owned roads utilizing the following installation criteria based on the above documents.

## **II. Speed Hump Criteria**

### **Criteria 1: Written Request from Citizen or Association**

Residents or neighborhood associations wishing to have speed humps considered for a specific street must submit to the City of Rye's Traffic and Transportation Committee (T and T) a written request endorsed by at least ten households within the area impacted by the speed humps (all request are acknowledged in writing).

Additionally, the resident (s) or neighborhood association that is submitting the request must notify households on adjacent streets that would be regularly affected by the installation of speed humps. The notification process must be in writing and provide a description of the proposal (e.g. What is a speed hump?) as well as the next meeting time and date for discussion at the T and T committee where public comments are heard and professional advise is given. In a neighborhood not specifically linked with a

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<sup>1</sup> For further information refer to Guidelines for the Design and Application of Speed Humps, June 1997, ITE Traffic Engineering.

neighborhood association, a proper review of the affected area by the City Engineer identifies a **neighborhood notification area** (e.g. particular streets with households and businesses within a specified radius) necessary to notify.

## **Criteria 2: Street Eligibility**

The City Engineer, at the request of the Traffic and Transportation Committee, considers **secondary streets** for speed humps only after proper review. Secondary streets are those streets that are mainly residential side streets, where speeds limits do not exceed 30 mph. Principal streets with high volumes of traffic will not be considered for speed humps as well as emergency routes. Those streets include, but not limited to, Forest Avenue, Boston Post Road, Locust Avenue, Milton Road, Osborn Road, Midland Avenue, Purchase Street, Stuyvesant Avenue, and Oakland Beach Avenue.

Only after the elimination of other conventional, non-capital controls (e.g. speed limit signs, appropriate warning signs, directed enforcement) and a comprehensive review by the City Engineer, is a street to be considered for speed humps.

### **Eligibility for Secondary residential street:**

- An uncontrolled segment length of 600' or greater
- A street with a speed limit of 30 mph
- The project is approved by at least 75 percent of households on properties adjacent to the proposed street segment.

### **Streets are ineligible for speed humps if:**

- Classified as an emergency route principal street
- Grades, curvature, or other physical conditions make, in the City Engineer opinion, the application of speed humps unsafe
- Used as a routine emergency service route or a major transit route for buses or bicycles
- Scheduled for resurfacing within the next two budget years
- Excessive traffic volume would be diverted to other residential streets

## **Criteria 3: Priority and Approval**

Because speed hump funding is limited, it may not be possible for all eligible projects to be funded. Candidates for speed hump projects must meet eligibility status by May 1 of each year for consideration in the annual program. If more than one project meets eligibility, the Traffic and Transportation Committee ranks projects based on descending order of the recorded 85% percentile speed as well as continuous observations of traffic volume and accident reports.

The police, fire, ambulance, and other emergency service departments as well as the Department of Public Works review all proposed speed hump installations. Emergency agency comments also are considered in the decision-making process.

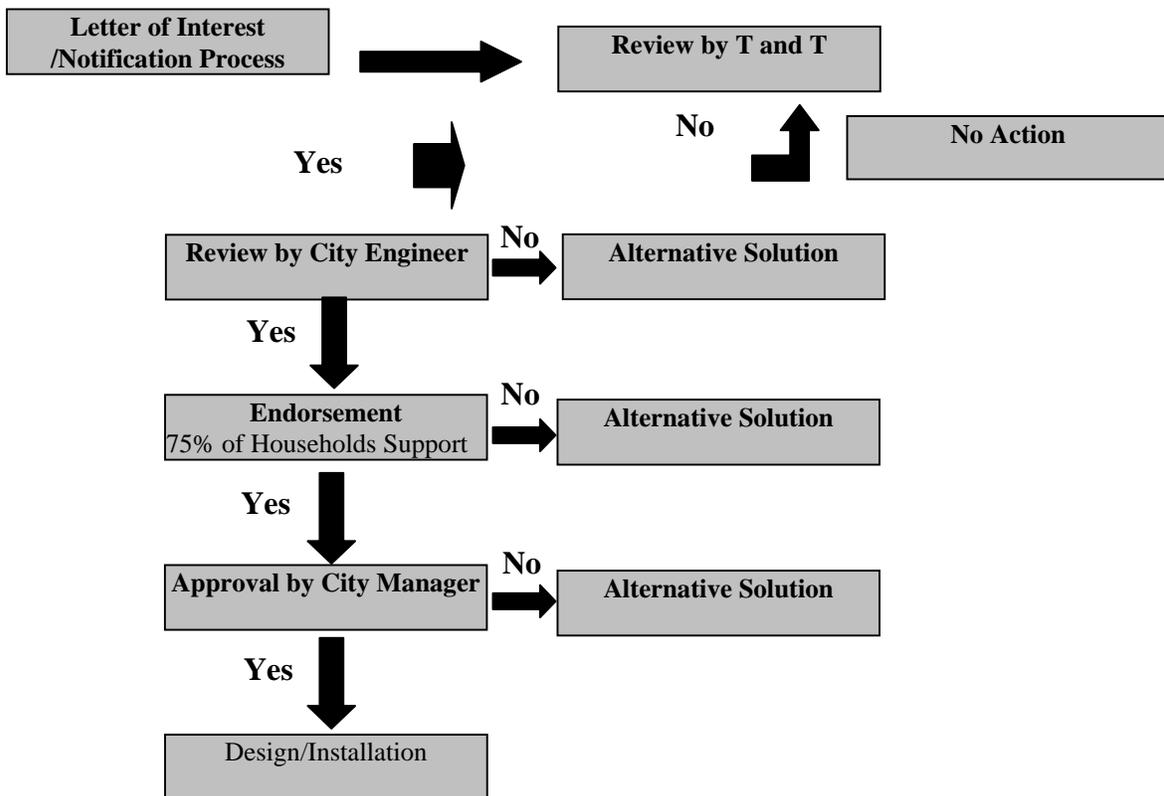
#### Criteria 4: Application Procedures for Speed Humps

Upon achieving priority ranking for speed hump funding, the project is designed and submitted to the citizen representatives (those submitting the request) for endorsement.

Should those submitting the request fail in gathering 75% approval from households adjacent to the proposed street segment where the speed humps are to be installed or if the agreement among City Staff, local representatives, and neighborhood groups cannot be achieved, the project will be dropped and replaced by the next highest-ranking project on the eligibility list.

When project eligibility is met and all implementation criteria achieved, the project is submitted to the City Manager for final approval. Following final approval, the City Manager's office notifies the appropriate households identified in the **neighborhood notification area**, through a written letter or flyer, of the expected timeline for the implementation of the speed humps.

#### Approval Process Flow Chart



### **III. Monitoring and Removal**

Installed speed humps are monitored for six months to a year. If safety problems develop due to improper installation, maintenance, or emergency issues, steps will be taking by the City Engineer to modify the speed humps or remove the devices.

If a safety problem does not exist and 75% of households on properties adjacent to the proposed street segment request removal of the speed humps, proper review by the City Manager, City Engineer, and Traffic and Transportation Committee will be made before removal of the humps.

### **IV. Design Aspects**

#### **A. General Guidelines for Design**

The following are general guidelines for the design of speed humps. These are provided for citizen information only. The latest design requirements as determined by the NYSDOT, ITE, and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) shall be utilized. The City Engineer will determine applicable modifications to the design.

**Guideline 1:** Speed humps within a series are often placed from 200 feet to 750 feet apart. On long blocks they are placed 1000 feet to 1600 feet and three or more humps might be necessary.

**Guideline 2:** A series of two or more speed humps on a street are usually more effective than a single hump.

**Guideline 3:** The first hump in a series should be located where it cannot be approached at high speed from either direction.

**Guideline 4:** Speed humps (at the first hump in a system) are usually installed within approximately 200 feet or less of a small-radius curve or stop sign.

**Guideline 5:** Traffic control consisting of signs and markings is needed to warn roadway users of the presence of a speed hump. While no minimum standards exist for devices to be used in conjunction with speed humps, devices typically used by agencies are the W8 -1 BUMP warning sign (MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) and markings that show advance word messages (typically Bump) directly in advance of, or on, the hump. Pavement word and symbol markings should be installed in conformance with MUTCD guidelines.

#### **IV. Frequently Asked Questions about Speed Humps**

**Question 1: What are *Speed Humps*?** Speed humps are a design feature (generally made of asphalt) described as a raised area of a street, which deflect the wheels and frame of a vehicle. Speed humps usually extend across the roadway perpendicular to the traffic flow. Speed humps are 3 to 4 inches high and 12 to 22 feet long (longer than the wheel base of an automobile).

The purpose of speed humps is to reduce vehicle speed. Speed humps generally slow vehicles traveling at typical residential speeds (30 mph) to approximately 15 mph. At higher speeds, a vehicle may experience severe jolting. Speed humps should not be utilized on roadways where the speed limit exceeds 30 mph.

**Question 2: How are *Speed Humps* different from *Speed Bumps*?** Speed bumps are also raised areas in a roadway that extend perpendicular to the traffic flow and deflect the wheels and frames of a vehicle. However, speed bumps are much higher and shorter than speed humps rising 3 to 6 inches high and 1 to 3 feet long (shorter than the wheel base of an automobile).

Speed bumps are typically placed in low speed areas such as parking lots and alleys. Speed bumps are effective in slowing vehicles traveling at typical speeds (30 mph) to approximately 5 mph when crossing the bump. Speed bumps should also not be installed in roadways where the speed of traffic exceeds 30 mph.

**Question 3: What are the benefits of installing *Speed Humps*?**

- Vehicle Speeds – Reduction in local street speeds.
- Traffic Volumes – Diversion of through traffic to other parallel routes.
- Conflicts – Reductions in car collisions.
- Environment – Traffic noise may be reduced due to lower speeds (but may increase adjacent to the Speed Hump).

**Question 4: What are the disadvantages of installing *Speed Humps*?**

- Traffic may be diverted to parallel streets that do not have traffic calming measures.
- Moderate disadvantages to ambulances (2.3 – 9.7 second delay), fire vehicles (1.0 – 15 second delay), buses, bicycles, and snow clearing vehicles.
- Noise could increase adjacent to the speed hump.
- Snow removal complications
- Residents may find signs unattractive.

**Question 5: What *Speed Humps* have no effect on?**

- Resident Access
- On – Street Parking
- Police Enforcement
- Property Values

**Additional Research Information you should know about *Speed Humps*?**

- Adequate signing and marking of each Speed Hump is essential to warn roadway users of the humps presence and guide.
- Speed humps have not been found to pose a traffic safety hazard when properly designed and installed at appropriate locations.
- Overall traffic noise will generally decrease with fewer vehicles and lower speeds but noise may increase at the Speed Hump.
- Large Trucks, buses, and emergency vehicles can safely pass over Speed Humps but must travel at low speeds.