

2023 December 5

**Re: Speed Bumps**

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This is a response to the Administrative Inquiry submitted by Councillor Penner at the 2023 September 12 Regular Meeting of Council, which included the following question:

With back to school, pedestrian safety and road speed is once again top of mind for many Calgarians. One of the frequent requests ward offices receive is for speed bumps as a means of traffic calming. **Can you please share with council, when and where speed bumps are used for traffic calming, if they prove more or less effective than other traffic calming measures, and what messaging ward offices can use to inform and educate Calgarians about using speed bumps in neighbourhoods.**

Effectiveness:

Mobility Safety recognizes speed humps, bumps, and cushions as one of many tools moderate speeds and improve safety in residential areas. The city uses “speed humps” and “speed bumps” to moderate speeds to 40-50 km/h, as shown in Figure 1. These roadway features are very different from “speed bumps” used in parking lots at much lower speeds, despite the public use of this term as a general name for all similar features.

Figure 1: Speed Hump and Speed Cushions (Reference: [2014 Complete Streets Guide](#))



Where we have used speed cushions, we have seen operating speeds that are 5-10 km/h lower than before they were present and all locations where they exist were found to meet the criteria to be 40 km/h roadways during the neighbourhood speed limit review. While we know that they are effective at reducing speeds, and often more effective than other measures, there may also be drawbacks to their use. These negative impacts include noise/vibration from vehicles decelerating/traversing the element/accelerating and increasing challenge of maintenance activities, increased potential for cyclists falls on the roadway, inappropriate application on steep grades or tight curves since they would contribute to loss of control collisions, and the cost of construction and signage.



When/Where and Messaging to inform Calgarians about speed bumps:

The City of Calgary currently does not have a specific process or program for installing these features, as standalone work, but they are often used as a tool during traffic calming projects. The formal traffic calming process within the Neighbourhood Streets Policy/Guide is still in development, and this work is currently unfunded. Issues raised are addressed where possible through existing budgets and programs identified in the Guide. The Policy does identify the importance of traffic calming and outlines the use of the Transportation Association of Canada *Canadian Guide to Traffic Calming* and similar best practice documents as we develop our process. We will be piloting expanded use of speed humps and cushions in 2024 to respond to requests we have received for review through the Neighbourhood Streets 311 requests and Neighbourhood Speed Limit Review requests. The process we are developing is to review locations where citizens have expressed concerns against objective criteria (e.g., roadway classification, traffic volume, measured speeds and potentially collision criteria) then we will install temporary speed humps or cushions for evaluation. As we review those issues, we will also explore other opportunities to address their concerns. People who have concerns in their communities and think that speed cushions or humps may be an appropriate tool are invited to submit a 311 on the Neighbourhood Streets project page at [Calgary.ca/neighbourhoodstreets](https://calgary.ca/neighbourhoodstreets) and we will be in contact with them.