Overview of Traffic Calming & Sidewalk Request Processes

Presented to City Council, Feb 22, 2023

Traffic Calming Request Process

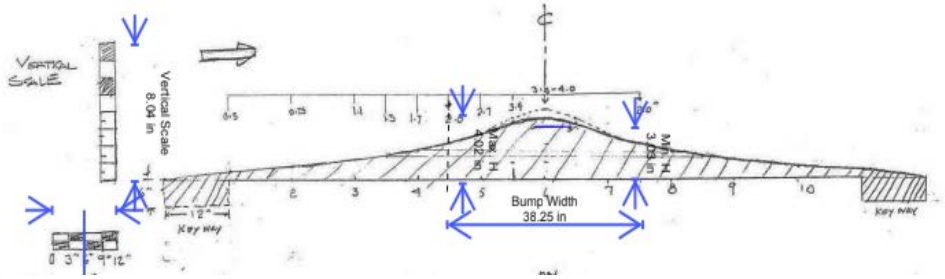
- The process was established by ***Regulation #96-1***
- In 2011, Council adopted ***Guidelines for Installation*** (City Code Chapter 13.28.020) which identified siting location recommendations
- Process requires a ***petition*** to initiate
  - Resident-driven process - requires sign-on of 2/3 of households
  - Petition area to include the block of the request and the adjacent block of the same street
  - Requires a community meeting coordinated by petitioners; can be through citizen association (if exists); and report back to City Clerk to confirm the date, location, method of advertising, # of people attending, and disposition of attendees
- Followed by ***Public Hearing***
  - notification to the public provided by City Clerk's office through direct mail and Newsletter
- Approved by Council through ***Two Reading Ordinance***

Initial Traffic Calming Projects– Speed Hump Focused

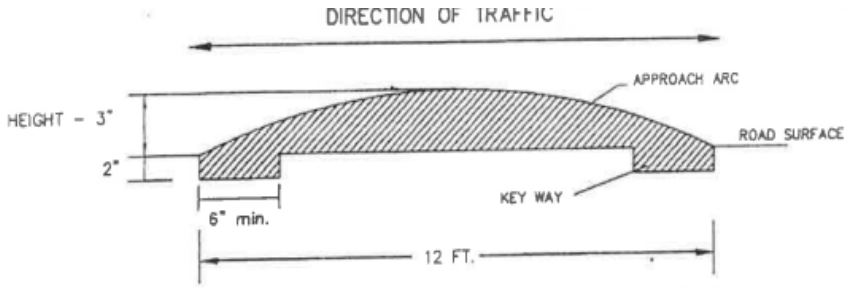
- For City purposes, use hump and bump interchangeably
- For decades, the installations were exclusively speed humps
- In early 2000's City developed a "more aggressive" speed hump, in response to requests from the community – City Standard profile "bump on a hump"
- General Traffic Engineering Standards define a standard speed hump, as in the Montgomery County Standard profile, which is recommended
- There are over 150 speed humps in Takoma Park
- Since 2010 options for traffic calming have been expanded to include measures beyond speed humps

Speed Hump Comparison

City Standard – 5 mph



County Standard – 20 mph



CROSS SECTION AND HUMP DIMENSIONS

City Code Section 13.28 added guidelines including:

- Restrictions on streets with slopes of 8% or more; on cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets
- Must avoid driveway aprons, utility access points
- Placed 150 to 300 feet apart, distance to stop signs 100 feet, distance to intersection 75 feet
- Proximity to street lighting and ability to be seen within 100 to 200 feet (the affect of curves or hills)

Traffic Calming Options

LEAST RESTRICTIVE

- signage
- roadway markings
- change to parking

MODERATELY RESTRICTIVE

- speed humps
- speed tables
- chicanes
- bump-outs
- reduced turn radius at corners
- reduce roadway width

MOST RESTRICTIVE

- one way street
- turn restriction

Examples of Non Speed Hump Traffic Calming

- In 2008-2010, the City's Planning office worked with 3 neighborhoods on a broader neighborhood traffic calming plan. The City contracted with Traffic Engineering consultants who met with residents, analyzed traffic patterns and spe,eds and developed recommendations. Implementation occurred in 2 of the 3 neighborhoods.

Other Examples include:

- Ritchie Ave – traffic circle, bump-outs, and speed humps FY12/13
- Erskine St – bump-outs at stop sign FY13/14, installed lighted stop sign in 2020
- Flower Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway – collaboration with Montgomery Parks, narrowed roadway, eliminating turning lane. FY15 design, installed in FY20
- Boston Avenue – Bump-out at playground entrance, roadway narrowing FY 16
- 5th Avenue – Bump-outs at intersection FY18
- 4th Avenue – Bump-outs, raised crosswalks FY22

Sidewalk Request Process – Framework

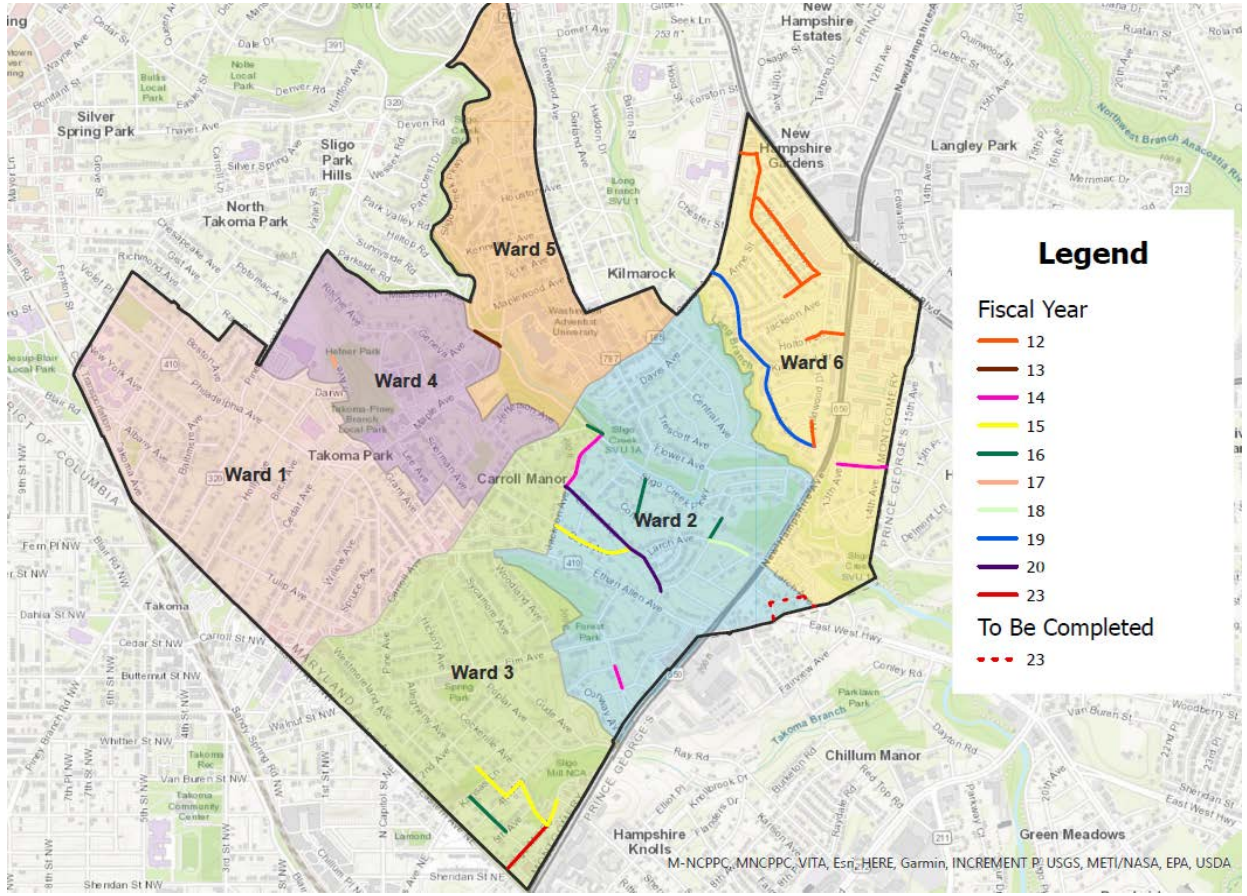
- The Council established an initial process by ***Resolution 2010-14,*** superseded by ***Resolution 2012-16*** and again by ***Resolution 2015-32***
- Resolution 2010-14 endorsed a priority ranking system developed by Toole Design Group for new sidewalks and ADA sidewalk compliance. Toole Design identified new sidewalk locations by Tier 1,2 or 3 based on evaluation criteria.
- Resolution 2012-16 superseded the priority ranking system and established a community-based method for initiating new sidewalk requests.
- Resolution 2015-32 simplified the initiation process

Sidewalk Request Process

- Request can be initiated by:
  - Resolution of the Council, an individual Councilmember, or the City Manager
  - 1 or more residents or Neighborhood Association
- City **schedules a community meeting**, mails notice to the affected area*, and provides FAQ
- **First neighborhood vote** held on support for developing design; if 50% or more votes received are Yes, design initiated
- Design development performed by a contract engineering firm, includes Right of Way survey and development of design using 11 preference guidelines defined in Resolution
- Community review of design options is an iterative process; notices are mailed to all properties in the affected area; feedback is received and revisions made and presented in follow-up meetings until a final design is established
- **Second neighborhood vote** held on support for construction; if 50% of responses are Yes, project is moved to the construction queue
- Caveats – Council by majority vote can override majority vote of neighborhood
  - If sidewalk vote is not approved, it can't be restarted for a 2 year period

**affected area is defined as the block and adjacent blocks of the same street and one block of cross streets*

New Sidewalk Installations Since 2012



Sidewalk Design Preference Guidelines: Section 8 A - K

- Located in ROW when possible; if not an easement agreement is required
- Consider installing partially or fully within existing pavement to reduce added impervious area and reduce private property impacts
- Minimize tree removal; tree inventory and tree protection methods to be used including non-linear sidewalks to accommodate tree space
- Any tree removed, must be replaced, per City replacement criteria, and included in project budget
- Preference for sidewalk location on the side of street with utility poles (already limits tree planting and may have better lighting)
- Sidewalk planning should be coordinated with other planned utility, traffic safety, or tree planting projects
- Any area impacted by sidewalk construction, including private lead walk, retaining wall, plantings, etc., will be addressed and included in project budget
- Stormwater treatment mitigation as required per City Code
- Sidewalk width must meet ADA standards (5 ft minimum); may be wider if specified by Master, Sector or development guidelines, or connects to existing wider sidewalks or is needed to accommodate heavy pedestrian traffic
- Preference for green strip between curb and sidewalk when right-of-way space allows
- City is not exempt from County Sediment and Erosion Control Permit and/or Forest Conservation Plan if project size triggers need

Historical Expenditures

SIDEWALK DESIGN	
FY12	**$48K**
FY13	**$92K**
FY14	**$169K**
FY15	**$55K**
FY16	**$112K**
FY17	**$62K**
FY18	**$51K**
FY19	**$60K**
FY20	**$0**
FY21	**$1,500**
FY22	**$117K**
FY23	**$74K to date**

SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION	
FY12	**$314K**
FY13	**$272K**
FY14	**$329K**
FY15	**$385K**
FY16	**$237K**
FY17	**$0**
FY18	**$47K**
FY19	**$1,067**
FY20	**$553K**
FY21	**$1,400**
FY22	**$38K**
FY23	**$118K to date**

TRAFFIC CALMING	
FY12	**$10K**
FY13	**$150K**
FY14	$26K
FY15	$23K
FY16	$10K
FY17	$43K
FY18	$69K
FY19	$10K
FY20	$65K
FY21	$0
FY22	$21K
FY23	$24K to date

Recommendations for Process Improvements

Complete Safe Streets Committee (CSSC)

Released recommendations for Council consideration in January 2021

- Simplify process, uniformity
- Be innovative and cost-conscious
- Use data-driven evidence-based criteria in the review process and balance public input with other priorities including racial equity, more holistic approach in planning locations
- Engage community using multiple outreach methods
- Provide updated mapping of sidewalk and traffic calming locations, publish on City website
- Establish annual budget and set priorities

Resolution 2022-41 – Pedestrian and Transportation Safety

- Referenced recommendations of the CSSC
- Referenced County efforts including Action Plan for Vision Zero, Pedestrian Master Plan, Reimagined RideOn, Bicycle Master Plan
- Comprehensive approach that prioritizes pedestrian and non-vehicle safety and emphasizes equity in decision-making
- Address larger geographic areas together and integrate with other City priorities
- Identify areas for reduced speed limits
- Expand process for initiation requests