



## Privately Funded Traffic Calming: A How-To Guide for Developers

*(A supplement to Metro's Neighborhood Street Traffic Calming Process Manual)*



# Background

Since the re-introduction of effective speed-reducing measures in 2018, Nashville's **Neighborhood Street Traffic Calming Program (NSTC)** has seen significantly increased demand from constituents. Since that time, various steps in the program have evolved to streamline the implementation process while remaining committed to the importance of citizen input into the project. A few of these milestones include:

- 2018 First speed cushions installed in approximately 10 years
- 2019 Metro Council earmarks dedicated funds for traffic calming
- 2021 Prioritization streamlined for one-street-at-a-time installations
- 2022 Direct mailer used to contact all property owners
- 2022 On-line ballot replaces door-to-door petition process
- 2022 Recorded virtual (and hybrid) meetings introduced
- 2023 Website overhauled with additional resources including project tracker map
- 2023 Privately funded projects authorized by Metro Council

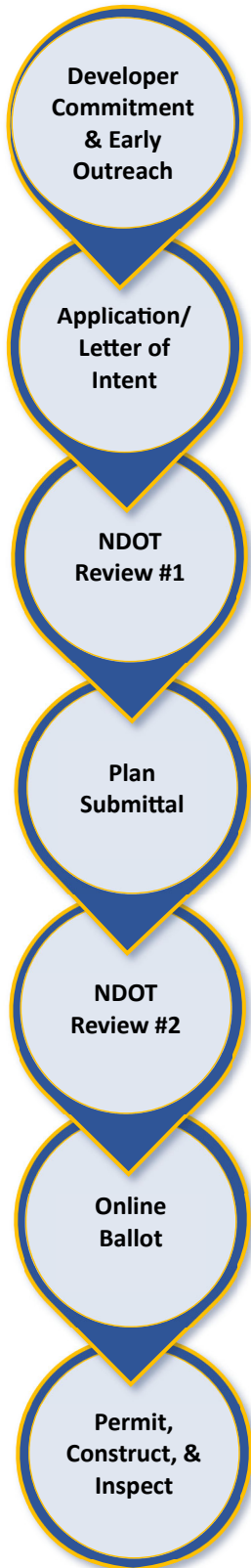
Even with these changes bringing better efficiency and quality of service to the program, demand has continued to increase. There currently remain well over 400 applications for new traffic calming installations on streets in Davidson County.

As Nashville continues to grow, traffic calming has been seen as a potential solution to some of the perceived drawbacks of new development. The installation of traffic control devices as part of the larger development project may ease concerns regarding traffic introduced by the development project. For this reason, developers may offer or be asked to install traffic calming as part of their projects.

In 2023, Metro Council passed ordinance BL2022-1572, authorizing traffic calming projects paid for by private funds. This supplement to NDOT's standard traffic calming program manual specifies the requirements and procedures which must be followed by developers wishing to install a traffic calming project either on an existing street under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Government or on a future street (to be constructed by the developer) which will become a public Metro street.

By far, the most commonly requested type of traffic calming is speed cushions. This is also the form of traffic calming that NDOT has had the best experience with and is most recognized in our community. This process is oriented toward developers who desire to install speed cushions as the primary form of traffic calming.

# The Developer-Funded Process (existing street)



NDOT’s traffic calming program requires significant buy-in from the affected street before installing speed cushions and so should a developer-funded project. These seven steps define the process.

**Developer Commitment & Early Outreach** – This process is built on the assumption that the developer is willing to fund the design and construction of the speed cushions; given the relatively low cost of these projects, this will usually be the case. Developers should familiarize themselves with traffic calming project objectives (see the NSTC Program Manual) and seek to achieve consensus regarding a project with neighbors. Any early discussions (including with council members) should be premised on the fact that a street ballot will be required, which will either confirm and approve or reject the speed cushion plan.

**Application/Letter of Intent** – This document must be completed by the developer (applicant) and submitted to NDOT staff via [NDOTTrafficCalming@nashville.gov](mailto:NDOTTrafficCalming@nashville.gov). Application should be submitted with the rezoning request to give time for Review #1 as part of the community input process.

**NDOT Review #1** – NDOT’s staff will review the application and determine the viability of the project. Conflicts with other Metro projects or services (such as WeGo, etc.) will be determined. In some cases, additional data collection (traffic volumes, speed, etc) may be required. This would be the applicant’s responsibility and can be provided by the applicant’s engineer.

**Plan Submittal** – After approval of the application, the applicant will hire a licensed engineer to perform all field measurements and develop the traffic calming design plans. Plans must comply with NDOT’s current standards and specifications for traffic calming installations plan requirements. Plans should generally be submitted as part of the building permit request.

**NDOT Review #2** – City staff will review the design plans and provide revisions, if necessary, to the applicant’s engineer.

**Online Ballot** – After receiving approval, the design plans will be posted on the traffic calming website, and NDOT will administer the online voting process<sup>1</sup>. Details of this procedure can be found in the NSTC Program Manual.

**Construction** – If voted favorably, the applicant will be authorized to proceed with construction. The applicant’s contractor must obtain the appropriate permits from NDOT’s permitting office. The installation will be inspected and approved by NDOT before being accepted as a permanent city asset. It is understood that the installation of speed cushions will typically be required by the time of the issuance of the first use and occupancy permit.

<sup>1</sup> Balloting is required for all projects with vertical measures (speed cushions) proposed on existing streets. NDOT will supply the mailing list, and applicant returns ballot cards, stamped and addressed, to NDOT for mailing.

# The Developer-Funded Process (future street)

In most cases, new road construction presents an opportunity to incorporate design features which inherently lower traffic speeds. This type of speed-discouraging design is preferable to NDOT's typical modular traffic calming devices which are intended more for traffic calming retrofits than new construction. Either form of traffic calming may be acceptable, but developers should strongly consider appropriate traffic speed when designing new access, public or private, to the development.

If a developer wishes to build traffic calming countermeasures into the design of a new public street, only NDOT approval is required. All traffic calming devices should be in compliance with Metro's current standards and specifications. NDOT will approve, deny, or request modification of traffic calming devices and locations as part of its design review process – no up-front application is required.



## Appendices

The following documents are attached for reference.

Application/Letter of Intent for a developer-funded traffic calming (speed cushion) project

Sample set of design plans

NDOT's speed cushion standards and specifications

*Application for*  
**Developer-Funded Traffic Calming**  
*On an existing Metro-owned street*

*As authorized by Metro Code Section 12.12.190.C, this application serves as a letter of intent for a developer (applicant) to design, furnish, and install speed cushions on an existing street under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Government.*

*Applicant Information*

Group/Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Specific Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Specific Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Project Information*

Street Name (only one street per application): \_\_\_\_\_  
Limits: From (street name) \_\_\_\_\_  
To (street name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Development Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Development Project Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Council District Number: \_\_\_\_ Council Member: \_\_\_\_\_  
Any special considerations regarding the installation of speed cushions (optional):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Acknowledgment*

*On behalf of the applicant organization, I acknowledge that this application in no way obligates Metro Government to perform services related to this request. The applicant will be responsible for all contracting and costs associated with required engineering services and construction activity. These contracting activities should not occur before this application has been approved by NDOT staff. All work performed at the direction of the applicant will be reviewed by NDOT staff and will be subject to revision and correction at cost to the applicant. After approval of the plans, the applicant will be required to perform NDOT's standard balloting process. The district council member has been notified of this intended project. This application may be withdrawn by the applicant at any time with no obligation to install traffic calming if the development project is withdrawn.*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_