SPEED HUMP FACT SHEET

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DESCRIPTION

A speed hump is an area of raised asphalt pavement that is three (3) inches high and 12 feet (parabolic) or 22 feet (flat top) long, oriented in the direction of travel. Montgomery County DOT installs these two types of speed humps according to the classification of a given street/road.

On Alleys, Neighborhood Streets and Neighborhood Yield Streets (unless a full-time transit route), a 12-foot parabolic speed hump may be installed. Standard speed humps can be comfortably traversed at 15-20 MPH.

On all streets, other than those classified as Neighborhood Streets and Neighborhood Yield Streets, and those that are a full-time transit route, a 22-foot flat top speed hump may installed.

PURPOSE

Speed humps are intended to calm traffic such that vehicle speeds are consistent with the posted speed limit.

EFFECTIVENESS

Motorists typically reduce their speed when approaching speed humps and maintain that speed between successive, properly spaced speed humps. This speed reduction remains relatively constant over time. In the long term, reduction in vehicle speeds has a positive effect on pedestrian and traffic safety by reducing the number and severity of crashes.

LOCATION

Speed humps are typically spaced a minimum of 500 feet apart. Spacing intervals of up to 750 feet may be acceptable, depending on street characteristics. Speed humps are not installed on roads within the limits of sharp curves, close to intersections, or in front of driveways, or on roads with grades greater than 8%. Efforts are made to select speed hump locations that are the least obtrusive to adjacent residents, such as at property lines.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Like other vehicles, emergency response vehicles (fire and rescue vehicles, law enforcement vehicles) must navigate speed humps at reduced speeds. The speed hump design and spacing selected for any street takes into consideration whether it is a regularly used response route. Studies have shown delays of up to 10 seconds per standard hump, depending on the emergency vehicle type and the desired travel speed.

TRANSIT SERVICE

Buses must also traverse speed humps at reduced speeds. Experience shows that flat top speed humps do not impede transit service or scheduling. Riding over the flat top humps does not typically create discomfort for transit riders.

SNOW PLOWING

The speed humps are designed to allow snow plows to traverse them smoothly with no significant impedance. Signs installed next to each speed hump ensure that adequate warning of its location is maintained during snow events.

PARKING IMPACTS

It is not necessary to prohibit parking at or on speed humps, although residents may not feel comfortable parking on them.

NOISE/VIBRATION

Some noise is generated at the hump when traversed by large trucks, buses or vehicles with trailers. However, lower speeds generally result in lower noise levels between humps, so the overall noise effect may be negligible. Increased roadway vibrations near a speed hump are possible.

TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Traffic volumes may decrease slightly after speed humps are installed. However, consideration must be given to possible diversion of traffic along to parallel neighborhood streets and the subsequent need for traffic calming treatments along those routes of diversion.

AESTHETICS

Speed humps are marked with white chevrons. Yellow, diamond-shaped warning signs with black text/graphics must be posted at the hump for each direction of travel. These signs and markings are required to provide notice of the hump to approaching motorists. The signs and markings are particularly important during conditions of reduced visibility, such as at night and when the road is covered with snow.

DRAINAGE

Speed humps are designed to allow for normal road drainage. However, in certain cases where speed humps are installed along an older street without curb and gutter drainage, care must be taken to place the speed humps in such a way as to ensure proper drainage.

PROPERTY VALUES

Available studies of home sales data have been unable to demonstrate that installing speed humps will affect property values in any predictable way.