

## Traffic Calming Policy update (2026)

### Summary of feedback

This summary describes what we did, what we heard, and how we are using the feedback gathered through community engagement to update the City's Traffic Calming Policy (TCP). It outlines the engagement activities completed to date, provides an overview of the key themes and recommendations, describes how we plan to respond to what was heard and clarify our next steps.

### What we did

#### Vision Zero survey

The City created a Vision Zero survey to document Guelph residents' road safety awareness and attitudes for the purposes of informing the City's Vision Zero Action Plan. In addition, one survey question was meant to inform an update to the City's TCP, asking if we should place priority for reducing traffic speeds on busier streets in Guelph or those that are less busy?

Between September 19 and October 10, 2024, Oraclepoll Research conducted a random sample telephone survey of 600 households, representing 100 households from each of Guelph's six wards including both landline and cellular telephone numbers. In addition, the City posted the same survey online at <https://www.haveyoursay.guelph.ca/vision-zero> for the same period to allow community members who were not selected as part of the random sample telephone survey to provide their input. City staff joined three public community events throughout September to promote the online survey. In total, 1,021 survey responses were collected representing the 600 telephone survey responses and 421 online survey responses.

#### Traffic Calming Policy Civic Circle

The City convened a Traffic Calming Policy Civic Circle (Civic Circle) in November and December 2025 as a forum for in-depth discussion of traffic calming issues and the TCP. The process began with the development of a Terms of Reference outlining participation expectations, selection criteria, meeting requirements, and clarifying the purpose of the group. The Terms of Reference stated that those invited to join the Civic Circle would:

- Review the current TCP, analyze available data and examine other information to improve the effectiveness of road safety efforts.
- Provide input on a revised framework to prioritize traffic calming projects with a focus on equity, safety for vulnerable road users, and alignment with community needs.
- Evaluate the use of existing traffic calming measures (e.g. speed humps, curb extensions, raised crosswalks, etc.) and recommend changes, improvements, or enhancements.

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- Create recommendations to guide an updated TCP which will be presented to Council.

A citywide call for participation was issued through community partners and social media. Applications were reviewed based on diverse geographic representation, travel modes, age, gender, lived experience, and motivations for participating. 15 members were selected and committed to join the Civic Circle. Some members were eligible for an honorarium to participate under the City's Community Engagement Honorarium Policy.

The Civic Circle met four times with Engineering and Transportation Services (ETS) and Community Engagement staff between November 19 and December 10, 2025. Sessions included a combination of presentations from City staff, guest presentations from external experts, and facilitated group exercises designed to support reflection, share knowledge and build consensus on recommendations for an updated TCP.

## **What we heard**

### **Vision Zero Survey Feedback**

Responses were evenly split. 51 per cent of respondents favoured prioritizing reduced traffic speeds on busier streets such as Gordon Street, Speedvale Avenue, and Wellington Street, while 41 per cent favoured prioritizing less busy streets such as neighbourhood side streets. Eight per cent of respondents stated they were unsure or did not reply. This division suggests broad support for traffic calming but differing views on where it is most urgently needed.

### **Civic Circle Recommendations**

The following recommendations were developed during the Civic Circle, received unanimous support from all members, documented exactly as written by members, and are intended to guide ETS when updating the TCP. The recommendations are structured according to the key components of TCP implementation. Organizing them this way highlights the major areas where policy decisions involve significant tradeoffs.

#### **Initiation of Traffic Calming Measures**

- Traffic calming can be initiated by residents, or Transportation Engineering Staff on the basis of road safety risk factors.
- Road safety risk factors include, but are not limited to, the risk of injury and fatality.
- The occurrence of a serious injury or fatality would automatically initiate the traffic calming process.

#### **Prioritization of Traffic Calming Plans**

- Community Safety Zones should be prioritized over a first-come, first-serve approach.
- All current Community Safety Zones should be reviewed every X years (before the next Traffic Calming Policy review) for traffic calming needs, or sooner if there is significant population growth in the area (e.g., a new assisted living facility or subdivision).
- Group all outstanding traffic calming requests and review them together at the neighbourhood level – subject to Community Safety Zone prioritization.

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- Traffic calming plans each year should be started by City staff based on data and demonstrated injury risk.

### **Community Engagement Required for Traffic Calming Plans**

- Inside Community Safety Zones, there can be either less, or no community engagement conducted to direct the traffic calming plan.
- Outside of Community Safety Zones, there should be some level of community engagement conducted to direct traffic calming plans.
- Residents will receive a notice at least one month before installation of traffic calming measures.
- Anyone can provide feedback on traffic calming.

### **Level of Scale to Review Traffic Calming Plans**

- All street-level reviews should also look at the surrounding area to identify factors that may be causing the problem.
- Collect data for adjacent streets, not just one street, to identify broader factors that may cause street-level issues.

### **Application of Traffic Calming Measure and Appropriate Design**

- The traffic calming policy should prioritize effective measures for reducing vehicle speeds and preventing collisions, over maintaining maximum convenience for drivers, minimizing travel time, and avoiding discomfort for passengers.

Several other recommendations were made during the Civic Circle. These have been summarized and are not listed verbatim. While there was general support for the ideas, participants did not reach unanimous agreement on the following recommendations:

- Allowing residents to directly fund traffic calming on their own street or contribute to a city-wide traffic calming fund.
- Creating an online platform for reporting collisions and near misses.
- Incorporating more traffic calming features into new developments, including Complete Street-aligned elements, trees, and low impact development features to increase visual friction.
- Collecting data on a neighbourhood-wide scale rather than street by street.
- Ensuring that all traffic calming designs fully avoid creating hazards for people cycling.

## **What we are doing**

Community feedback helped guide the City's direction on how to implement traffic calming measures. An updated TCP will be presented to Council which recommends prioritizing Community Safety Zones for traffic calming plans. This means residents will see traffic calming installed proactively in locations where people walking, biking, or using mobility devices face a higher level of risk on local and collector roads.

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The City will continue to use road safety data to identify, prioritize, and evaluate locations for traffic calming—whether those locations are in Community Safety Zones or brought forward through resident requests.

The City will also continue to use measures that have been proven to slow down vehicles and reduce collisions. One noted difference will be some new types of traffic calming measures, such as raised crossings, which have not been used before in Guelph. The policy will also continue to require designs that minimize impacts on people cycling. New measures that support and improve safety for people cycling have also been added to the list of applicable traffic calming measures.

Although Community Safety Zones will be prioritized, residents will still be eligible for other road safety measures—such as mobile speed boards and seasonal bollards—without waiting for a traffic calming plan.

## **What we are not doing**

We are not changing the way residents submit traffic calming requests; the process will remain the same. However, because all Community Safety Zones must be reviewed first, we are not able to offer faster timelines for requests that come from outside these areas.

We are also not expanding the TCP beyond its intended scope. While focusing on individual streets and adjacent streets, this policy will not review broader neighbourhood or area-wide traffic calming plans due to limited staff capacity.

In addition, arterial roads and reviews related to serious injury or fatal collisions will not be addressed through this policy, as these continue to be handled through the Vision Zero Action Plan. Finally, we are not creating a new online reporting platform; instead, we will explore using existing digital engagement tools as part of our standard engagement practices.

## **Next Steps**

The updated TCP will move forward for Committee of the Whole consideration on April 7, 2026. Pending Council approval, implementation of the updated Policy is expected to begin in the spring and summer of 2026.