

Why won't the Borough just place a speed bump (hump), stop sign or traffic light or other traffic device when they know about a dangerous road?

According to the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code, 75 Pa.C.S., section 6109 (and others), the State, through the Department of Transportation (PennDOT) controls all traffic calming measures. PennDOT and the State believe that traffic calming measures can be very useful. Nowadays people think of them primarily as speed bumps or speed humps, but the measures regulated by PennDOT also include, but are not limited to: any traffic control signage such as stop or yield signs; electronic traffic control devices (traffic signals/lights); traffic circles; speed limits; and curb bumps to name the most common measures. Failure to receive PennDOT approval can result in being forced to remove the measure

Per the PennDOT Traffic Calming Manual (PennDOT Publication 383), physical traffic calming measures are appropriate when "[u]sing a well-defined "Traffic Calming Study and Approval Process" will help determine when and where traffic calming measures are appropriate. Because traffic calming measures have the potential to create controversy, their installation often occurs as the final step of a three-step process referred to as the "three E's" (education, enforcement, and engineering). However, this three-step process only addresses problems with speeding, not with cut-through volumes. If the first two steps are not effective in lowering speeds on neighborhood streets, the need for traffic calming measures becomes more apparent."

For a municipality such as Munhall to perform a traffic study it requires the knowledge of a trained traffic engineer. The Borough's current engineering firm, GPI, has those personnel and equipment necessary to perform the study, analyze the data, and make a certified recommendation to PennDOT requesting calming measures if warranted.

Once PennDOT approves a given recommendation, the Borough and the engineer need to design the specifications for installation. For a sign it may simply be measuring the appropriate distances from the intersection and installing it. Items that require construction such as a speed bump (hump) will require additional engineering to ensure that the size, road paint, and signage meet traffic standards. This could also involve a temporary solution such as a bolt on speed hump to test the effectiveness before investing in full road construction. The effects of the calming measures must also take into account the impact it may have on adjacent streets – will the traffic calming just encourage people to use a different street?

Finally, or actually initially, it needs to be determined who has jurisdiction on a given roadway. Most of the roads in the Borough are owned by the Borough. Some are owned by the County, and 8<sup>th</sup> Ave is owned by the State. Municipalities are prohibited from taking traffic calming measures on County or State owned roads.

In summary, traffic calming measures are a necessity. Without stop signs, traffic control signals, speed limits, and other signage, it would not be safe for anyone to be on a road. Munhall is in the process of installing radar-based speed signs for awareness and is also conducting a traffic study on Ravine St. Once we have the results of the study we can work with our engineer to determine the best courses of action to keep our residents safe and deter speeding & reckless driving.

We hope this explanation assists in understanding why traffic control is not as simple as putting up a sign or bolting down a speed bump/hump.

FIGURE 2  
TRAFFIC CALMING STUDY AND APPROVAL PROCESS

