


LOMBARD POLICE DEPARTMENT

To: Chief Ray Byrne

From: Deputy Chief Dane Cuny 
Patrol Division Commander

Date: July 1, 2004

Subject: Police Department Position on Traffic Calming Devices

Although traffic calming devices may be appealing as a way of slowing traffic and reducing complaints of speeding autos, the police department should be opposed to them for safety and environmental noise concerns.

Most traffic calming devices consist of a speed bump/ hump or some form of partial barrier that forces vehicles to slow. These devices can create a serious hazard by causing vehicles traveling at accelerated speeds to either lose control or strike the barriers. These devices can take what would normally be a simple speeding vehicle incident and turn it into a serious injury or death crash. Vehicles losing control at high speed in residential areas can strike homes and endanger the occupants.

Emergency vehicle response would be slowed when they too would need to reduce their speeds when these devices are encountered. In addition, a driver of an emergency vehicle who is not familiar where these devices are located may also risk loss of vehicle control.


One other concern with speed bump devices is the noise generated by cars driving over them. Complaints would likely be generated from residents about noise from vehicles driving over the bumps and by rapid vehicle deceleration/ acceleration.

For these reasons, I recommend that we oppose installation of any traffic calming devices.



June 23, 2004

TO : John Johnson, Technical Services Supervisor

FROM : George E. Seagraves, Fire Chief 

RE : TRAFFIC CALMING

Attached is a memorandum from Deputy Chief Tonne stating the position of the Fire Department on Traffic Calming, utilizing physical barriers, reducing vehicle speed.

Deputy Chief Tonne will represent the department at any meetings regarding traffic calming. Please notify both Deputy Chief Tonne and myself of any such meetings.

GES:lh

- c. *William T. Lichter, Village Manager*
- Raymond Byrne, Chief of Police*
- John Burg, Acting Director of Public Works*
- Dane Cuny, Deputy Police Chief*
- Jerome J. Tonne, Deputy Fire Chief*

Attachment



June 22, 2004

To: George E. Seagraves, Fire Chief

From: Jerome J. Tonne, Deputy Fire Chief *J.J.T.*

Ref: Traffic Calming

The operational division of the fire department is strongly opposed to any traffic calming devices or planned abnormalities on streets within the corporate limits of Lombard. Speed bumps, speed humps (more obtrusive than bumps), narrowing of streets from two lanes to one with an "S" curve, and the narrowing of two lanes to one forcing vehicles to slow down or stop in order to yield to an opposing vehicle, all present specific and unique travel problems for emergency vehicles and their occupants. Speed tables that allow pedestrians to enter into the intersection farther than normal and traffic circles with planters in the middle of the circle or intersection forcing traffic to maneuver around the planter pose traffic hazards.

It cannot be disputed that the aforementioned obstructions or variances force normal traffic to reduce speed in areas of concern to residents and merchants. They do, however, cause the following problems for emergency personnel responding in fire and ambulance apparatus:

- Speed bumps and speed humps can cause damage to hose wells and low hanging pipes on engines and ladder trucks.
- While attempting to maneuver over or around a traffic calming device, the ability to stabilize a patient while enroute to the hospital will be impacted.
- Emergency medical patients in severe neck or back pain will find the ride over "traffic calming" bumps and humps intolerable if not excruciating. Additional injury to the patient may also occur.
- Response times to emergency scenes and hospitals will increase as vehicles slow down to maneuver the obstructions/variances.
- Any narrowing of streets from two lanes down to one with an "S" curve or yield signs will dramatically slow the response time of emergency vehicles. Ambulances,

engines, ladder trucks and heavy rescue squads will be forced to minimize their speed or literally stop to allow vehicular traffic to pull into driveways or onto parkways to allow them to pass.

- Traffic circles will reduce the turning radius of emergency vehicles and cause maneuvering problems for engines, ladder trucks, and heavy rescue squads.
- If a significant snow cover would conceal the obstruction/diversion or narrow a two-lane to one-lane roadway even further due to plowing practices, the negative results will be even more dramatic.
- Onboard equipment can be damaged or lost and personnel can be injured if an obstruction is encountered unexpectedly due to snow cover or old and worn out markings.

It should be obvious that although traffic calming may be effective in theory, in reality it has a very negative effect on emergency personnel, their response times and equipment, and the customers they serve.

JJT