

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2019 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 560

(Delegate Healey, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation

Judicial Proceedings

Transportation - State Highway Administration - Traffic Calming Devices

This bill requires the State Highway Administration (SHA), in consultation with appropriate county and municipal authorities, to compile best practices for siting, constructing, and maintaining traffic calming devices that address specified items. SHA must (1) coordinate and act as a clearinghouse for the best practices and (2) publish and periodically update information about the best practices; the information must include the estimated costs of construction for each traffic calming device. Upon request, SHA must provide the information on best practices to a county or municipality.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures increase by \$50,000 in FY 2020 only for consultant services. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SF Expenditure	50,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$50,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: Local governments can consult with SHA using existing resources. Local governments may benefit from the information on best practices provided by SHA; however, the extent to which this affects local government finances is unknown.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: “Traffic calming device” means a physical highway measure used to reduce vehicle speed and increase safety for bicycles, motorists, and pedestrians. It includes speed bumps, raised crosswalks, traffic circles, and narrowed roads.

Current Law/Background:

State Highway Administration

SHA is responsible for more than 5,200 miles or approximately 16,800 lane miles of road, 2,500 bridges, 3,500 small stream crossing structures, and 80 miles of sound barriers in the State. It also has responsibility for planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads and bridges to safety and performance standards while considering sociological, ecological, and economic concerns.

SHA does not currently have a manual that specifically addresses the use of traffic calming devices in the State. Even so, some local governments have implemented traffic calming strategies into their street designs. For example, Baltimore County’s [Neighborhood Traffic Management Program](#) includes information on the use of speed notification sign boards, table top style speed humps, and pedestrian refuge islands.

Traffic Calming – Federal Highway Administration and Other States

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) advises that traffic calming designs have helped to increase the quality of life in urban, suburban, and rural areas by reducing automobile speeds and traffic volumes on neighborhood streets. Traffic calming is important because when a pedestrian is struck by a motor vehicle, the slower the speed of the motor vehicle, the greater the chances are for survival for the pedestrian. A pedestrian is typically not permanently injured if struck by a motor vehicle traveling at 20 miles per hour or less. However, a pedestrian is usually fatally injured if struck by a motor vehicle traveling at 36 miles per hour or more.

FHWA further advises that traffic calming strategies have evolved in recent years from a neighborhood focused treatment to an integral part of complete streets and bicycle/pedestrian-related projects in many states. The [Delaware Department of Transportation](#), [Virginia Department of Transportation](#), and [Pennsylvania Department of Transportation](#) each maintain handbooks that include traffic calming guidelines, strategies, benefits, and potential costs. Types of traffic calming devices discussed in the various handbooks vary significantly and range from unobtrusive signs that prominently display the fines associated with speeding to full redesigns of roadways and intersections (*i.e.*, roundabouts, median barriers, etc.).

State Expenditures: In order to complete the initial research and development of the best practices required by the bill, SHA requires consultant assistance. Although SHA advises that much of the information on best practices for siting, constructing, and maintaining traffic calming devices is available online or in documents produced by national associations, SHA needs to consolidate the information. Therefore, TTF expenditures increase by \$50,000 in fiscal 2020 only to compile the initial best practices publication. SHA can maintain and update the information on best practices over time and provide the information to local governments upon request using existing budgeted resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Charles counties; Maryland Association of Counties; Federal Highway Administration; Delaware Department of Transportation; Pennsylvania Department of Transportation; Virginia Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Richard L. Duncan

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510