

**Oak Park Fire Department**

# Memo

**To:** Transportation Commission  
**From:** Deputy Fire Chief Peter Pilafas  
**cc:** Fire Chief Thomas Ebsen  
**Date:** May 15, 2017  
**Re:** Traffic Calming Devices (Speed Humps, Tables and Bumps) Impacts to Fire Department

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The Oak Park Fire Department is committed to providing quality emergency services to the community as quickly and efficiently as possible. Our goal is to maintain or improve OPFD's average response time. Towards that effort, OPFD uses 4-5 minutes as our evaluation criteria when reviewing the installation of traffic calming devices that impede our ability to provide emergency services.

**Response Time Goals:**

The VOP Transportation Commission must consider the delay added by traffic calming measures to emergency response and emergency response time goals. Any delay entails some added risk to life and property. But the risk may be acceptable as long as response time goals continue to be met.

**Fire Department Concerns with Speed Hump**

- Cause a "rough ride" for all drivers, and can cause pain for people with certain skeletal disabilities.
- Force large vehicles, such as emergency vehicles and those with rigid suspensions, to travel at slower speeds.
- May increase noise and air pollution
- Cannot be used on Emergency Response Routes
- Delay in providing emergency services to the community
- Speed humps being installed at such a rapid rate that all local streets would soon be treated
- Speed Humps once limited to local streets will be extended to higher order streets that serve as primary emergency response routes.

**OPFD Statistics & Study: Northern Part of the Village of Oak Park**

The Fire Department responded to a total of 807 emergency and non-emergency incidents in districts 2A and 2B from September 2015 – May 2017. See Attached Map: Districts 2A and 2B encompass the northern part of the Village of Oak Park. Overall response time for the Fire Department was 00:05:31 for districts 2A & 2B. Fire emergency response time is measured from the time the 9-1-1 call is received to the moment when the first unit arrives on the scene.

On May 15, 2017 the Oak Park Fire Department conducted a time study on 1200 block of Woodbine that currently has a speed table. The purpose of this study was to determine what type of delay impact the speed table had on different emergency vehicles.

The 1100 block of Woodbine was used to determine the time of the vehicles with no traffic calming device. All vehicles started from the stop position and proceeded to 25 mph and ended at a complete stop on both streets.

On the 1200 block of Woodbine vehicles conducted the same test but reduced their speed while driving over the speed table at 5 mph. The vehicles that participated in the test were Ford Expedition, Ford F450 Ambulance and Central State Fire Engine.

**Results:**

The results from the study indicated on average a 10 seconds delay for the Ambulance & Engine due to the speed table. The Ford Expedition resulted in only having a 5 second delay. This study concluded that the speed table on Woodbine is effective in reducing traffic speeds but will also have an effect on the Fire Department's response time.

**Recommendations:**

The Fire Department is very supportive of the traffic calming toolbox that the transportation commission and staff are working on. We are not supportive of the speed hump, speed lumps, speed cushions, speed tables, speed kidneys, raised crosswalks and raised intersection because these devices delay emergency services to the community. The toolbox has other alternative traffic calming options that will result in reducing traffic and speed without delaying public safety.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter J. Pilafas  
Deputy Fire Chief

OAK PARK FIRE DEPARTMENT CALL VOLUME SEPTEMBER 2015 - MAY 2017  
DISTRICT 2A & 2B,

0517-2  
7.3  
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807 INCIDENTS 2A & 2B: OVERALL AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME 00:05:31

