

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
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FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

House Bill 560 (Delegate Healey, *et al.*)
 Environment and Transportation

Transportation - State Highway Administration - Traffic Calming Devices

This bill requires the State Highway Administration (SHA) to develop and adopt statewide standards for the construction and maintenance of traffic calming devices. SHA must publish a manual containing those standards. If requested to do so by a county, SHA must provide engineering services for the development, construction, and maintenance of traffic calming devices; any such service must be provided at cost or lower.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures increase by \$100,000 in FY 2020 for consultant services. TTF expenditures increase further beginning in FY 2020 to the extent that SHA provides engineering services to local governments; TTF revenues increase correspondingly as local governments pay for those services.

(in dollars)	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
SF Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
SF Expenditure	\$100,000	-	-	-	-
Net Effect	(\$100,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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

Local Effect: Local government expenditures increase to the extent that engineering services are requested. Revenues are not affected.

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.

The standards adopted by SHA must address the engineering and design of traffic calming devices, as well as the costs and benefits of various methods of traffic calming. The manual published by SHA must include the estimated costs to construct each type of traffic calming device.

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 Fiscal Effect: In order to develop a comprehensive traffic calming design manual that can be used by State and local governments to design, construct, and maintain traffic calming devices, SHA requires consultant assistance because no such manual currently exists in the State. Therefore, TTF expenditures increase by \$100,000 in fiscal 2020 only to develop the manual. SHA can maintain and update the manual over time with existing budgeted resources.

TTF expenditures increase further beginning in fiscal 2020 to the extent that SHA provides engineering services to local governments for the development, construction, and maintenance of traffic calming devices. Many local governments are likely to request assistance after the manual's release; however, as local government transportation agencies become more familiar with traffic calming devices, they will require less technical assistance from the State. SHA advises that, under the bill, it plans to provide engineering services to local governments who request assistance at cost; therefore, TTF revenues increase commensurately with SHA's costs to provide the services.

Local Expenditures: As previously discussed, SHA plans to provide engineering services to local governments by request and at cost. Therefore, local government expenditures increase to pay for any engineering services requested.

It is assumed that local governments that already use traffic calming devices can adhere to the standards adopted under the bill with existing 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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