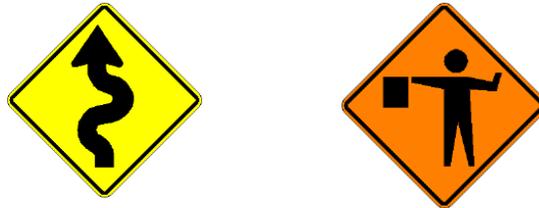


Traffic Control Philosophy

The City of Wooster recognizes that traffic conditions directly affect the livability of neighborhoods. Residents want to feel safe and secure while they interact socially, bicycle, walk, and drive in their neighborhood. When vehicle speeds and traffic volumes are excessive, neighborhoods can lose their sense of identity and community. The Division of Engineering, the Wooster Police Department and the City Traffic Commission desire to help residents address traffic concerns they may have in their neighborhood, and are committed to improving the safety and livability of their neighborhood. If an individual citizen or neighborhood identifies a vehicle speed or traffic volume problem in their neighborhood, Engineering staff, the Police Department and Traffic Commission members will work with them toward a solution.

Traffic Control Solutions

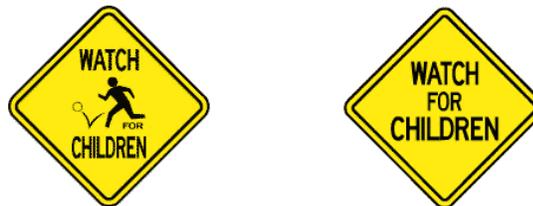
General Warning signs



Warning signs are most effective when used sparingly and are intended to advise motorists of an unusual or unexpected condition ahead. These signs have little value if they become overused. National studies have shown that many signs that warn of *normal* conditions in residential areas fail to improve safety.

The City receives numerous requests for “Children at Play” and “Stop” signs, to help solve speeding problems. These methods seem like an obvious and easy way to control vehicle speeds, but they do not always work.

Children at Play Signs



Some parents believe that the safety of their children playing in or near the street can be made safer if a “Slow, Children at Play” sign is installed in the neighborhood. Since children live on nearly every residential block, there would have to be signs on each street. Blocks with no signs could have the effect of suggesting no children live in that neighborhood.

In addition, traffic studies have shown that “Slow, Children at Play” signs can actually increase the potential for an accident. The sign does not increase a driver’s attention enough to reduce the potential for a pedestrian accident. Therefore, placing the sign in the neighborhood can increase the chance of an accident because the sign gives both parents and children a sense of protection, which doesn’t exist and cannot be guaranteed.

Finally, Federal standards, Ohio Law, the Ohio Department of Transportation and the Wayne County Engineer do not recognize or support the use of these signs.

For these reasons, the City of Wooster does not install this type of sign and instead, we encourage parents and/or guardians to find alternative play areas for children, such as a backyard or a local park.

Stop Signs and Yield Signs



Stop signs seem like an obvious and simple solution to control vehicle speeds. However, when stop signs are used to control speed, there is a high incidence of drivers intentionally violating the stop. When vehicles do stop, it is effective only in the immediate area of the stop sign, since a large number of motorists then increase their speed to make up for lost time. This results in increased speeds between stop signs in the neighborhood.

Stop signs can also create a false sense of security for pedestrians. When pedestrians approach an intersection controlled by a stop sign, pedestrians assume drivers will stop at the sign to allow a safe crossing. However, when stop signs are located to control speeds rather than establish right-of-way priority through the intersection, drivers may not respect the sign. Drivers may endanger pedestrians by either running the sign or doing a “rolling stop.”

For these reasons, the City does not use stop signs as a way to control speed through a neighborhood. Instead, they are used to improve safety at intersections where there is an accident problem, where visibility is limited due to buildings or the topography, or where volumes are high enough that the normal right-of-way rule is unsafe.

Speed Limit Signs



In many situations, speed limit signs may be the solution to speeding problems. City ordinances designate most residential areas as 25 mph speed zones. This is the default speed limit, and most residents are aware of this provision, so speed limit signs are not always posted in these areas.

If no speed limit signs are present on a street, and a speeding problem exists, these signs can be requested by contacting either the Police Department or the Engineering Division.

Other Traffic Control Measures

In most cases where a speeding problem exists, the root issue is a failure on the part of the driver to obey the law and drive in a safe manner. While the City of Wooster cannot legislate a concern for others safety, there are possible enforcement measures which can be attempted.

A temporary radar and speed display can be erected to notify drivers of their vehicle speed. In most cases, drivers will slow down when they become aware of their actual speed.

In addition, additional police patrols can be requested in the area where a speed problem exists. While the Police Department can not be everywhere, all the time, a reasonable effort will be made to observe vehicular speed patterns in the requested area.

For More Information, please contact:

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