

SLOWING TRAFFIC WITHOUT THE NOISE: WHAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS DID

The residents of the first block of Houston Boulevard are not asking the Commission to abandon its goal of slowing traffic. We share that goal. We are asking whether it can be achieved by a means that does not put continuous noise and vibration into the homes alongside the road.

Other governments have faced similar questions. Below is what they did. None of them was compelled to act, and none of them gave up on road safety. Each found a different way to get there.

WHAT "A QUIETER SOLUTION" HAS MEANT ELSEWHERE

Sinusoidal rumble strips A wave-profile design that alerts drivers with markedly less external noise.	MnDOT, Highway 19
Modified geometry Shorter panels and a shallower profile. Measured 5.6–7.4 dBA quieter at 50 ft with the in-vehicle alert intact.	IDOT / Univ. of Illinois
A different device entirely Flashing four-way stop installed in place of the strips.	Madera County, CA
Intersection redesign Council member committed to pursue re-engineering of the dangerous intersection instead.	Dallas, TX
Speed-hump-style treatment Strips reworked into a quieter vertical treatment; residents reportedly satisfied.	Holly Pond, AL
Removal and relocation Strips discontinued where homes are very close to the road.	FHWA guidance

THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

"Some simply ban their use in residential areas, while others try other alternatives to improve safety before considering rumble strips."

FHWA guidance also cites studies finding that when rumble strips end approximately 650 feet before residential or urban areas, noise impacts are tolerable. The homes on the first block of Houston Boulevard sit roughly 40 feet from the pavement edge.

FHWA, "Mitigating Noise" and Decision Support Guide — highways.dot.gov

SUMMARY

GOVERNMENT	SETTING	YEAR	WHAT THEY DID	SOURCE
Dallas, Texas	Residential street	2023	Removed; committed to redesign	Press
Miami Beach — Pine Tree	Residential street	2022	Removed within days	Press
Miami Beach — Collins Ave	Residential, raised	2024	Unanimously recommended removal	City rec.
Ringgold, Georgia	Downtown streets	2016	Removed	Press
Holly Pond, Alabama	Residential road	2018	Modified to a quieter treatment	Press
Amherstburg, Ontario	Within ~650 ft of homes	2018	Removed	Press
Windsor, Ontario	Residential street	2024	Removed after pilot	Press
Madera County, California	Residential crossroads	2023	Most removed; flashing stop instead	Press
Victoria, Minnesota	Highway beside homes	2013	Removed over MnDOT preference	Press
Highland Park, Illinois	Highway, homes ~950 ft	2022	Rebuilt to a quieter specification	Univ.
Highway 19, Minnesota	Highway near homes	2014–	Removed; quieter sinusoidal design	FHWA
Highway 61, Minnesota	Highway near homes	2013–	Filled or removed ~46 mi	FHWA

Source column: FHWA = federal case study · Univ. = university measurement study · City rec. = official city record · Press = established local reporting. Full citations on page 4.

Not every case ended in removal. What none ended in was leaving the original installation unchanged.

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CLOSEST COMPARISONS — RESIDENTIAL STREETS, MUNICIPAL DECISIONS

These are the cases nearest to Houston Boulevard: city and town streets with homes alongside, decided by elected councils or city administrations.

Dallas, Texas — Sylvan Avenue, Oak Cliff

Removed July 2023

Rumble strips were installed on a residential street in summer 2023 as a temporary traffic-calming demonstration. Residents reported noise and sleep disruption. At a community meeting a majority of attendees objected — and the city's own Department of Transportation stated it did not have data showing whether the strips actually slowed traffic. They were removed about five weeks later. That road had a known speeding problem and a prior fatality at a nearby intersection. The city removed the strips regardless, and the council member stated he intended to advocate for 2024 bond funding to reconstruct and redesign that intersection.

Source: Oak Cliff Advocate, June and July 2023

Miami Beach, Florida — Pine Tree Drive

Removed in about 5 days

Miami-Dade County installed rumble strips on a residential street to limit speeding. Residents reported that noise and vibration made sleep impossible — one described it as "all day and all night." Miami Beach Commissioner Steven Meiner began receiving complaints, and the County removed the strips roughly five days after installation. Commissioner Meiner told WPLG: "I think there was a recognition this was not appropriate for this street."

Source: WPLG Local 10 News, Rosh Lowe, March 10 and 11, 2022

Miami Beach, Florida — Collins Avenue

Removal recommended unanimously

The same city, a different street, twenty months later. Raised rumble strips were installed in November 2023 to address speeding. Adjacent residents complained of noise at all hours. A city memorandum reported that the police department's 85th-percentile speed south of the strips was not considerably above the 35 mph limit. On February 14, 2024 the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee unanimously recommended removal, and the administration supported it at an estimated cost of about \$12,000.

Note: Final commission adoption and physical removal are not independently confirmed. We state only what the memorandum records.

Source: City of Miami Beach Commission Memorandum, Item C7 Z

Ringgold, Georgia — three downtown roads

Removed 2016

The City Council voted to remove rumble strips from three roads near downtown after residents living nearby complained to the city manager about noise. The strips had been added by Public Works alongside a separate stop-sign installation rather than as a separately studied measure.

Source: Northwest Georgia News, September 2016

Holly Pond, Alabama — Brooklyn Road

Modified, not removed

Included with its full outcome. The Town Council voted in August 2018 to remove recently-installed strips after resident noise complaints, and in September voted to accelerate removal because complaints continued. In December, after the installation had been reworked into a quieter, speed-hump-like form, the council voted to retain the modified treatment; reporting indicated nearby residents were satisfied. The outcome need not be removal — but the original installation did not remain unchanged.

Source: The Cullman Tribune, August, September and December 2018

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Amherstburg, Ontario — intersections

Removed 2018

Town council voted to remove rumble strips from intersections following noise complaints. Reporting noted that most of the strips were within roughly 200 metres — about 650 feet — of homes, and that residents said the noise was affecting their quality of life.

Note: Canadian municipality. This council was not applying US federal guidance, and we do not suggest it was. We note the distance only because it happens to fall near the figure cited separately by FHWA in the US context.

Source: CBC News, 2018

Windsor, Ontario — Grand Marais Road East

Removed 2024

A year-long pilot on a residential street. A City of Windsor report found minimal benefit and concluded rumble strips are not very effective for traffic calming in a low-speed urban setting, and documented residential, durability and winter-operation concerns.

Note: Canadian municipality. The Ontario Traffic Manual discourages residential use but has no authority in Kentucky.

Source: CBC News, October 2024; City of Windsor report

Madera County, California — Road 36 at Avenue 15

Most removed; flashing stop instead

The county installed rumble strips at a residential crossroads in June 2023. Residents reported they could not sleep; one noted her husband leaves for work at 2 a.m. and the noise reached her bedroom. Within days the county supervisor stated most of the strips would be removed, that a further decibel reading would be taken, and that a flashing four-way stop would be installed within a week.

Note: Reported through a resident relaying the supervisor's statement. We located no county record confirming completion.

Source: KMPH FOX26, June 7, 2023

THE SAME CONCLUSION AT HIGHWAY SCALE

These involve centerline strips on state highways rather than a residential street, and are therefore less directly comparable. We include them because they are official federal and university records, and because they show the same reasoning applied at a far larger scale.

Victoria, Minnesota — Highway 5

Removed

A centerline rumble strip kept nearby residents awake at night. A MnDOT representative spoke in favor of keeping it. The city council voted to recommend removal on behalf of residents, and the state agreed.

Source: Star Tribune, July 1, 2013

Highway 19 near New Prague, and Highway 61, Minnesota

Removed; quieter design substituted

On Highway 19, after residents complained of frequent hits and noise, MnDOT investigated together with residents, removed the strips at the identified locations, repaved, and installed an experimental sinusoidal design. FHWA reports no further complaints. On Highway 61, following public concern, involvement by the Cook County Board, and a noise study finding sound carried farther than assumed, MnDOT filled or removed nearly 46 miles near residential locations.

Source: FHWA Decision Support Guide case studies — highways.dot.gov

Highland Park, Illinois — US-41

Rebuilt quieter, October 2022

The Illinois DOT declined to remove these strips. We include the case because it is the clearest measured evidence that geometry drives external noise. After sustained resident complaints IDOT rebuilt the transverse strips to a quieter design — panel length 25 ft to 15 ft, depth 1/4 in to 3/16 in, strips per panel 25 to 16 — and the University of Illinois measured external noise falling 5.6 to 7.4 dBA at 50 feet, roughly a 35–40% reduction in perceived loudness, while in-vehicle alerting remained within the FHWA-recommended range.

Note: Homes are roughly 950 feet away and those strips are milled into asphalt; ours are raised thermoplastic. The dimensions do not transfer. The principle does.

Source: Illinois Center for Transportation, Report FHWA-ICT-23-003, April 2023

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SOURCES

Every claim in this document is drawn from the sources below. Where an outcome could not be confirmed in an official record, we have said so on the page rather than leaving it implied.

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WHAT WE COULD NOT CONFIRM

Madera County: the removal commitment was reported through a resident relaying the supervisor's statement. We located no county record confirming completion. The Ringgold and Amherstburg entries rest on local reporting rather than official minutes. We include them because the pattern is consistent, and we flag them so the Commission can weigh them accordingly.