



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Simpson Avenue – Traffic Calming

Date:	February 28, 2007
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Transportation Services Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Toronto - Danforth, Ward 30
Reference Number:	Ts07066te.top.doc

SUMMARY

This staff report is about a matter which Community Council has been delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision. Transportation Services staff have investigated installing traffic calming to address residents' concerns with the speed of traffic on Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue.

Our assessment indicates the speeds on the street are already below a level which would benefit from traffic calming. Therefore, speed humps should not be installed on Simpson Avenue at this time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Services recommends to Toronto and East York Community Council that:

1. traffic calming not be installed on Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue.

Financial Impact

The adoption of the above-noted recommendation will not result in any financial impact. If, however, Toronto and East York Community Council decides speed humps on Simpson Avenue would be beneficial, the following financial impact will result:

1. the estimated cost for installing four speed humps would be \$12,000.00.
Transportation Services has requested funds in the amount of \$750,000 be allocated in the 2007 Capital Budget for traffic calming initiatives. Installing speed humps on Simpson Avenue would be subject to competing priorities and funding availability.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

At the request of Councillor Paula Fletcher, Transportation Services staff studied this section of Simpson Avenue to determine whether traffic calming devices would address concerns with current traffic operations.

COMMENTS

Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue, is a local street operating one-way westbound with a posted speed limit of 40 km/h and a pavement width of 7.3 metres. It has sidewalks on both sides of the roadway and the road grade is less than eight percent. Accordingly, we further considered the need for traffic calming measures against the City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy.

Analysis

Toronto Police Service collision records indicate no collisions were reported on Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue for the three-year period ending March 1, 2006.

Vehicle speeds and traffic volume are the prime criteria for installing traffic calming devices and other factors, including road width, pedestrian facilities and gradient are also considered in the assessment.

Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue, does not meet all the criteria for installing traffic-calming devices. Specifically, the operating speed of 43 km/h is below the minimum of 10 km/h over the posted speed limit that the traffic-calming policy requires. Also, the average daily volume of 925 vehicles per day is less than the required minimum of 1,000 vehicles per day. Therefore, installing speed humps on Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue, is not warranted.

Appendix A outlines the assessment of the technical criteria in more detail.

Alternate recommendations

If, despite the findings above, Toronto and East York Community Council determines that installing speed humps on Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue would be beneficial, it may approve the following:

1. Transportation Services consult with Councillor Paula Fletcher to develop a speed hump plan;
2. Transportation Services poll eligible householders on Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue to determine whether residents support the installation, and consult with Toronto Fire Service, Emergency Medical Service and Toronto Police Service, in accordance with the City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy; and

3. subject to favourable results of the poll;
 - (a) The City Solicitor prepare a by-law to alter sections of the roadway on Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue, for traffic calming purposes, generally as the speed hump plan that Transportation Services circulated to residents during the polling process shows; and
 - (b) Transportation Services take the necessary actions to reduce the speed limit from forty kilometres per hour to thirty kilometres per hour on Simpson Avenue, between Howland Avenue and Carlaw Avenue, when the speed humps are installed.

Conduct poll

The City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy stipulates householders who would be directly affected by installing speed humps on this section of Simpson Avenue must be formally polled. A minimum response of 50 percent plus one ballot is established, of which at least 60 percent of the responding households must be in favour of installing speed humps in order to proceed with the installation. Accordingly, subject to approval by Toronto and East York Community Council of the alternate recommendations outlined above, Transportation Services would poll householders on this section of Simpson Avenue. If the poll supports speed humps on Simpson Avenue, Transportation Services staff would schedule installation based on relative need and competing priorities.

Relative Priority and Other Impacts

Relative need and the priority of speed hump installation is based on a technical assessment of traffic volume, vehicle speed percentages, speed-related collisions, and the presence of schools, parks, seniors' residences or bicycle routes. Simpson Avenue scored 14 points out of a possible 100.

No alterations to parking regulations are required, nor would the number of parking spaces be affected, and the effects on winter services, street cleaning and garbage collection should be minimal.

Speed humps would result in slower operating speeds for all vehicles, including emergency service vehicles, and could result in increased response times in the event of an emergency.

Emergency Services Comments

Consultation with emergency services (Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services) is required in order to ensure that the design and layout of a traffic calming proposal does not unduly affect their operations. At this time we have not consulted with emergency services, however, Toronto Fire Services has provided the following general statement in the past regarding the installation of speed humps:

“...Toronto Fire Service is supportive of initiatives that improve the life safety of our citizens. Our concern is that the physical calming measures being proposed may negatively impact emergency response to the area.

The vertical restrictions imposed by speed humps have a much greater affect on large fire vehicles than smaller passenger vehicles. Response time increases with every obstacle a fire vehicle encounters en route from the fire station to the incident. Although the increase at each hump may only be seconds, the cumulative effect can be a significant amount of time that could result in increased property damage, unnecessary injury or loss of life.

Speed humps are generally hard on large, heavy vehicle (fire vehicles) and increase the potential to suffer mechanical damage. This in turn can lead to a vehicle being placed out of service for considerable periods of time. Aside from the costs associated with repairs, there is a decrease in the resources available to respond to other emergency situations.”

CONTACT

Dave Dignard, Transportation Technologist
Traffic Operations, Toronto and East York District
Phone: (416) 338-5398
Fax: (416) 392-1920
e-mail: ddignard@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Andrew Koropeski, P.Eng.
Director, Transportation Services

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix “A” – Table 1: Traffic Calming Warrant Criteria

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