



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West – Traffic Calming

Date:	January 10, 2008
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Transportation Services Toronto and East York District
Wards:	St. Paul's – Ward 21
Reference Number:	Ts08021te.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 has investigated installing speed humps on Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West to address residents' concerns with the speed of traffic.

Staff's assessment indicates the criteria as set out in the Traffic Calming Policy has not been met. Therefore, installation of speed humps on Rushton Road is not recommended at this time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Services recommends that Toronto and East York Community Council:

1. not authorize installation of speed humps on Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West.

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 Rushton Road would be beneficial, the following financial impact will result:

1. the estimated cost for installing 3 speed humps would be \$9,000.00. Funds in the amount of \$295,000.00 have been allocated in the Transportation Services 2008 Capital Budget for traffic calming initiatives. The installation of speed humps on Rushton Road is subject to competing priorities and funding availability.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

At the request of Councillor Joe Mihevc, Transportation Services' staff investigated Rushton Road between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West to determine whether the installation of speed humps is justified to address concerns with current traffic operations.

COMMENTS

Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West is a local street operating two-way with a posted speed limit of 40 km/h and a pavement width of 7.2 metres. There are sidewalks on both sides of the roadway and the road grade is less than 8 percent.

Analysis

The Toronto Police Service collision records indicate three collisions were reported on Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West for the three-year period ending July 31, 2007. None of the reported collisions identified speeding as a contributing factor.

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

Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West, does not meet all the criteria for installing traffic-calming devices. Specifically:

- the operating speed of traffic is 43 km/h. This is below the minimum threshold of 10 km/h over the warranted speed limit; and
- the average total daily volume is about 700 vehicles. The traffic calming policy stipulates on those streets with a volume of less than 1,000 vehicles per day, speed humps should only be considered when the operating speed is 15 km/h over the warranted speed limit.

Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West does not satisfy the stipulations of the Traffic Calming Policy therefore, installation of speed humps is not recommended. Appendix A outlines the assessment of the technical criteria in more detail.

Alternate recommendations

Despite the findings above, if Toronto and East York Community Council determines that installing speed humps on Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West would be beneficial, it should adopt the following:

1. Transportation Services poll eligible householders on Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West to determine whether residents support the installation, in accordance with the City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy; and
2. subject to favourable results of the poll;
 - (a) the City Solicitor prepare a by-law to alter sections of the roadway on Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West, for traffic calming purposes, generally as shown on the attached print of Drawing No. 421F-9151, dated December 2007 and circulated to residents during the polling process; and
 - (b) Transportation Services take the necessary action to reduce the speed limit from forty kilometres per hour to thirty kilometres per hour on Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West, when the speed humps are installed.

Conduct poll

The City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy stipulates residents who are directly affected by installing speed humps on this section of Rushton Road must be formally polled. A minimum response of 50 percent plus one ballot is required, of which at least 60 percent of the respondents must favour installation of speed humps in order to proceed.

Subject to approval by Toronto and East York Community Council of the alternate recommendations outlined above, Transportation Services would poll eligible residents on this section of Rushton Road. If the poll supports speed humps Transportation Services' staff will 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. Rushton Road, between Benson Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West scored 12 ranking points out of a possible 100.

No changes to parking regulations are required, and the number of parking spaces will remain the same. The effect of speed humps on winter services, street cleaning and garbage collection is minimal.

Speed humps will 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. Staff has consulted with emergency services but have not received any specific comments at this time. 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 a 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

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SIGNATURE

Andrew Koropeski, P.Eng.
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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix “A” – Table 1: Traffic Calming Warrant Criteria
Drawing No. 421F-9151, dated December 2007

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