



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Traffic Calming – Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street

Date:	August 5, 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:	Ts08145te.top.doc

SUMMARY

This staff report is about a matter for which Community Council has been delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision.

Transportation Services staff have investigated installing speed humps on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, to address residents' concerns regarding the speed of traffic.

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Services recommends that Toronto and East York Community Council:

1. Not authorize installation of speed humps on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street.

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 Benson Avenue 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 \$265,000.00 have been allocated in the Transportation Services 2008 Capital Budget for traffic calming initiatives. Installing speed humps on Benson Avenue is subject to competing priorities and funding availability.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

At the request of Councillor Joe Mihevc, Transportation Services studied Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, to determine whether installation of speed humps is justified to address concerns with current traffic operations.

COMMENTS

Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, is a local roadway operating two-way (east/west) with a maximum speed limit of 50 km/h and a pavement width of 8.5 metres. Sidewalks are on both sides of the roadway and the road grade is less than 8 percent. There is no TTC service on Benson Avenue.

Analysis

The Toronto Police Service collision records for a three-year period ending May 31, 2008 indicates there were no collisions reported on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, that could have been attributed to speeding.

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.

Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, does not meet the criteria for installing speed humps. Specifically:

- the operating speed (44 km/h) is less than 10 kilometres per hour over the warranted speed limit and is below the maximum speed limit of 50 km/h. In addition, the average speed recorded on Benson Avenue was 35 km/h; and
- the volume of traffic is about 850 vehicles per day, which is less than the minimum threshold of 1000 vehicles per day.

Therefore, installing speed humps on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, is not technically warranted nor recommended.

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 Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, would be beneficial, it may approve the following:

1. Transportation Services poll eligible householders on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, to determine whether residents support the installation of speed humps, in accordance with the City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy.
2. Subject to favourable results of the poll:
 - (a) the City Solicitor prepare a by-law to alter sections of the roadway on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, for traffic calming purposes, generally as shown on the copy of Drawing No. 421F-9362, dated July 2008, which Transportation Services circulated to residents during the polling process; and
 - (b) Transportation Services take the necessary action to reduce the speed limit from fifty kilometres per hour to thirty kilometres per hour on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, when the speed humps are installed.

Conduct poll

The City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy stipulates residents who would be directly affected by installing speed humps on Benson Avenue 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 support installing speed humps in order to proceed with the installation. 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 Benson Avenue. If the poll supports speed humps, Transportation Services would schedule installation based on relative need and competing priorities.

Relative Priority and Other Impacts

Relative need and 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. This section of Benson Avenue scored 7 points out of a possible 100.

No alterations to parking regulations are required, nor would the number of parking spaces be affected, by the installation of speed humps. Also, the effects on winter services, street cleaning and garbage collection should be 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 and has attached copies of the letters received from Toronto Fire Services and Emergency Medical Services, outlining their comments/concerns. Both services are against the installation of speed humps on this section of Benson Avenue.

CONTACT

Teresa Carmichael, Transportation Technologist
Traffic Operations, Toronto and East York District
Phone: 416-392-7771
Fax: 416- 392-1920
e-mail: tcarmich@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Andrew Koropeski, P.Eng.
Director, Transportation Services

ATTACHMENTS

Drawing No. 421F-9362, dated July 2008
Appendix "A" – Table 1: Traffic Calming Warrant Criteria
Appendix "B" – Letter dated June 26, 2008 from Toronto Fire Services
Appendix "C" – Letter dated July 15, 2008, from Emergency Medical Services

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