Traffic Control Device Decisions

Scarborough District

Scarborough Community Council

October 13, 2009

TCD Decisions Presentation Goal

- Compare history of Scarborough Community Council over-turns of negative staff recommendations between last two SCC sessions

- Compare capital costs of TCD's installed as result of SCC over-turns

- Need for staff reports

- Managing over-turns

TCD Decisions
General Process

- SCC has only over-turned some negative staff recommendations

- Positive staff recommendations always adopted

- Delegated Decisions under TMC Chapter 27

  - Community Councils have delegated authority to over-rule Policy on local, collector or minor arterials with no TTC routes

  - Otherwise decisions must be ratified at City Council – no more routing through PWIC

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TCD Decisions Types

- Three types of negative recommendations have been significantly over-turned by SCC since 2004
    - speed limit reductions
    - new All-Way Stop Controls at intersections
    - new Traffic Control Signals

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TCD Decisions
Speed Limit Reductions

TCD Decisions
Speed Limit Reductions

- Typically triggered by local concerns about speeding on local streets
- Speed limits governed by City policies and practices based on national/provincial guidelines, including:
  - measured speed must be 9 km/h or less over posted speed to reflect "natural" traffic speed
  - lack of any sidewalks so pedestrian safety enhanced (40 km/h)
  - school or park on street so child safety enhanced (40 km/h)

TCD Decisions
Speed Limit Reductions

- Over-turns based on local desire for reduced speed limit as perceived safety improvement
- Concerns about:
  - compliance due to high "natural" speed
  - resulting perception of excessive enforcement
  - traffic & pedestrian conflicts due to higher differential in traffic speeds (some follow new speed, others maintain natural speed)

TCD Decisions
All-Way Stop Controls

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TCD Decisions
All-Way Stop Controls

- Typically caused by local concerns about intersection traffic, pedestrian crossings, and speeding on local streets

- AWSC governed by City Policy with provincial technical guidelines, including
  - minimum volume thresholds
  - traffic splits

TCD Decisions
All-Way Stop Control

- Over-turns based on local desire for
  - ROW control
  - reduced speeds
  - pedestrian safety
- Concerns about:
  - poor compliance due to high split
  - resulting perception of excessive enforcement
  - pollution & noise caused by stopping
  - increased speeding between AWSC's to make up for delays
  - AWSC not recommended for school crossings on wider roads – false sense of security for compliant drivers and crossing pedestrians

TCD Decisions
Traffic Control Signals

TCD Decisions
Traffic Control Signals

- Typically result of local concerns about:
  - intersection traffic delays
  - pedestrian crossings hazards, or
  - actual pedestrian injuries or fatalities
- TCS warrants based on Provincial standards (now City policy through consistent application), including
  - minimum volume thresholds
  - minimum delay thresholds
  - collision warrants
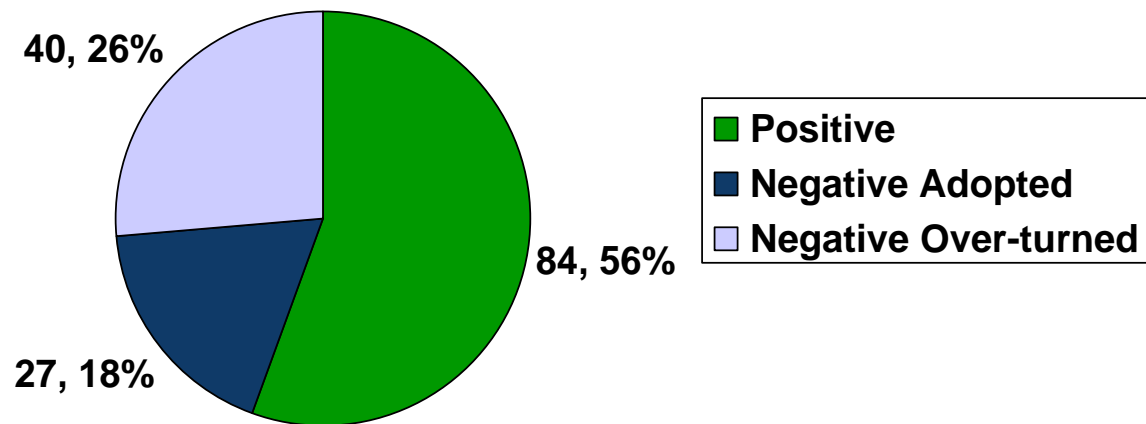
TCD Decisions
Traffic Control Signals

- Over-turns caused by:
  - Local desire for ROW control to gain access to and from major street
  - Perceived pedestrian hazards or inconvenience
  - Specific pedestrian injuries or fatalities
- Concerns about:
  - increased rear-end collision hazard along major street caused by new Red Lights
  - increased pollution caused by unnecessary delay to traffic and energy needed to power signal plant
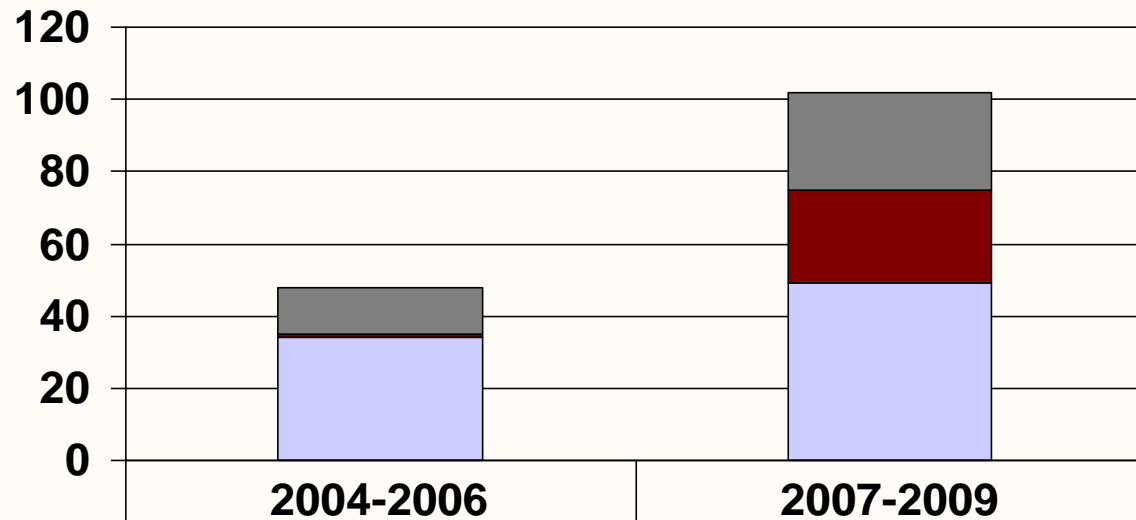
TCD Decisions
SCC Decisions – 3 TCD's

- Analysis of all recommendations
- Long-Term 2004-Present SCC

40, 26%

84, 56%

27, 18%

- ■ Positive
- ■ Negative Adopted
- ■ Negative Over-turned

TCD Decisions
SCC Decisions – 3 TCD's

- Comparison of last two SCC sessions

|	2004-2006	2007-2009
■ Negative Over-turned	13	27
■ Negative Adopted	1	26
☐ Positive	34	49

TCD Decisions
SCC Decisions – 3 TCD's

- Number of recommendations considered by SCC has doubled over the two sessions
  - reflection of increased production in the Traffic Operations Unit
- Trend is for negative recommendation over-turns to remain constant at around 26% of all reports
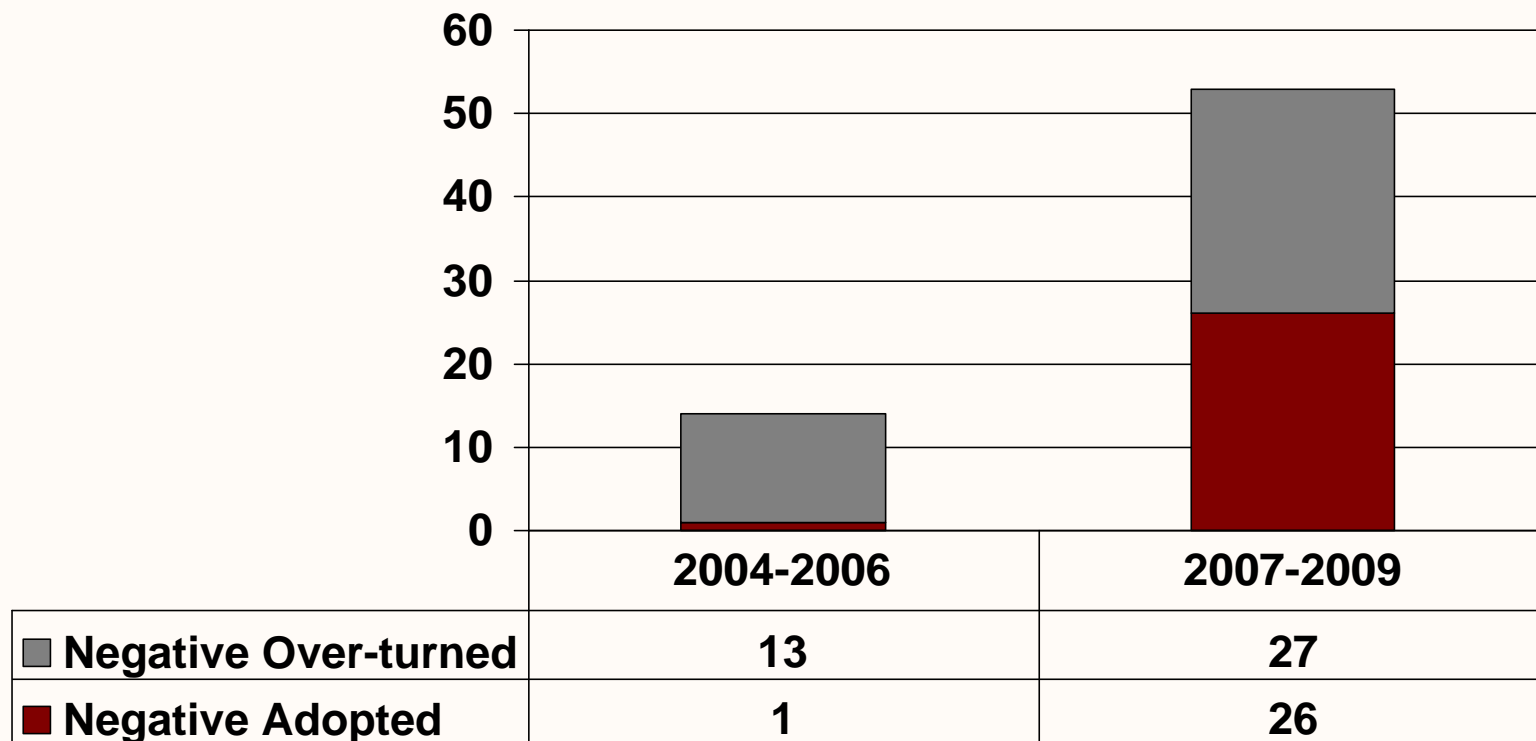
TCD Decisions
Negative Over-Turns

- Analysis negative reports over-turns
- Long-Term 2004-Present SCC

27, 40%

40, 60%

■ Negative Adopted
■ Negative Over-turned
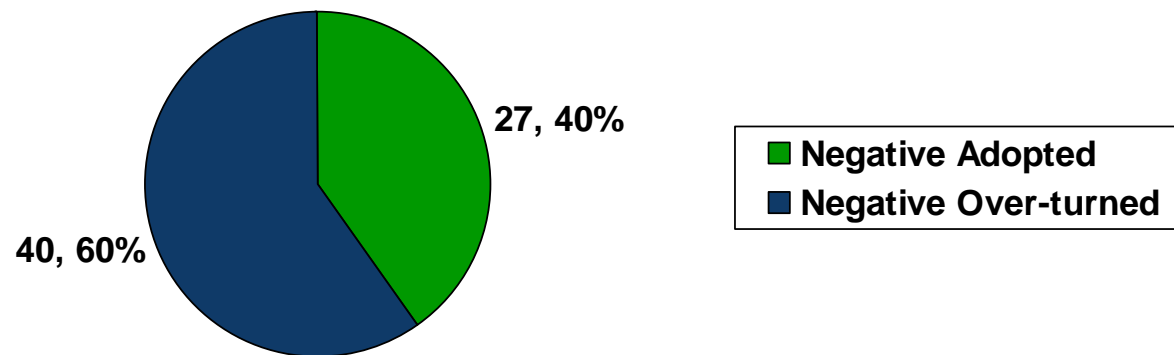
TCD Decisions
Negative Over-Turns

- Comparison of last two SCC sessions

	2004-2006	2007-2009
■ Negative Over-turned	13	27
■ Negative Adopted	1	26

TCD Decisions
Negative Over-Turns

- Number of negative recommendations considered by SCC has nearly tripled over the two sessions
  - reflection of increased requests for negative reports by Councillors
- 42% reduction in over-turn rate over the two SCC sessions
- Trend is reduction in over-turns to 60% of all negative recommendations for three types

TCD Decisions
Ward Over-Turn Rates

- Over-turn rate is percentage of negative recommendations that are over-turned per Ward

- A measure of tendency to request negative reports to over-turn policy, rather than simply requesting reports to show issue being duly considered by Councillor but refused by SCC

- Long-term trend is for SCC to over-turn 53% of negative reports

TCD Decisions
Ward Over-Turn Rates

- Lower rates may not necessarily be desirable as negative reports that are simply adopted:
  - result in no change on-street while
  - consuming staff resources to generate reports

TCD Decisions
Ward Over-turn Rates

- Ward 35 – 0%
- **Ward 36 – 78% (highest)**
- **Ward 37 – 74% (second)**
- **Ward 38 – 68% (third)**
- Ward 39 – 50%
- Ward 40 – 22%
- Ward 41 – 60%
- Ward 42 – 0%
- Ward 43 – 33%
- Ward 44 – 47%
- All Wards – 53%

TCD Decisions
Ward Over-turn Shares

- Over-turn share is percentage of over-turns of negative recommendations across Wards

- A measure of tendency to request negative reports to over-turn policy for community interests outside of policy

TCD Decisions
Ward Over-turn Shares

- Ward 35 – 0%
- **Ward 36 – 18% (second)**
- **Ward 37 – 29% (highest)**
- **Ward 38 – 16% (third)**
- Ward 39 – 15%
- Ward 40 – 5%
- Ward 41 – 8%
- Ward 42 – 0%
- Ward 43 – 1%
- Ward 44 – 9%
- All Wards – 100%

TCD Decisions
Ward Over-turn Index

- Over-turn index is a ratio of over-turn rate by share by Wards

- Measure of relative amount of over-turns that a Ward is driving on Agenda (assuming base of long-term average 53% over-turns for a 10% of share for each of the 10 Wards)
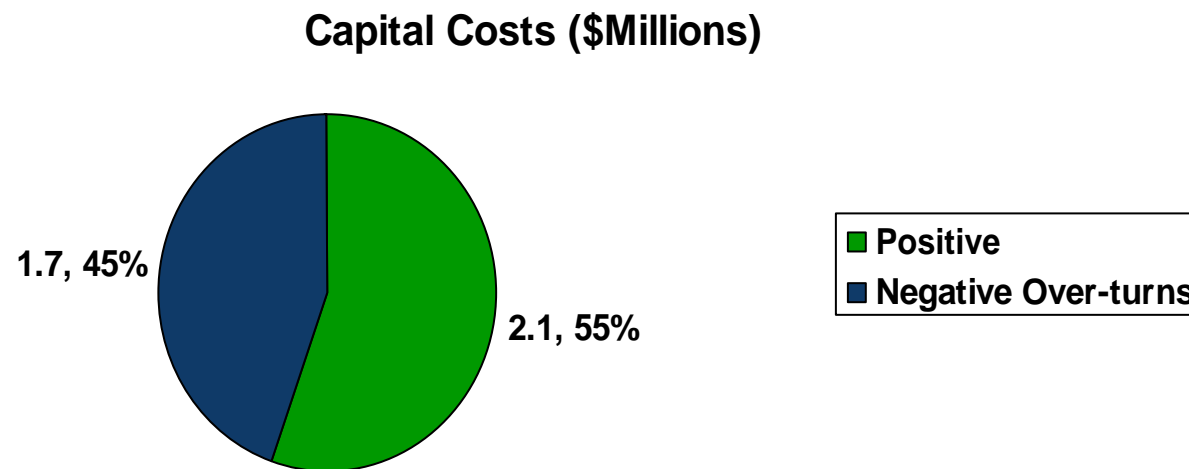
TCD Decisions
Ward Over-turn Index

- Ward 35 – 0.0
- **Ward 36 – 2.6 (second)**
- **Ward 37 – 4.0 (highest)**
- **Ward 38 – 2.1 (third)**
- **Ward 39 – 1.4 (fourth)**
- Ward 40 – 0.2
- Ward 41 – 0.9
- Ward 42 – 0.0
- Ward 43 – 0.1
- Ward 44 – 0.8
- **Base – 1.0 (assume 53% over-turns for 10% share)**

TCD Decisions
Budget Impacts – 3 TCD's

- Long-Term 2004-2009 (estimated capital costs)
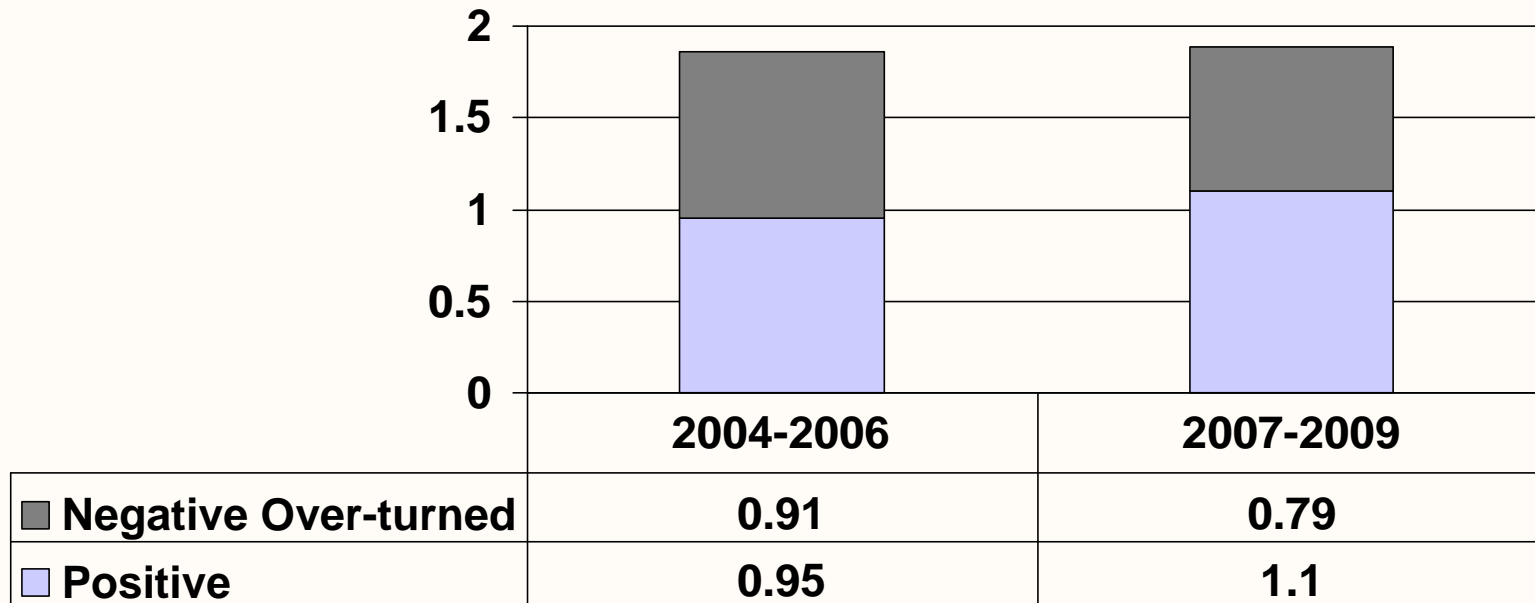 - total approvals - $3.8M

Capital Costs ($Millions)

1.7, 45%

2.1, 55%

■ Positive
■ Negative Over-turns

TCD Decisions
Budget Impacts – 3 TCD's

- Comparison of last two SCC sessions

Capital Costs ($Millions)

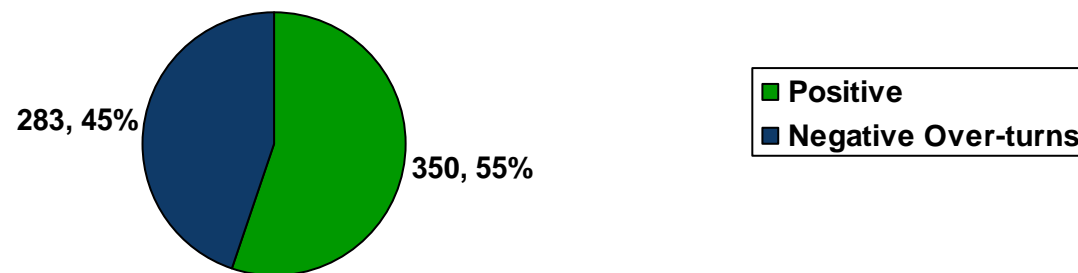|	2004-2006	2007-2009
■ Negative Over-turned	0.91	0.79
□ Positive	0.95	1.1

TCD Decisions
Budget Impacts – 3 TCD's

- 15% reduction in over-turn costs over the two SCC sessions

- Trend is reduction in over-turn costs to about 45% of all TCD approvals ($280k annually)

Annual Capital Costs ($Thousands)

283, 45%

350, 55%

- Positive
- Negative Over-turns

TCD Decisions
Budget Impacts By Type

- Long-Term 2004-2009 (estimated capital over-turn costs)

Capital Costs ($Millions)

0.012, 1%

0.038, 2%

1.7, 97%

- ■ Speed Limits
- ■ AWSC
- □ TCS

TCD Decisions Budget Impacts

- Comparison of last two SCC sessions

Capital Costs ($Thousands)

	2004-2006	2007-2009
■ TCS	900	750
■ AWSC	11	27
☐ Speed Limits	0	12
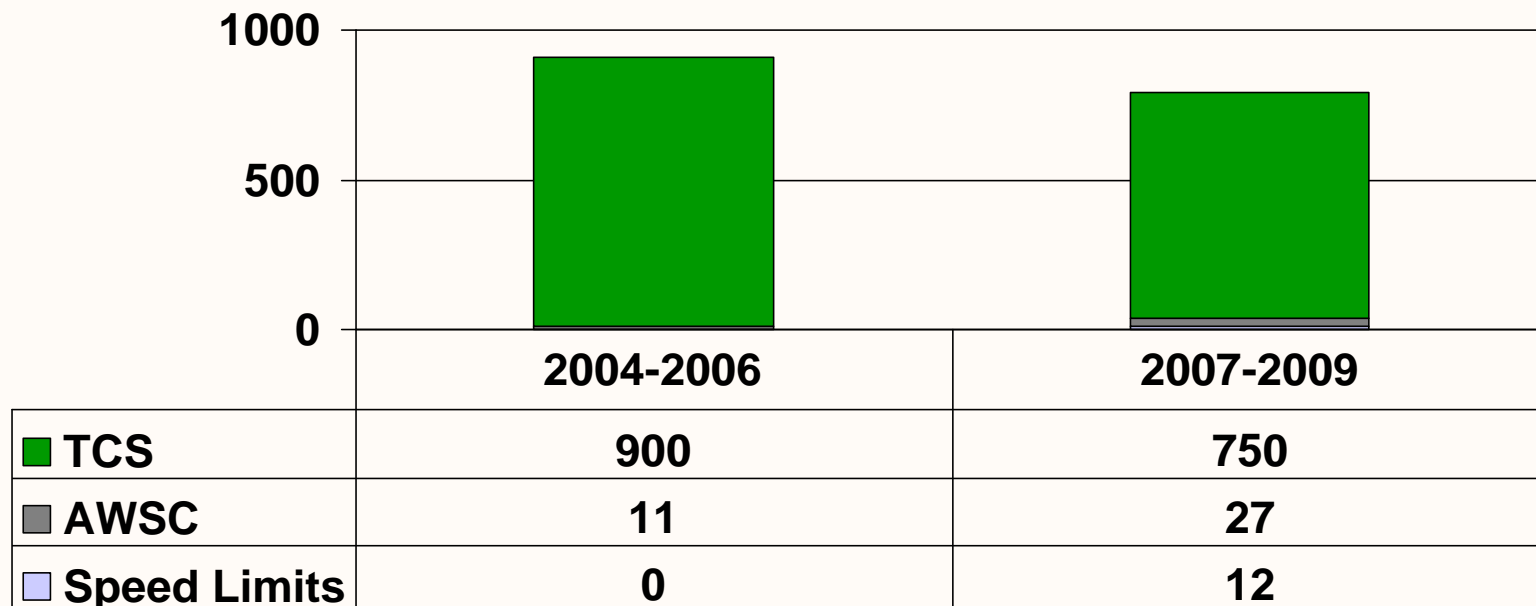
TCD Decisions
Budget Impacts

- Speed reduction over-turns are new for current SCC session but relatively minor cost
- AWSC over-turns are up 59% but relatively minor cost
- TCS over-turns decreasing (down 20%) but still highest cost

Annual Capital Costs ($Thousands)

2, 1%

6.3, 2%

- Speed Limits
- AWSC
- TCS

283, 97%

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TCD Decisions
Need for Staff Reports

- City Staff:
  - must provide professional and sound technical reports as per City Policy
  - while providing client service to Councillors
- Need to manage impacts of potential over-turn issues
  - mitigate repercussions of over-turns
  - facilitate benefits of over-turns

TCD Decisions
Need for Staff Reports

- Repercussions of over-turns of staff negative recommendations:
  - unintended safety hazards
  - environmental impacts
  - community backlash to installation of unwarranted TCD's difficult to rationalise
  - budget impacts
    - front-end capital costs
    - ongoing maintenance
  - potential legal liability for not being consistent with policy and practice

TCD Decisions
Need for Staff Reports

- Repercussions - continued:
  - Due Process (motions to over-turn staff memoranda without a negative report to SCC)
    - new business Motions can be inaccurate and not fully informed
    - requests for "walk-on" reports do not provide enough time to research impacts and draft best staff reports
    - new business Motions and "walk-ons" do not provide full Public Notice via Main Agenda – inconsistent with City policies on open and transparent governance
  - requests to report to following SCC do not provide enough time for staff research and reporting

TCD Decisions
Need for Staff Reports

- Benefits of staff reports:
  - Councillors can properly take community issues to SCC/City Council for decision making beyond technical policies
  - Due Process mitigation
    - negative reports prepared for regular Agenda still provide full and accurate information for decision making with Public Notice - in the Public Interest
    - if Motion made to report to an upcoming Community Council, staff need at least two cycles for complete and accurate reporting

TCD Decisions
Need for Staff Reports

- Emerging "Options" report format
  - gives diverse choices for SCC to choose from due to different conflicting issues
  - useful where negative or "do nothing" recommendation is not technically correct
  - also for multiple positive recommendation possibilities
  - can be used to table political choices while maintaining staff integrity
  - SCC needs to make final decision – default is to receive for information if no decision

TCD Decisions
Managing Over-turns

- Three types of negative reports
  - strong
  - neutral
  - friendly

TCD Decisions
Managing Over-turns

- Strong negative report
    - outright negative recommendation due to serious safety concerns

- Neutral negative report
    - negative recommendation on policy grounds and no public benefits

TCD Decisions
Managing Over-turns

- Friendly negative report
  - technical negative recommendation on policy grounds but there are public benefits
  - TCD is feasible if warranted in future
  - provides other needed benefits consistent with City Policy (example - pedestrian connectivity at pathways)
  - over-turn not necessarily direct safety hazard

TCD Decisions
Managing Over-turns

- Budget and environmental impacts remain with over-turns
  - budget impacts are clearly indicated in Financial Impact statement
  - environmental impacts can be provided in body of report
- Editorial comments in reports can indicate extent negative over-turns can be tolerated in the public interest

TCD Decisions
Managing Over-turns

- Staff can facilitate constructive negative reports at Councillor's request:
  - for SCC to debate and confirm that hazardous TCD's are not approved (hostile negative reports), or
  - to facilitate Councillor's needs to table issues that may not necessary meet policy but provide other community benefits while not being hazardous (neutral and friendly negative reports)

TCD Decisions
Managing Over-turns

- Staff would still like to discourage negative reports that are simply to be adopted without intent to over-turn
  - not constructive for public interest
  - strain on staff resources to generate such reports

TCD Decisions
Managing Over-turns

- Reversals of recommendations in previous reports
    - original report can be re-opened to modify recommendation via a Motion
    - best to have Motion to bring old report back to next SCC meeting
    - avoids rewriting reports already tabled
    - only feasible for reports tabled during current SCC session
    - should only be done for reports no more than two-years old

TCD Decisions Summary

- Compare history of Scarborough Community Council over-turns of negative staff recommendations between last two SCC sessions

- Compare capital costs of TCD's installed as result of SCC over-turns

- Need for staff reports

- Managing over-turns

TCD Decisions
Scarborough District

Thank You!