



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Requested Speed Limit Reduction – Oriole Parkway

Date:	December 2, 2014
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Transportation Services, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	St. Paul's, Ward 22
Reference Number:	Ts2014191te.top.doc

SUMMARY

Toronto and East York Community Council at its meeting on August 12, 2014, directed Transportation Services to report back to Council with any regulation changes, improvements to road design, or road design options that could be considered on Oriole Parkway as a measure to potentially reduce the speed of traffic and make viable the reduction of the speed limit to 40 km/h.

As the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates bus service on this section of Oriole Parkway, City Council approval of this report is required.

RECOMMENDATION

Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council approve the reduction of the speed limit from 50 km/h 40 km/h on Oriole Parkway, between Lonsdale Road and Oxtan Avenue in conjunction with the implementation of painted curb lane edge lines and the corresponding reduction of the northbound/southbound lane widths.
2. City Council approve the reduction of the speed limit from 50 km/h 40 km/h on Lonsdale Road, between Avenue Road and Oriole Parkway.

Financial Impact

Funds to undertake the necessary pavement marking adjustments in the estimated amount of \$2,000.00 are contained within Transportation Services 2015 Interim Operating Budget.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

As the result of a Motion from Ward 22 Councillor Josh Matlow, Toronto and East York Community Council, at its meeting on August 12, 2014, directed Transportation Services to report on any viable options, such as regulation changes, road design, or streetscaping options on Oriole Parkway, from Lonsdale Road to Chaplin Crescent, that could used to reduce motorists speeds and facilitate the introduction of 40 km/h maximum speed limit. (Item TE34.196)

COMMENTS

Oriole Parkway, between Lonsdale Road and Oxton Avenue, is classified as a major arterial roadway that operates with a daily two-way traffic volume of approximately 24,000 vehicles, on a variable pavement width between 16.4 and 17.7 metres and with a maximum speed limit of 50 km/h. On the section of Oriole Parkway, between Oxton Avenue and Eglinton Avenue West, the roadway currently operates with a maximum speed limit of 40 km/h. Traffic control signals are provided on Oriole Parkway, between Lonsdale Road and Oxton Avenue, at both Gormley Avenue and at Kilbarry Road. TTC bus service is provided in both directions. The following parking regulations are in operation on the subject section of Oriole Parkway.

East Side

- Stopping is prohibited from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.
- Parking is prohibited at anytime.

West Side

- Stopping is prohibited from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Monday to Friday.
- Parking is prohibited at anytime.

On February 29, 2000, Toronto City Council adopted a Road Classification System and determined that the minimum speed limit on major arterial roads would be 50 - 60 km/h. The subject section of Oriole Parkway is classified as a major arterial roadway, therefore the established City Council adopted warrants justifying a 40 km/h speed limit would not be applicable in this case.

In reviewing a request to reduce the maximum speed limit of a roadway, it is necessary to review the physical, environmental and operational characteristics of a roadway to determine if a speed limit reduction would be warranted, and if implemented, adhered to. The principal influence on the operating speed of any roadway is the road width. If a roadway is relatively wide, then the simple act of reducing the speed limit and installing signs will have a very minor effect in the reduction of motorist's speeds.

Experience has shown that the majority of motorists tend to travel at speeds dictated by the physical characteristics of a roadway and the surrounding environment, rather than simply by signage indicating the legally prescribed speed limit. The current speed limit of 50 km/h is appropriate for Oriole Parkway under its current configuration, given its road width, lane configurations, parking regulations, and design. In this regard, we would anticipate that a lower

speed limit would not have a positive impact on actual operating speeds unless strictly enforced. In fact, there is a concern that road safety could actually be compromised, as an artificially low speed limit could encourage a larger range of speeds (the difference between the lowest and highest speeds on a roadway) which is potentially even more problematic than a higher speed profile that is more consistent.

In regard to concerns about the speed of traffic on Oriole Parkway, we undertook speed and volume counts on the roadway over a three-day period ending April 24, 2014. The results of our studies indicated that motorists on Oriole Parkway travel at an 85th percentile speed of 60 km/h, and that the daily two-way traffic volume is approximately 24,000 vehicles. Additionally, the average speed of traffic on Oriole Parkway is 51 km/h.

A review of the Toronto Police Service collision records over a three-year period ending October 1, 2013, indicated that 16 reported collisions occurred on Oriole Parkway, between Lonsdale Road and Oxtown Avenue. Of these, only one collision could be directly attributable to speeding. This collision involved a motorist who was travelling too fast while undertaking the turn from eastbound Lonsdale Road to northbound Oriole Parkway. The driver applied the brakes hard while in the curve, started sliding and over-steered to compensate, before losing control and sliding into a retaining wall and a utility pole in the vicinity of No. 15 Oriole Parkway.

As noted above, the driving environment has a major impact on what motorists perceive to be reasonable speed limit restrictions, therefore the type of road, the level of flanking development, lane width, the presence of sidewalks/pedestrian activity and other physical factors will influence driver speeds and compliance with the posted regulations. With regard to flanking development, the east side of this section of Oriole Parkway is bordered by single family homes, while the west side is flanked by the fenced-in grounds of Upper Canada College, which offers no pedestrian access. As such, there is no sidewalk on the west side of Oriole Parkway, between Lonsdale Road and Kilbarry Road, except for the section located between a point approximately 7 metres north of Duggan Avenue and a point approximately 15 metres north of Gormley Avenue. As there is no built-up development, or any pedestrian generators, there is no reason to consider the installation of a sidewalk on the remainder of the west side of Oriole Parkway, between Lonsdale Road and Kilbarry Road.

In reviewing the current lane widths on Oriole Parkway, between Lonsdale Road and Oxtown Avenue, they could be considered generous, but not uncharacteristic of many other major arterial roadways that operate with TTC service. However, as the City of Toronto is now using new guidelines designed to reduce lane widths where feasible, we have proposed a new pavement marking plan for this section of Oriole Parkway, as a means to slow down traffic speeds. Through our proposed plan, as shown in attached drawing No. 421G-1577, the overall travelled portion of the roadway would be reduced by the creation of edge lines, which would be painted approximately 1.5 metres from each of the northbound/southbound curb edges. Correspondingly, each of the northbound and southbound lane widths would be reduced down to the minimum recommended width, in consideration of the existing road usage and operation.

Another option that was also considered on this section of Oriole Parkway, as a means to slow traffic to facilitate a speed limit reduction, was the potential of installing bicycle lanes on Oriole Parkway. However, as only separated bicycle lanes would meet our recommendation on this heavily travelled roadway, the overall width of Oriole Parkway is not available to provide separated (buffered) bicycle lanes without losing a traffic lane.

In conclusion, although a lower 40 km/h speed limit is not warranted on this section of Oriole Parkway under its current lane configuration design, Transportation Services staff could support the introduction of a 40 km/h speed limit on Oriole Parkway, between Lonsdale Road and Oxtan Avenue, in conjunction with the implementation of painted curb lane edge lines and the corresponding reduction of the northbound/southbound lane widths. The implementation of edge lines on other roadways within the city have been proven effective in reducing traffic speeds.

Additionally, it is recommended that the maximum speed limit in operation on Lonsdale Road, between Avenue Road and Oriole Parkway, be reduced from 50 km/h to 40 km/h. Being that a 40 km/h speed limit currently operates on the adjacent flanking spans of this roadway and because this short span of roadway is mainly used a gateway between Avenue Road and Oriole Parkway, it would be practical for this block of Lonsdale Road to also be operating with a 40km/h speed limit. The speed limit reduction would also be consistent with the existing 40 km/h speed limit on Oriole Parkway, between Oxtan Avenue and Eglinton Avenue West.

CONTACT

Randy Hillis, Engineering Technologist
Toronto East York District, Transportation Services
Tel: 416-338-5430; Fax: 416-338-1920;
Email: rhillis@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Kyp Perikleous,
Director, Toronto and East York District

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – Drawing No. 421G- 1577, dated November 2014

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