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

Transportation Services staff have reviewed the need for traffic calming on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, to address residents' concerns with the speed of traffic. Our assessment indicates the criteria as set out in the traffic calming policy has not been satisfied. Therefore, speed humps should not be installed on Benson Avenue at this time.

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

1. Traffic calming not be installed 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, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, would be beneficial, the following financial impact will result:

The estimated cost for installing three speed humps would be $9,000.00. Funds in the amount of $200,000.00 that were allocated in the Transportation Services 2012 Capital Budget have been fully utilized. As a result, speed humps on Benson Avenue would be installed in 2013 at the earliest as their installation would be subject to competing priorities and funding availability.
ISSUE BACKGROUND
Transportation Services staff reviewed the need for traffic calming on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, in response to a residents’ petition for speed humps. Councillor Joe Mihevc has requested staff submit a report on the results of this review to Toronto and East York Community Council.

This section of Benson Avenue was previously reviewed in 2008. At that time, the results of a speed and volume survey revealed that speed humps were not technically warranted. Notwithstanding the results of the study, we were requested to proceed with the request and report the results of that study to Toronto and East York Community Council.

At its meeting of September 9, 2008, Toronto and East York Community council adopted the alternate recommendations contained in our report dated August 5, 2008 and in doing so, endorsed the installation of speed humps on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street subject to a favourable poll of residents (Item No. TE18.80).

In this regard, 74 ballots were mailed out on October 27, 2008 with the last date for filing a response being November 25, 2008. There were 3 ballots returned by the post office. The traffic calming policy for the City of Toronto stipulates that in order to implement a traffic calming plan at least 50 percent plus one of the affected households must respond to the poll, and a minimum of 60 percent of the valid responses must indicate support of the proposal. The total number of eligible ballots (total polled minus returned by post office) was 71. Of these, 35 (49 percent) responded to the poll, but one of the ballots was spoiled. Of the valid responses, 18 (53 percent) were in favour and 16 (47 percent) were opposed to the installation of speed humps on the subject section of Benson Avenue. Accordingly, the polling results did not obtain the minimum response level as set out in the traffic calming policy noted above and no further action was required at that time.

Further, the policy also stipulates that when a poll does not meet the criteria, another poll cannot be conducted again for a two-year period following the closing date of the poll (November 25, 2010).

COMMENTS
Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, is a local road operating two-way (east/west) with a maximum speed limit of 50 km/h and a pavement width of approximately 8.5 metres. Sidewalks exist on both sides of the roadway. The TTC does not operate a service on this section of Benson Avenue.

Analysis
Vehicle speeds and traffic volumes are the prime criteria for installing traffic calming devices. 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 all the criteria for installing traffic-calming devices based on the updated study conducted this year. Specifically, the operating speed of 43 km/h is below the minimum of 10 km/h over the existing posted speed limit required in the traffic calming policy and the average speed recorded was 33 km/hr, which is below the maximum 50 km/h speed limit. Accordingly, installing speed humps on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, is not technically warranted, nor recommended.

The results of the speed and volume survey noted above are similar to those obtained in 2008. At that time, the 85th percentile was 44 km/h and the average speed recorded was 35 km/h. These figures are in keeping with the latest results.

A review of the Toronto Police Service collision records for the three-year period ending May 31, 2012, did not reveal any reported collisions on the subject section of Benson Avenue.

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. Polling Registry Services poll eligible householders on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, to determine whether residents support the installation, 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; and
   b. Transportation Services take the necessary actions to reduce the speed limit from 50 km/h to 30 km/h on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, when the speed humps are installed.

**Conduct Poll**

As noted above, 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 request a poll of eligible residents on Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street.
Traffic Calming – 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. Benson Avenue, between Wychwood Avenue and Christie Street, scored 18 ranking 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. Installation of speed humps will have minimal effect on winter services, street cleaning and garbage collection.

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. A copy of this report will be sent to the emergency services requesting their comments on this proposal.

**CONTACT**

Teresa Carmichael, Transportation Technologist
Traffic Operations, Toronto and East York District
Telephone: 416-338-5429
Fax: 416-392-1920
e-mail: tcarmich@toronto.ca

**SIGNATURE**

Jacqueline White, P.Eng.
Acting Director, Transportation Services
Toronto and East York District

**LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

(1) Drawing No. 421F-9362, dated July 2008
(2) Appendix A – Table 1: Traffic Calming Warrant Criteria