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February 3, 2014

## COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT ES2014-04

TO: Committee of the Whole

SUBJECT: Proposed Sidewalk – Second Street  
File No.: T04-2014-06 – 2014 Road Rehabilitation

ORIGIN: Director of Engineering Services

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### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT Community Services Report – ES2014-04, dated February 3, 2014 regarding a Proposed Sidewalk on Second Street be received and the following recommendation be adopted:**

- 1. THAT a sidewalk not be constructed on Second Street in accordance with the Town of Newmarket Sidewalk Installation Policy (PWES 1-01).**

### COMMENTS

At its regular meeting of Monday July 18, 2005, Council adopted the Sidewalk Installation Policy, PWES 1-01. This policy was established to enhance pedestrian safety, to provide links between existing sidewalks and to promote safe routes for pedestrian traffic on streets that feed local school sites, public parks and recreation facilities. Since that time, the Province enacted the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) with the goal of making Ontario fully accessible by January 1, 2025. As part of the AODA, the "Built Environment Standards", which provide construction standards to ensure accessibility, are being developed and are expected to be in effect in 2015.

An important function of the street right-of-way is to safely accommodate pedestrians. Increased walking is healthy, environmentally friendly and reduces dependency on the automobile. Opportunities for safe walking leads to improved health, reduced greenhouse gas emissions from single occupancy vehicles and an enhanced community atmosphere. It is also known that walking promotes socializing in the community and it leads to opportunities for recreation, relaxation, independence and enjoyment of leisure time. The Town of Newmarket's Official Plan also supports the Town's policy for sidewalk and lists a number of benefits that it can provide.

In accordance with the Sidewalk Installation Policy, the Town of Newmarket endeavors to include the construction of sidewalks as part of any road rehabilitation or road reconstruction project. However, there are certain rare instances where constructing a sidewalk is not advisable due to safety concerns related to narrow roadway widths, steep slope gradients and general conditions of the site. This is the case with Second Street, as outlined in this report.

Second Street between Prospect Street and Cotter Street is scheduled for reconstruction in 2014 and has been included as part of the 2014 Road Rehabilitation program. Although Second Street meets some of the criteria for the installation of a sidewalk, not all criteria are met and there are major concerns related to safety and physical placement that make a sidewalk unfeasible in this location. The following reasons, as generally set out in clause 11 of the policy, apply:

- i) Insufficient Road Allowance: There is insufficient road allowance on Second Street to accommodate a sidewalk. The right-of-way width varies between 20.08 metres down to only 12.47 metres (in front of 330 Second Street). The Town's current standard for two-way traffic is a minimum of 18 metres for local road right-of-ways. This is not currently being met along the full length of Second Street, even without a sidewalk. If a sidewalk were to be forced within this narrow right-of-way, the travelled portion of the road would no longer be sufficient to accommodate two lanes of traffic.
- ii) Severe Geometrics or Grading Issues: There are two separate issues regarding grading that preclude the construction of a sidewalk:
  - a. Grade along the west side of Second Street: The situation above is exacerbated by the hazardous topography, which slopes steeply away from the road at a sharp angle on the West side. The severe slope abuts onto private properties where homes are located at an elevation that is considerably below the road grade. At one time, there was a stairway to divert pedestrians from Second Street onto Cotter Street below. The stairway was used mostly by students walking to Newmarket High School, which has since then closed its doors. The stairway, which was in disrepair, was therefore removed and it is not recommended that it be replaced as a result of the maintenance required and less usage due to the school closure.
  - b. Grade along Second Street Itself: In addition to the grade along the west side of the road, there is also a severe grading issue along the roadway itself. The existing road grade on a portion of Second Street is in excess of 17%. To ensure the safety of users, the current Town standard specifies a maximum slope of 8% for sidewalk. Constructing a sidewalk with a slope in excess of 8% will impede safety and will increase the Town's risk in terms of liability should a pedestrian slip and fall or should a mobility device such as a wheel chair lose control.

- iii) Excessive Costs: Installing a sidewalk in such adverse slope conditions would require a massive retaining wall along the west side of the road and additional safety considerations such as railings, resulting in large cost increases that cannot be accommodated with the present budget. Although such a wall could address the steep slope condition along the west side of the road, it still would not address the 17% grade on the Second Street roadway, resulting in an unsafe sidewalk that is not built according to our Town standard.
- iv) Other Consideration: If a sidewalk is constructed on Second Street, the reduced width would no longer support two-way traffic. Should the roadway be designated as one-way either in the Northbound or Southbound direction, this would trigger a Schedule 'B' Environmental Assessment under the Class Environmental Assessment Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.18. This would delay the project considerably to the point where construction would have to be delayed to 2015.

#### **CONSULTATION**

Not applicable at this time.

#### **BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES**

Not applicable at this time.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS**

No impact to current staffing levels.

#### **IMPACT ON BUDGET**

##### Capital Budget

Not installing a sidewalk on Second Street would result in a considerable cost savings the amount of which is undetermined at this time.

##### Operating Budget (Current and Future)

Annual winter sidewalk maintenance service costs for the additional proposed curb face sidewalks will be included as sidewalk growth related items and form part of the annual sidewalk maintenance program performed by Public Works Services.

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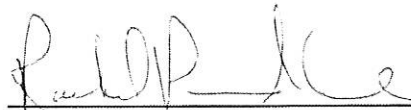
**CONTACT**

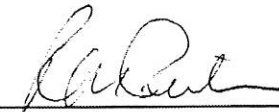
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