



Town of Newmarket
395 Mulock Drive P.O. Box 328,
Newmarket, Ontario, L3Y 4X7

Email: info@newmarket.ca | Website: newmarket.ca | Phone: 905-895-5193

Simcoe Street Traffic Review Staff Report to Council

Report Number: 2021-04

Department(s): Engineering Services

Author(s): M. Kryzanowski, Manager, Transportation Services

Meeting Date: February 1, 2021

Recommendations

1. That the report entitled Simcoe Street Traffic Review dated February 1, 2021 be received; and,
2. That the solar radar display board be deployed on Simcoe Street; and,
3. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Purpose

The Town received a petition from residents within the portion of Simcoe Street located between Main Street and Niagara Street requesting speed mitigation in the form of: speed humps, rumble strips, speed display boards and/or bollards. The purpose of this report is to outline the staff review and present the findings related to this request.

Background

At the regular Council meeting of September 9, 2019, the Town received a petition from 18 of 27 households on the street (67 percent of households), requesting speed mitigation using four different measures as noted above for the section of Simcoe Street between Main Street and Niagara Street. This is a one-way street that is westbound.

Town Council, as per the approved policy, referred the matter to staff for review and recommendations. Early snowfalls in 2019, followed by the significant effects of the Pandemic restrictions on traffic volumes in 2020 due to lockdowns, school closures and

residents working from home, the traffic counts planned for this location could not be carried out until late in 2020. This created the unusually long delay in reporting.

Discussion

Town staff reviewed the speed mitigation request in accordance with the Town-wide Mitigation Strategy (TWMS). The Town does not support rumble strips in residential communities due to the noise they create, so this measure was removed from the review.

It was found that, despite the effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on traffic volumes and patterns earlier in 2020, traffic counts have since returned to what was representative of general traffic trends before the pandemic on most streets. More specifically, studies done by Transportation Services Staff showed that traffic volumes decreased by 30 to 40% in March/ April, but have since recovered to near normal levels. It was also found that speeds have remained consistent, with no noticeable increase or decrease as a result of the pandemic situation.

The following table outlines the data collected on Simcoe Street for 2020:

SIMCOE ST (July, 2020)	WB (ONE-WAY STREET)		
	AVG. SPEED	OP. SPEED	ADT
NIAGARA ST & MAIN ST S	29.8	39.4	235

The Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volume measured on Simcoe Street is low. That is to be expected for this one-way residential street. The average and operating speeds are also low, and both are below the posted speed limit. A review of the speed profile was undertaken to determine if speeding was occurring at specific times of the day. Generally, motorists travelling above 50 km/h on local roads account for only 1% of the total volume and can be found at varying times of the day and night, with no specific pattern.

A calculation using the industry standard for speed hump design shows that the addition of speed humps would produce speeds of 45 km/h. This number has been confirmed in the field though follow-up studies done by Town Staff on the Town's existing speed humps. Since the average and operating speeds on Simcoe Street are already well below 45 km/h, the addition of speed humps would not have any effect on lowering speeds any further than the current speeds. To the contrary, the addition of speed humps could cause unintended issues related to drivers increasing their speeds between speed humps in order to catch up on perceived lost time. Therefore, speed humps are not recommended at this location at this time.

The Town's bollard program has been operating on all types of streets, but not one-way streets like Simcoe Street. Similar to speed humps, the bollard program is designed to help reduce speeds to the posted levels, but because the current operating speed is below the posted speed limit, the bollards would not help. Furthermore, the fact that there is on-street parking on Simcoe Street would make it very difficult to place the bollards in appropriate locations.

The Town can install a solar speed display sign on Simcoe Street to inform motorists of their speed. The solar speed display signs have proven to be an effective way to reduce speeds, and the Simcoe Street location will be added to the Ward 5 board rotation schedule.

Conclusion

It is recommended that the solar speed display sign be deployed on Simcoe Street as part of the Ward 5 rotation.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

This review addresses the Council Strategic Pillar entitled "Safe Transportation (Streets)". More specifically, the project addresses the following priorities under the "Safe Transportation (Streets)" Strategic Pillar:

- ii) Continue to implement the traffic mitigation strategy and Active Transportation Plan and explore/advance an off-road Mulock multi-use path;
- v) Develop a 'complete street' design and construction/reconstruction methodology to support ongoing safe street initiatives and continue to explore design options related to speed reduction, where appropriate.

Consultation

The Town received a petition from 18 households within a community of 27 households (about 67%) on Simcoe Street. This satisfies the minimum amount required for Staff to undertake a review, as per the Council-approved Public Consultation and Support Policy.

The petition was supplemented with a letter from the Town, dated November 26, 2019 to confirm the residents' interest in the petition and to solicit their comments and input, as per the Town's TWMS.

All households within the study area will receive a copy of this report and a notice indicating the date and time of the Committee of the Whole at which the matter will be heard. Residents who wish to address the Committee will have the opportunity to do so at that time.

Human Resource Considerations

None.

Budget Impact

None.

Attachments

None.

Approval

Rachel Prudhomme, M.Sc., P.Eng.,
Director, Engineering Services

Peter Noehammer, P.Eng.,
Commissioner, Development & Infrastructure Services

Contact

For more information on this report, please contact Mark Kryzanowski, Manager, Transportation Services, at 905-953-5300, extension. 2508.