

# The Corporation of the Town of Lakeshore

## Report to Council

### Engineering & Infrastructure Services

### Public Works



**To:** Mayor & Members of Council

**From:** Nelson Cavacas, Director, Engineering & Infrastructure Services

**Date:** February 20, 2020

**Subject:** Policy for Traffic Calming Measures

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### Recommendation

Council adopt the Traffic Calming Measures Petition Policy.

### Background

Council adopted the following resolution at its February 20, 2018 meeting:

*That a report be provided on a policy regarding traffic calming measures currently in place for Council consideration.*

### Comments

The Town periodically receives complaints regarding speeding on specific urban and rural roads. While some residents perceive they already have the solutions to traffic issues in their neighbourhood, studies across North America have shown that using the wrong tool to address a traffic issue not only does not solve the problem, but may result in creating additional safety issues in the area. As an example requests are occasionally received for stop signs to prohibit or eliminate speeding concerns. However, it is important to note that stop signs are implemented for stop control treatments at intersections and are not speed control applications under sound traffic engineering principles.

### Traffic Calming Purpose

The primary purpose of traffic calming is to restore streets to their intended function. The intended function of a street is to provide the safe movement of a multi-modal transportation network for all users (pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles). The aim of traffic calming is to employ measures that reduce high traffic speeds within residential neighbourhoods to improve conditions for area residents and the safety of multi-modal users (pedestrians and cyclists).

There has been a significant amount of knowledge gained by many municipalities through the implementation of successful projects to determine what traffic calming measures work and which traffic calming measures are not effective. As such, the following are measures that are not effective and commonly mistaken for being traffic calming tools:

- 1) all way stop
- 2) 40 km/hr reduced speed zone
- 3) children at play signs
- 4) rumble strips
- 5) speed bumps

There are two types of Traffic Calming categories typically employed by some municipalities as listed below:

- 1) Passive measures, i.e. line markings, signage and/or driver feedback boards
- 2) Physical measures, i.e. intrusive treatments that modify the shape and/or form of the travel lanes making it uncomfortable for drivers to attain high speeds.

Passive traffic calming treatments are simple modifications in comparison to physical treatments. Passive modifications are intended to visually reduce effective lane width for a motorist and in some circumstances re-allocate portion of the road to bicycle lanes, adding on-street parking or the use of driver feedback boards such as signs that flash speed of approaching vehicle and/or display messages to inform the driver. These treatments in some applications have proven to be capable of reducing 85th percentile operating speeds by up to 5 km/hr. Passive treatments are typically applied uniformly over the entire road section, unlike physical measures which are best described as spot treatments.

Physical traffic calming treatments fall into three categories of either vertical deflections, horizontal deflections and physical obstructions.

### Town's Current Traffic Calming Measures

Currently, speeding complaints are typically addressed through enforcement with policing efforts. However, if problems persist, the following added measures are employed:

- Placement of speed trailer to alert drivers when they are speeding (typically for a minimum duration of one week or sometimes longer)
- Installation of speed limit signs if street is not currently posted

Further to the initial measures of enforcement and deployment of radar speed trailers in areas of public concern, the Town has employed occasionally passive traffic calming measures (signage and/or pavement markings) along with the completion of traffic assessments of speed profiles and characteristics on roads requested by the public and/or as directed by Council. These current measures are completed on an ad hoc manner by reviewing requests on an individual case by case basis without a formal policy or process to initiate a traffic calming review.

## Policy for Traffic Calming

A draft policy is attached for Council's consideration to formally adopt as a policy on the implementation of traffic calming measures currently in place. The draft policy provides the requirements to initiate and criteria warrants to be satisfied for implementation of passive traffic calming measures within existing residential neighbourhoods. The policy will ensure safety concerns related to speeding are handled in a fair, transparent and efficient manner.

The policy applies to local and collector roads that are assumed and maintained by the Town of Lakeshore. The policy does not apply to arterial roads or any road that has a posted speed limit above 60 km/hr which are typically associated in non-residential neighbourhoods. This policy applies to traffic calming measures currently in place as directed in Council's motion and does not apply to physical traffic calming measures such as vertical deflections, horizontal deflections or physical obstructions. Implementation of physical traffic calming measures is a contentious subject that is not always received well by the community. Physical measures also have potential implications to emergency response times and municipal operations. As such, implementation of physical measures requires an extensive public consultation process and a comprehensive traffic calming policy which the Town does not have the necessary resources to administer.

Traffic calming is a contentious subject and should be dealt with in a clear, concise and transparent process that will meet the needs and expectations of the neighbourhood residents and community. As such, property owners with concerns regarding traffic speeds on their street shall submit a petition requesting the Town to complete a traffic calming assessment.

The purpose of the petition tool is to enable Administration to assess whether or not there is neighbourhood support for the Town to initiate an investigation into the need for traffic calming on the requested roadway. This step in the process is crucial in determining the level of concern from the residents as well assist in the allocation of resources to traffic calming assessments. As such, a minimum of fifty-one percent (51%) of property owners within the impact area must indicate their approval by signing the Traffic Calming Petition. The use of petition to initiate the process is typical across several municipalities that have implemented traffic calming policies.

The signatures must come from properties with direct frontage or flankage onto the section of roadway that has been identified by the residents having speeding concerns. Each property is represented by one signature, regardless of the number of people in the household. Failure to meet the 51% support level will result in termination of the petition request.

When it is determined that there is public interest for traffic calming measures with the minimum 51% support level of properties on the requested street, the Town will conduct an initial site visit to observe the traffic activity and assess potential mitigation measures and/or the need to complete a traffic assessment for the potential deployment of passive traffic calming measures. This will include a brief preliminary assessment to determine if

the requested road meets all of the following Initial Screening Criteria for traffic calming eligibility:

- 1) Must be a local or collector roadway;
- 2) Must have a minimum 500 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT);
- 3) The posted speed limit shall not be greater than 50 km/h;
- 4) All reasonable efforts have been made to address the concerns utilizing other means including education and enforcement tools;
- 5) Roadway must be assumed and maintained by the Town of Lakeshore;
- 6) Zoning should be primarily residential in nature; and
- 7) Requested street or section of street must be a minimum of 150m in length.
- 8) The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed captured is determined to be a minimum of 10 km/hr above the posted speed.

The requested road must satisfy all 8 criteria listed above. If one or more of the 8 criteria is not satisfied in the initial screening criteria, the road will not qualify for traffic calming and a response letter will be provided to the petitioners on the results of the initial screening. Conversely, if all 8 criteria listed above are met the petitioners will be provided with a letter advising them that the road has met all 8 criteria and that the Town will complete a traffic analysis to confirm warrants for potential passive traffic calming measures.

Upon completion of the Traffic Analysis and should the findings warrant the installation of passive traffic calming measures that can be accommodated within the Town's Public Works operational budget for signs and safety devices, Administration will proceed with installation of the recommended measures. Depending on volume of annual maintenance activity for sign replacements, traffic signal repairs, etc. and time of year, the Town's Public Works operational budget for signs and safety devices can accommodate installation of most passive traffic calming measures and including potentially up to two driver feedback board signs that display speed and messages if recommended in the traffic analysis completed.

Should the petition result, at any time through the process, in implications to either completing the traffic analysis and/or implementation of the measures as to the timing and funding necessary, Administration will provide a report for Council consideration and approval.

Although, currently the traffic calming measures employed by the Town are passive measures, a more comprehensive traffic calming policy should be developed in the future to include physical measures along with a resident education component on traffic calming program principles to improve their understanding on the decision making process on the appropriate traffic calming treatments. Completion of an expanded traffic calming program and policy will be considered in conjunction with the future update to the Town's Transportation Master Plan and include implications of required staffing to administer the increased level of service associated with the implementation of a comprehensive traffic calming measures policy.

## Others Consulted

The IBI Group, Town of Leamington, and Municipality of Chatham-Kent were consulted in the preparation of this report.

## Financial Impacts

There are no financial impacts related to the recommendation of this report. Should a petition for passive traffic calming measures result in a budget implication, a report would be provided for Council consideration and approval.

**Attachment(s):** Traffic Calming Measures Petition Policy

## Report Approval Details

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|----------------------|--|
| Document Title:      | Policy for Traffic Calming Measures.docx |
| Attachments:         | - Traffic Calming Policy.03.2020.docx    |
| Final Approval Date: | Mar 5, 2020                              |

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

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