

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING ON MAY 14, 2019
FROM:	KELLY SCHERR, P. ENG, MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER
SUBJECT:	TRAFFIC CALMING PROCEDURES

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Environmental & Engineering Services and City Engineer, the Traffic Calming Practices & Procedures for Existing Neighbourhood Update **BE RECEIVED** for information.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

- Civic Works Committee — March 18, 2013 — Traffic Calming Policy
- Civic Works Committee – March 3, 2014 – London Road Safety Strategy
- Civic Works Committee – April 25, 2016 – School Zone Speed Limit Policy
- Civic Works Committee – May 9, 2017 – Vision Zero - London Road Safety Strategy

2019-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

The following report supports the Strategic Plan through the strategic focus area of “Building a Sustainable City” and “Strengthening Our Community”. Traffic calming supports Londoners moving around the city safely and easily in a manner that meets their needs by improving safety for all modes of transportation in accordance with Vision Zero principles. The procedures support Londoner’s engagement in their neighbourhoods and community.

DISCUSSION

Purpose

This report presents Committee and Council with an update on the City’s Traffic Calming Practices & Procedures document. The Traffic Calming document outlines the process for the implementation of traffic calming measures on residential streets within the City of London.

Background

In 2013, Council approved an updated Traffic Calming Policy, which at the time addressed two primary shortcomings that existed with previous guidelines; a measure of the extent of community support for traffic calming and implementation of a refined speed criterion. The main purpose of traffic calming measures is to restore the street to

its intended function in a neighbourhood.

In 2016, Council adopted the School Speed Limit Policy. The School Zone Speed Limit Policy reduces the speed limit from 50 km/h to 40 km/h in school zones on collector and local roads. Since then, posted speed limits for all school zones have been updated.

In 2017, Council adopted the Vision Zero Principles, which provide a framework to shift assumptions and thinking for City staff, partner agencies and the public. Consistent with the aspirational goal identified by Vision Zero, the London Road Safety Strategy, approved by Council in 2014, outlines a path to a safer road environment for all transportation users in London.

Every year the City receives numerous complaints or concerns from residents regarding speeding, traffic volumes and/or cut through traffic in residential areas. Staff respond by investigating the need for neighbourhood traffic calming measures to potentially mitigate these unfavourable conditions. Below is a list of historic records:

- Over 7,000 entries in the Traffic Operation Public Service (TOPS) program since 2005. TOPS is a database of operational concerns that enables staff to track submitted requests, studies and responses.
- Since 2013, when the previous update to the Traffic Calming Guidelines were introduced, Transportation staff have completed approximately 524 speed and volume studies in response to public concerns. Speed and volume studies involve the physical placement of discreet tools on the street that measure traffic volumes and speeds.
- Since 2013, Public Education & Empathy Program (PEEP) speed display boards have been temporarily deployed at more than 600 locations on city streets.
- In 2018, “Respect the Limit” campaign was launched and 2,500 lawn signs reminding drivers to slow down were distributed to the residents in six weeks.

The Traffic Calming Practices & Procedures document is the tool used by staff for reviewing, processing, and implementing traffic calming measures in order to address citizens’ concerns of traffic issues, in particular speeding, in existing residential neighbourhoods.

The document outlines a combination of technical measures and public consultation procedures. The technical measures are considered to determine a logical application of traffic calming to streets based on traffic speeds and volumes. Traffic calming measures can only make a significant positive impact if traffic speeds are at certain minimum levels. The individual human perception of the speed of a passing car can vary widely and speeds are difficult to gauge. Approximately only 5% of the hundreds of speed and volume studies noted above qualified for traffic calming based on the 2013 Traffic Calming Guidelines.

The public consultation aspects of the procedures attempt to ensure there is a broad neighbourhood desire for traffic calming. The application of traffic calming is commonly contentious after implementation. Additionally, concerns have been received from emergency service providers with respect to operational impacts and response times.

Notwithstanding the above, if a clear road safety concern is determined by City staff, measures will be taken in response to the issue outside of the traffic calming procedures.

Key Changes from Current Guidelines

Since 2013, when the last update to the Traffic Calming document was approved by Council, potential improvements to the traffic calming process have been identified based on staff experiences and Canadian and international best practices. These improvements will improve the efficient use of City resources, while responding in a timely manner to the high volume of concerns received from the public.

The following is a summary list of the key updates to the Traffic Calming Practices & Procedures:

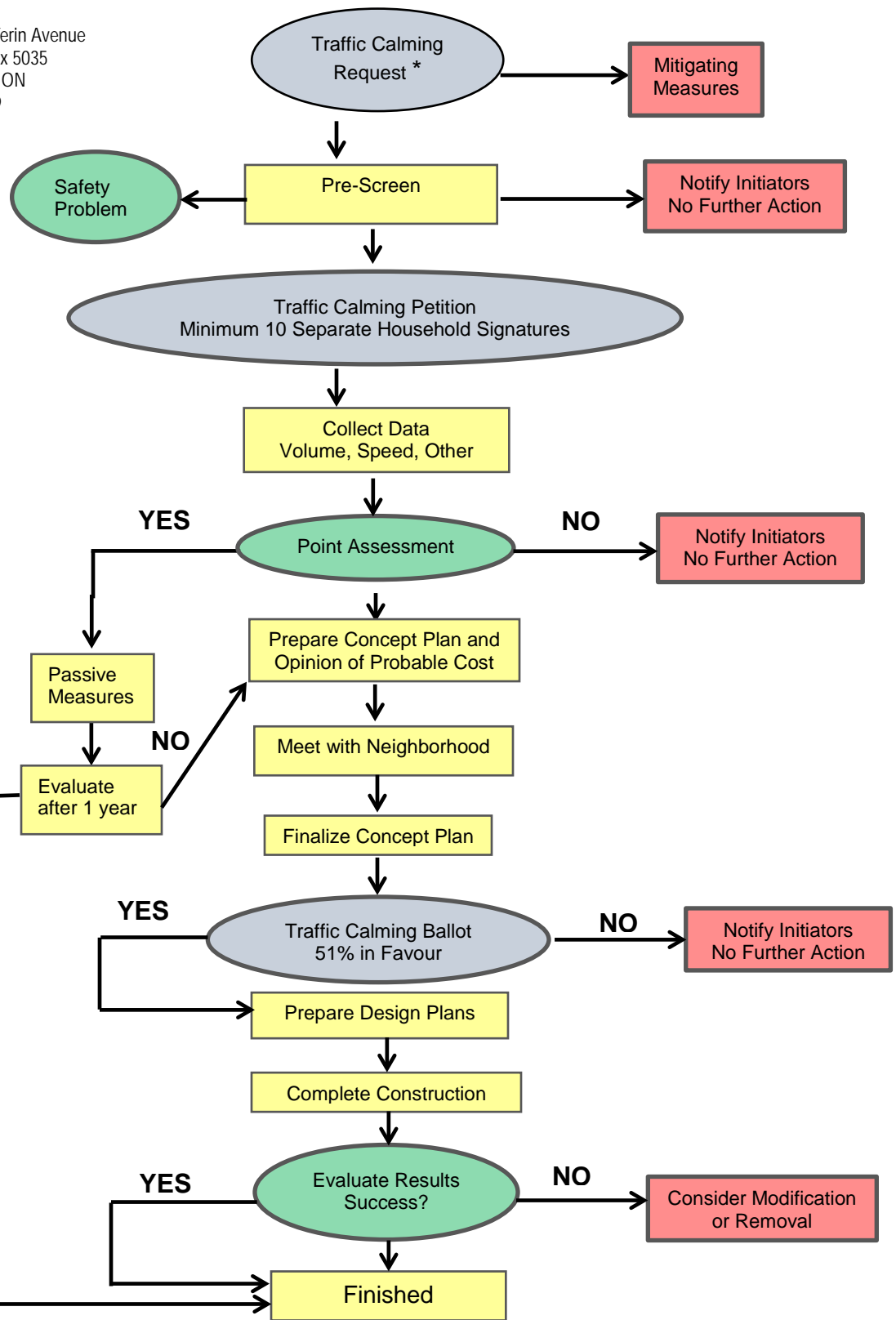
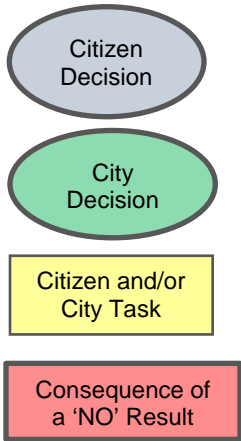
- Traffic calming measures in School Zones are not subject to the traffic calming process and staff will be able to implement traffic calming measures near schools based on traffic data and professional judgement in order to reduce speeds. This will support the lower school zone speed limits and specific concerns in these areas.
- The new process requires submission of a petition to trigger the undertaking of a traffic study. The petition must be signed by representatives from a minimum of 10 different households along the same street expressing their interest in traffic calming. This will attempt to validate individual perceptions that can be widely variable, better reflect community concerns and better allocate resources considering that speed and volume traffic studies are resource onerous. Previously, City staff sent survey forms and required 25% support from area residents after conducting a traffic study.
- Minor modifications to the traffic calming pre-screening factors are proposed, including the following:
 - The minimum street length to qualify for potential traffic calming measures was increased from 150 m to 300 m given that streets shorter than 300 m rarely experience high speeds.
 - If studied / assessed within three years from receiving a concern, a street previously not qualified for traffic calming would not be eligible to be reviewed. This time to revisit was previously one year.
 - The posted speed limit requirement was changed to “not exceed” 50 km/h. The document previously required the limit to equal 50 km/h and now includes the new 40 km/h zones.
- Updates to the road classification names to match the designations in The London Plan and Complete Streets Design Manual.
 - Neighbourhood Connectors were previously identified as Secondary and Primary Collector Streets; and,
 - Neighbourhood Streets were previously identified as Local Streets.

The updated process for a traffic calming assessment and potential project implementation is illustrated in the flow chart shown in Figure 1.



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Legend



* Schools located on Neighbourhood Connectors/Streets automatically qualify

Figure 1: Traffic Calming Process

Consultation

The draft Traffic Calming Practices & Procedures document was distributed to members of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for their review and comments. Also, staff made a presentation to TAC on November 27, 2018 to illustrate the proposed changes to the traffic calming document. Staff received few minor comments from TAC and these comments were incorporated into the document.

CONCLUSION

Every year the City receives numerous complaints or concerns from residents regarding speeding, traffic volumes and/or cut-through traffic in residential areas. The Transportation Planning & Design Division responds by assessing traffic operations, and investigating the need for neighbourhood traffic calming measures to potentially mitigate these conditions.

The traffic calming process commonly responds to the community’s perception of the operations on a street and attempts to align a street’s operations with its function in the neighbourhood. Neighbourhood buy-in is a key part of the process. The last update to the traffic calming procedures document was completed in 2013. The current update to the traffic calming process aims to better allocate resources in order to efficiently utilize staff and City resources, while responding in a timely matter to the high volume of concerns received from the public.

With the recent policy change enabling lower speed limits in school zones, design changes are sometimes necessary to achieve better levels of compliance. The recommended traffic calming procedure changes will focus resources and expedite changes in these important areas.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with the assistance of Maged Elmadhoon, M.Eng., P.Eng. Traffic and Transportation Engineer and Mark Ridley, C.E.T., Senior Transportation Technologist of the Transportation Planning & Design Division.

SUBMITTED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
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Attachment: Appendix A – Traffic Calming Practices & Procedures for Existing Neighbourhoods