

Report to Planning and Environment Committee

To: Chair and Members
Planning & Environment Committee

From: Kelly Scherr, P.Eng, MBA, FEC, Managing Director
Environmental & Engineering Services and City Engineer

Subject: Silverleaf Subdivision – Transportation Mobility and Safety
Meeting on: September 21, 2020

Recommendation

That on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Environmental and Engineering Services and City Engineer, the following report be received for information.

Executive Summary

This report examines the safety and mobility associated with the width of neighbourhood or local streets within the Silverleaf Subdivision.

Analysis

1.0 Site at a Glance

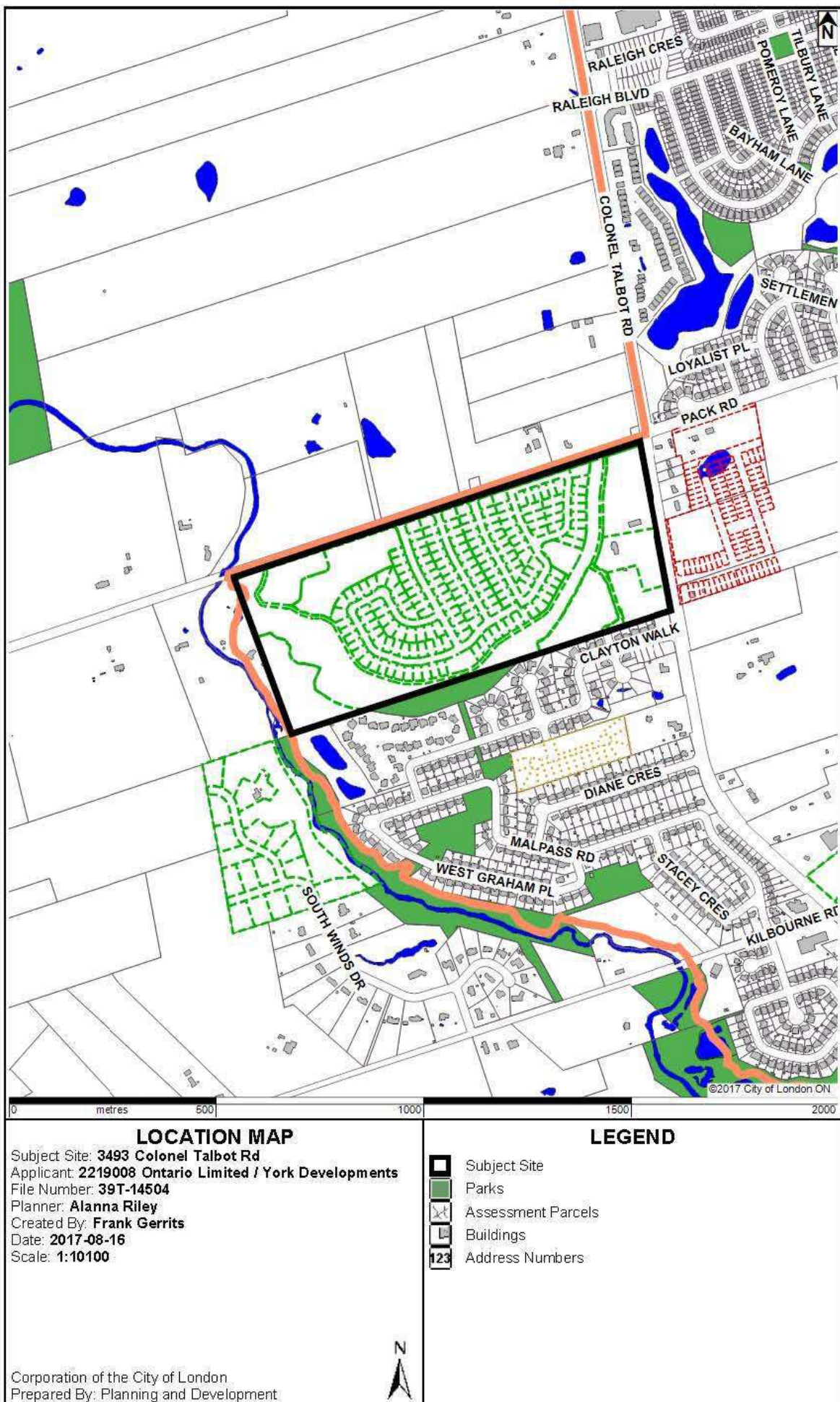
1.1 Property Description

Silverleaf Subdivision 2219008 Ontario Limited 3493 Colonel Talbot Road; 39T-14504

1.2 Previous Reports

- Planning and Environment Committee – January 18, 2016 – Public Participation Meeting, 39T-14504 Silverleaf Subdivision 2219008 Ontario Limited 3493 Colonel Talbot Road;
- Planning and Environment Committee – August 28, 2017 – Subdivision Special Provisions, 39T-14504 Silverleaf Subdivision 2219008 Ontario Limited 3493 Colonel Talbot Road;
- Civic Works Committee – August 13, 2018 – Complete Streets Design Manual;
- Civic Works Committee – March 3, 2014 – London Road Safety Strategy

1.3 Location Map of the Silverleaf Subdivision



2.0 Purpose of this Report

This report has been prepared in response to the August 25, 2020 Council Resolution regarding the Silverleaf Subdivision where Civic Administration was directed to review and report back regarding resident concerns related to “safety, road mobility, unfettered access to roads by residents and clear access for service, transportation and emergency vehicles”.

This report provides a review of safety and mobility considerations in relation to street widths in the Silverleaf subdivision. The report also provides background information regarding the transportation initiatives to promote safety, mobility and active transportation on City of London streets.

The Silverleaf Subdivision falls within the Southwest Area Plan (SWAP) and accordingly the associated policies are applicable which requires sidewalks on both sides of all streets with only a few exceptions. The policies related to the provision of sidewalks are important as they are aimed at supporting accessibility, pedestrian safety and promoting active transportation.

The scope of this report does not include a policy review of the provision of sidewalks in the Silverleaf Subdivision as this is addressed through the above referenced planning document. It is noted that the issue of providing a sidewalk on both sides of the street is independent of the street width. The provision of a second sidewalk would not change the width of the streets in this subdivision.

3.0 Relevant Background

A number of residents of the Silverleaf Subdivision located in the Lambeth area have requested that a second sidewalk on Silverleaf Chase and Silver Creek Crescent not be constructed. The residents are concerned that the second sidewalk will result in the need for additional on-street parking which will impede the movement of emergency, service, para-transit and school vehicles along their streets. They have expressed safety concerns with the narrow width of the roadway which in their opinion warrants the removal of the second sidewalk.

The Silverleaf Subdivision is currently under construction and is less than half built out at this time. The design of the subdivision street network was completed in 2017 and is consistent with the City standards at that time. A number of residents have constructed concrete driveways and landscaping which will be impacted by the installation of a second sidewalk.

This issue was presented to the Planning and Environment Committee (PEC) at the July 15, 2020 meeting through a resident petition which requested that the proposed new sidewalks not be installed. The petition identifies a number of concerns related to safety and traffic mobility associated with the narrow streets including access for garbage trucks, emergency vehicles, transit vehicles and school buses. The petition also identifies items related to the London Plan appeal and concerns related to communication with the builder and developer of the subdivision. The petition was received by the Committee with no further action recommended to be taken.

This item was reconsidered at the August 10, 2020 PEC meeting where a request was made to forgo the sidewalk on the east side of Silverleaf Chase and the inside of Silver Creek Crescent as well as restricting parking to one side of the street citing safety and mobility concerns as well as an incident where a London Fire Services vehicle had challenges travelling through the subdivision due to parked/stopped vehicles on both sides of the street.

Arising from this item, the Committee requested City Administration to review the resident concerns and report back to PEC regarding “safety, road mobility, unfettered access to roads by residents and clear access for service, transportation and emergency vehicles”. A delegation request was also granted for a representative of the Silverleaf community to speak at a future meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee when the staff report is brought forward for consideration.

On August 20, 2020 the City Clerk received further correspondence from a lawyer representing several property owners residing along Silverleaf Chase and Silver Creek Crescent requesting reconsideration of a second sidewalk along these streets. The correspondence raises concerns with the pavement width and includes a report completed by an engineering and architecture consulting firm. The engineer’s report identifies two potential options including removal of the sidewalk from one side of the street and changing the sidewalk location to the back of the curb. The report recommends removal of the sidewalk from one side of the street in order to provide additional parking in private driveways to reduce the need for on-street parking.

The August 20, 2020 correspondence was considered at the August 25, 2020 Municipal Council meeting where Council passed a resolution stating that “the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to review the concerns outlined in the resident correspondence regarding “safety, road mobility, unfettered access to roads by residents and clear access for service, transportation and emergency vehicles” and to report back addressing the concerns raised”.

This report is in response to the Council Resolution and provides a review of safety and mobility considerations in relation to street widths in the Silverleaf Subdivision. The report also provides background information regarding the transportation initiatives to promote safety, mobility and active transportation on City of London streets.

4.0 Key Issues and Considerations

In 2018, the City’s Complete Streets Design Manual was adopted as a transformative tool to guide the way streets are designed in London. The complete streets approach considers the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists and building streets that balance these needs and prioritize road safety. The London Plan, as well as the transportation master plan (TMP), Smart Moves, provide clear policy direction that the planning and design of future streets, as well as the renewal of existing streets should be supportive of all road users, and be “complete.” Furthermore, in 2017 the City of London adopted the Vision Zero principles, which are based on the notion that no loss of life as a result of traffic-related collisions is acceptable.

The City’s Complete Street Design Manual (CSDM) identifies the vision for “Neighborhood Streets and Connectors” as corridors that provide a high quality pedestrian realm, strong multi-modal connectivity, and managed motor vehicle speeds and volumes that support a high quality of life in residential neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood Streets include narrow motor vehicle travel lanes and low volumes of traffic to help manage vehicle speeds. The movement of service and emergency vehicles along these streets are important and need to be accommodated, but managing motor vehicle speeds and volumes in residential areas typically receives more emphasis on minor streets.

Research and experience from other jurisdictions has shown that the width of streets has a significant impact on the behaviour of drivers and acts as a passive traffic calming measure to reduce travel speeds on Neighbourhood Streets. The presence of on-street parking can also provide significant traffic calming benefits and assist in managing speeds in residential areas.

While the CSDM was completed in 2018, after the design of the street network in the Silverleaf subdivision, the principles and approach apply to new City streets and are

adopted to reconstruction projects across the City. Narrower streets contribute to slower traffic speeds and fewer traffic calming related complaints. The City currently expends significant resources in responding to resident concerns related to speeding and traffic calming in established neighbourhoods, typically in areas with wide streets and minimal on-street parking usage.

Street widths in new subdivisions are defined in the Design Specifications and Requirements Manual (DSRM). In 2017, when the Silverleaf subdivision streets were being designed, the DSRM identified local (Neighbourhood) street widths, ranging from 6 m to 8m. The street widths designed for Silverleaf Chase and Silver Creek Crescent are consistent with the City's design standards at the time and also reflect the current approach to the design of Neighbourhood Streets as provided in the Complete Streets Design Manual. There are a number of examples around the city where this standard has been implemented, but with a single sided sidewalk. These were applications that were approved based on the standards at the time of application.

The standard street widths provided in the DSRM are selected to accommodate fire trucks, snow plows, garbage trucks and other service vehicles on all streets. Additional pavement width is provided at 90 degree bends in the street to facilitate turning movements of larger vehicles. On-street parking on narrow neighbourhood streets does give the impression that the width is constrained resulting in lower traffic speeds and is typically considered to be an effective traffic calming measure.

During construction of new residential subdivisions, operational issues are common and do include issues with the presence of contractor and supplier trucks and vehicles parking and blocking streets and driveways. The subdivision developer has an obligation to manage these issues prior to assumption of the subdivision streets by the City. To address this issue in the Silverleaf Community, the City and developer are working cooperatively to install no-parking restrictions on one side of Silver Creek Crescent and Silverleaf Chase. This will organize on-street parking and enable access for large service and emergency vehicles and more efficient traffic movement. This restriction is typical, was anticipated and is being advanced to address the concerns raised. The supply of on-street parking is typically sufficient on neighbourhood streets with wider large frontages and longer spacing between driveways like the Silverleaf Subdivision. The bylaw amendment to support these parking restrictions will be presented to the Civic Works Committee at their September 22, 2020 meeting.

5.0 Conclusion

A number of residents in the Silverleaf Subdivision, specifically on Silverleaf Chase and Silver Creek Crescent have expressed concerns with the width of their Neighbourhood Streets and sidewalk layout related to safety, mobility, access and movement of emergency and service vehicles. Large vehicle access issues were observed due to vehicles parking on both sides of the street in this subdivision which is currently under construction.

The width of Neighbourhood Streets has a significant impact on safety and mobility. Road safety is paramount and an important part of the London Plan, the Transportation Master Plan and Vision Zero program.

The use of narrow streets helps to manage traffic speeds and volumes. The movement of emergency and service vehicles is also important and is accommodated as part of the design process however priority is given to safety through the management of vehicle speeds. The 6m street width used in the Silverleaf Subdivision on Silverleaf Chase and Silver Creek Crescent is consistent with other developments in London and can accommodate all street needs while proactively contributing to slower speeds and less future community road safety concerns. Narrow streets require organization of on-street parking; this was always anticipated and currently is underway in collaboration with the developer.

Prepared by:	GARFIELD DALES, P. ENG. DIVISION MANAGER TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & DESIGN MATT FELDBERG, MANAGER, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (SUBDIVISIONS)
Submitted by:	DOUG MACRAE, P.ENG., MPA DIRECTOR, ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION
Recommended by:	KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER
Note: The opinions contained herein are offered by a person or persons qualified to provide expert opinion. Further detail with respect to qualifications can be obtained from Development Services.	

September 14, 2020
LM\lm

Y:\Shared\implemen\DEVELOPMENT APPS\Insert Sorce)