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Transportation Services Division, City of Toronto

Gopa.pal@toronto.ca

Geoffrey.lau@toronto.ca

Sidra.Rahimzada@toronto.ca

Barbara.gray@toronto.ca

Traffic Calming – Elm Road

The South Armour Heights Ratepayers Association (“SAHRA”) is an incorporated non-profit association founded in 1988 that represents residents in the area between the 401 down to Brooke/Avenue Road over to Yonge Blvd.

Elm Road is a major secondary street running north from Lawrence up to a junction at Ridley Blvd. Sidewalks exist on both west and east sides from Lawrence to Brooke / no sidewalks exist north of Brooke up to Ridley Blvd. Many commuters turn onto Elm Road at Lawrence to avoid the traffic on Avenue Road, taking the route all the way up to Ridley and then returning to Avenue Road to access the 401. The posted speed limit is 40 km/h, which is in keeping with the other inner streets in the area.

Residents in the Elm/Dunblaine area have been expressing concern dating back to Oct, 2014 with speeding between Haddington and Joicey, sliding stops at Dunblaine and concerns re safety as there are no sidewalks. A Transportation Services request was initiated at the request of the Councillor.

We understand that there are defined criteria to determine if a road should receive speed humps:

1. There must be a desire from the community – more than 50% of affected households must sign a petition pertaining to speed humps for the street; for the application to proceed 60% of signatories must be in favour of speed humps. We believe the “affected households” in this situation means the homes on the east and west sides of Elm in the 3 blocks between Felbrigg and Joicey – not the other residents in the SAHRA area,
2. City staff examine the roadway to see if it meets safety requirements – for example, to see if there's a lack of sidewalks and what the impact would be on emergency services.
3. Technical requirements – traffic engineers determine the typical vehicular speed (the bulk of the traffic must be found to be travelling more than 10 km/h above the speed limit) and traffic volume (the area must register about 1,000 vehicles over any given 24-hour period) and what the impact will be on public transit.

To identify the existing traffic conditions, 24-hour speed and volume studies were conducted on Elm Road between Joicey Blvd and Felbrigg Avenue on Oct 16 and Dec 14, 2016. The results of the vehicle speed studies confirmed that operating speeds, the speeds at which 85% of the motorists are travelling at or below is 43 km/h and the average vehicle speeds are at or below 36 km/h.

The Report to Action dated March 29, 2017 (attached) stated that the results of the traffic calming assessment indicated that the minimum requirements of the traffic calming warrant have not been achieved and they recommended to DENY the installation of speed humps on Elm Road between Joicey Blvd and Felbrigg Avenue.

The North York Community Council chose to reject the DENY recommendation and instead directed Transportation Services to:

1. Poll eligible households on Elm Rd between Joicey Blvd and Felbrigg Ave to determine whether residents support the installation of traffic calming and to report back to the NYCC on the results.

1500 Avenue Road, PO Box 1373, Toronto, Ontario M5M 0A1

SAHRA



South Armour Heights Residents' Association

Website - sahratoronto.com

Email - sahratoronto@rogers.com

2. Develop and provide a Traffic Calming Speed Hump plan to the City Clerk, along with the poll.
3. Investigate the feasibility of reducing the speed limit to 30 km/h on Elm Rd, between Joicey and Felbrigg, and report back to NYCC with a recommendation.

Elm Rd is an inner-street used by many SAHRA residents/there are other streets with similar situations of speed and volume with no sidewalks.

SAHRA is not convinced that installing Speed Humps and/or reducing the speed limit in these specific blocks from Joicey to Felbrigg is an appropriate solution, for that area itself as well as for the *Neighbourhood*. We have the following questions/concerns:

- a) If speed humps are to be considered for this 3-block area, would other inner streets which are also being used as alternate routes for Yonge, Yonge Blvd and Avenue Road also be appropriate for speed humps?
- b) Shouldn't the study cover Ridley Blvd down to Brooke Avenue, as these streets also do not have sidewalks?
- c) What criteria would call for a 30 km/h speed limit in the specific section from Felbrigg to Joicey whereas 40km/h is the speed limit for the inner streets in this area? It is not a school area.
- d) What is the possible success rate of adherence to a 30 km/h speed limit between Felbrigg to Joicey when Lawrence up to Felbrigg (including the Brooke to Felbrigg block which has no sidewalks) and the Joicey to Ridley block (which has no sidewalks) are at 40 km/h?
- e) SAHRA feels that the speed calming measures that are adopted would need to be applied to the entire stretch of no-sidewalks area from Brooke Ave to Ridley Ave.
- f) Has the use of Speed Limit Flashing Signs been considered, rather than Speed Humps?
- g) Has the possibility of installing sidewalks from Brooke Ave to Ridley Ave been considered? If Elm Rd is a secondary north/south route for traffic diverting off Avenue Road, perhaps the appropriate safety measure is to install sidewalks. Perhaps a very expensive and likely controversial solution.
- h) There have been many reviews/articles on the pros/cons/success rate of Speed Humps. Is this really the best approach for 3 blocks within the entire Elm Rd stretch from Lawrence to Ridley? Some articles:

<http://www.radarsign.com/why-municipalities-are-moving-away-from-speed-humps/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speed_bump

<https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/globe-drive/culture/commuting/toronto-get-ready-for-even-more-speed-humps/article20332471/?ref=http://www.theglobeandmail.com&>

We would ask Transportation Services and the North York Community Council to consider these questions/concerns when they consider the best way to deal with the safety concerns on the Brooke to Ridley section of Elm Rd.

We would appreciate being advised in advance of when Transportation Services will be reporting on this issue to the North York Community Council.

Yours truly

Sheila Dunlop, Secretary

Email: Councillor C. Carmichael Greb
Ron Johnson, Bob Williams, Jim Sadler, Gary Langdon (SAHRA)

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