

Markham's Safe Streets Strategy

September 15, 2009

Development Services Committee
Engineering Department

Safe Streets Strategy - Background

- Adopted by Council on January 27, 2004
- Strategy based on three E's initiative:
 - Education
 - Enforcement
 - Engineering
- Implementation of the strategy through the Traffic Safety Committee (advisory committee)
 - Markham Councillors (Gord Landon, Valerie Burke, Logan Kanapathi, Alex Chiu)
 - York Region Police Representatives (District 2 and District 5)
 - Eight Residents (one from each ward)
 - Town Staff

Safe Streets Strategy – Current Status

- Education
 - Road Watch pilot project in 2005 – poor resident response
 - Community event promotion deferred pending volunteer support and staff resources
- Enforcement
 - York Region Police were not able to provide level of enforcement requested by Traffic Safety Committee. Enhanced enforcement stopped in February 2008
 - Photo Radar currently not permitted in Ontario
 - Red Light Cameras considered by Region of York and Markham
 - York Region Council supports the technology; has not approved funding for program
 - Estimated Annual Cost for one camera = \$335,000 start-up; \$150,000 operating/administration
 - Program is currently cost prohibitive; insufficient revenue to sustain
 - Cost and resource implications on Court Services
 - Not practical for use at Town intersections – significantly fewer collisions
- Engineering
 - Traffic calming installed on Royal Orchard, Carlton, Village Parkway, Elson, Henderson, Main Street in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008
 - Effective in reducing speeds from 4 to 8 km/hr
 - Average annual cost over the last 5 years = \$200,000
 - Public opposition to traffic calming (i.e. Carlton Road and Village Parkway)
- Traffic Safety Committee
 - Public interest in initiative has subsided
 - Last meeting January 17, 2008

Public Comments on Strategy

- Ongoing complaints about speeding and aggressive driving
- Continued lack of compliance with other rules of the road (stop signs, signal violations, yielding to pedestrians, etc.)
- More emphasis on enforcement is necessary
- Consultation process for traffic calming projects needs to be improved
- Obtaining consensus in a community for Traffic Calming is challenging
- Is Traffic Calming a good use of public funds?

Need to Update Strategy



A) Education

- Work with York Region Police to better promote Road Watch Program
- Install and rotate 4 Radar Message Boards to problem streets



B) Enforcement

- Pursue with York Region Police a dedicated police officer for speed enforcement and Highway Traffic Act compliance for Markham
- Staff provide direction to York Region Police on areas of concern and undertake Enforcement Effectiveness Studies (i.e. Speed counts)



C) Engineering

- Establish guidelines for future traffic calming (ie. Process)
- Physical traffic calming measures to be initiated by resident survey
- Establish minimum resident support required on impacted streets and broader area



D) Traffic Safety Committee

- Survey existing members re continuation of committee or establishment of resident Road Watch Committee

Financial Implications

- Town has spent an average of \$200,000 annually for Traffic Calming over the last 5 years
- In addition, at least 0.5 FTE (\$40,000) staff time per year is dedicated for Traffic Calming projects
- Town currently has \$750,000 in its 2009 Capital Budget for Safe Streets and is distributed as follows:
 - Education: \$ 100,000
 - Traffic Calming Construction: \$ 650,000
- Additional funding not requested for 2010 Capital Budget
- Opportunity for E3 savings if revised Safe Streets Strategy implemented (ie. Dedicated police enforcement vs. traffic calming)

Next Steps

- Council input/direction – September 15, 2009
- Meeting with Police Chief regarding dedicated enforcement officer and funding
- Review with Traffic Safety Committee – revised strategy and mandate
- Report back to Council in early 2010 with updated strategy and traffic calming guidelines for direction