

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Wednesday, October 13, 2021

WARD(S): 1

**TITLE: ATHABASCA COMMUNITY TRAFFIC STUDY PROGRESS
REPORT**

FROM:

Zoran Postic, Deputy City Manager, Public Works

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update for the Athabasca Community Traffic Study, as approved by Council at the June 22, 2021 meeting.

Report Highlights

- At the June 22, 2021 Council Meeting, Council directed staff to commence a neighbourhood traffic and speed management study for the Athabasca area aligned with the directions, programs and plans outlined in the MoveSmart Mobility Management Strategy (MoveSmart).
- A traffic study has been completed and has confirmed that the Provincial warrant for an all-way stop is currently not met at any of the studied intersections.
- As part of the City's standard traffic review process, an internal traffic operational review has been conducted in accordance with Provincial guidelines and has determined that there are currently no deficiencies on Athabasca Drive. A further consultant study will commence this fall to conduct a comprehensive neighbourhood traffic and speed management study, inclusive of community engagement.
- Specific measures aligned with the City's Pavement Markings and Signs program have been considered and will be implemented by November, 2021 to further raise public awareness of the presence of pedestrians and to promote walkability to the park.

Recommendations

1. That this report be received for information.

Background

The residents of the Athabasca area have raised concerns regarding traffic in their neighbourhood centering around speeding, the need for traffic calming measures, and stop signs, and have requested that a traffic study be completed.

Council provided direction to commence a neighbourhood traffic and speed management study aligning with MoveSmart.

At the Council meeting of June 22, 2021, Council directed staff to commence a neighbourhood traffic and speed management study for the Athabasca area aligned with the directions, programs and plans outlined in the MoveSmart. The recommendation also included that any improvements recommended in the study be deemed a pilot project that could potentially benefit other subdivisions in the future. Furthermore, direction included a request for York Region to install a temporary photo radar unit in this subdivision and/or surrounding vicinity as a pilot project. Details of the Council direction are outlined in Item 23, Report No. 29, of the June 22 Council Meeting.

Previous Reports/Authority

Council Meeting of June 22, 2021 – Committee of the Whole (Working Session)
Report No. 31, Item 1:

<https://pub-vaughan.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=78914>

Council Meeting of June 22, 2021 – Committee of the Whole (1) Report No. 29, Item 23:

<https://pub-vaughan.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=77772>

Council Meeting of March 10, 2021 – Committee of the Whole (Working Session)
Report No. 10, Item 1:

<https://pub-vaughan.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=63323>

Council Meeting of November 19, 2019 – Committee of the Whole (1)

Report No. 34, Item 8:

<https://pub-vaughan.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=24126>

Analysis and Options

The traffic operations review is completed, and in accordance with standard guidelines and practices, has determined that there are currently no deficiencies on Athabasca Drive.

The Athabasca area roadway network is shown in Attachment 1. The local road network has a typical roadway pavement width of 8.5 metres and the roads within this community are classified as local roads. Sidewalks are present on one side of the street on Athabasca Drive, Hunterwood Chase, and Beakes Crescent.

The following intersections within the Athabasca area have all-way stop controls in place:

- Athabasca Drive and Appalachian Way
- Athabasca Drive and Kootenay Ridge
- Hunterwood Chase and Georgia Crescent/Celeste Drive

Staff have conducted site investigations and met with area residents to get an understanding of community concerns, and to identify specific enhancements that can be considered to further raise public awareness of the presence of vulnerable road users.

A signage and pavement marking inventory for the neighbourhood has been completed.

A traffic review at selected intersections concluded that the Provincial warrant for all-way stop controls is currently not met.

In response to resident concerns, staff undertook an all-way stop control analysis at selected intersections.

The City's warrant analysis for all-way stop controls takes into consideration the minimum vehicular volumes required, accident hazards, and sight restrictions at the intersections. The warrant analysis is generally based on the thresholds established in Book 5 of the Ontario Traffic Manual.

The following locations were requested by the residents to be reviewed for all-way stop controls:

- Appalachian Way and Kootenay Ridge
- Laurentian Boulevard and Foot Hills Road
- Athabasca Drive and Hunterwood Chase – north intersection

- Athabasca Drive and Hunterwood Chase – south intersection
- Athabasca Drive and Beakes Crescent
- Athabasca Drive and Beakes Crescent/Greystone Gate
- Hunterwood Chase and Germana Place

Data was collected from September 14 to 16, 2021 to assess the feasibility of implementing all-way stop controls. A summary of study findings is summarized in the table below:

Intersection	Warrant #	Warrant Description	Study Results
Appalachian Way and Kootenay Ridge	Warrant 1	Minimum Vehicular Volumes	8%
	Warrant 2	Accident Hazards	0%
	Warrant 3	Sight Restrictions	0%
Laurentian Boulevard and Foot Hills Road	Warrant 1	Minimum Vehicular Volumes	25%
	Warrant 2	Accident Hazards	0%
	Warrant 3	Sight Restrictions	0%
Athabasca Drive and Hunterwood Chase (north intersection)	Warrant 1	Minimum Vehicular Volumes	8%
	Warrant 2	Accident Hazards	0%
	Warrant 3	Sight Restrictions	0%
Athabasca Drive and Hunterwood Chase (south intersection)	Warrant 1	Minimum Vehicular Volumes	28%
	Warrant 2	Accident Hazards	0%
	Warrant 3	Sight Restrictions	0%
Athabasca Drive and Beakes Crescent (south intersection)	Warrant 1	Minimum Vehicular Volumes	12%
	Warrant 2	Accident Hazards	0%
	Warrant 3	Sight Restrictions	0%
Athabasca Drive and Beakes Crescent/Greystone Gate	Warrant 1	Minimum Vehicular Volumes	16%
	Warrant 2	Accident Hazards	0%
	Warrant 3	Sight Restrictions	0%
Hunterwood Chase and Germana Place	Warrant 1	Minimum Vehicular Volumes	18%
	Warrant 2	Accident Hazards	0%
	Warrant 3	Sight Restrictions	0%

Based on the study findings, the intersections do not meet warrant requirements for the installation of all-way stop controls and therefore, all way stop controls are not recommended.

The Ontario Traffic Manual outlines that an all-way stop control should not be used as a speed control device. The installation of an all-way stop control when unwarranted may

result in compliance problems, and increased vehicle speeds due to the inconvenience that all-way stop controls introduce.

There are opportunities to implement specific measures that are aligned with existing municipal programs within MoveSmart along Athabasca Drive and its surrounding road network by November 2021.

The City continues to strive to raise awareness and improve public safety for all road users and to support active and sustainable transportation options. As part of this effort, the City launched MoveSmart in March 2021. MoveSmart builds upon existing municipal programs City wide, including the optimization of road delineation and pavement markings, enhanced signage and pedestrian crossings and accessibility upgrades in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. The City is seeking to implement specific measures contained in the programs within MoveSmart along Athabasca Drive and its surrounding road network. The presence of the Maple Trails Park and Nevada Park located within the Athabasca area presents an opportunity to promote walking and other forms of active transportation in the community and to further raise public awareness with respect to road safety and the presence of vulnerable road users. As such, the following signage and pavement markings are proposed to be implemented on Athabasca Drive and Hunterwood Chase:

Traffic Measures	Purpose	Anticipated Timeline
"Pedestrian Ahead" sign with "slow" tab will be installed at appropriate locations on Athabasca Drive	To provide guidance to motorists that pedestrians may be in the area.	November 2021
"Playground Ahead" sign with "slow" tab will be installed near Maple Trail Park.	To provide guidance to motorists of a park in the area.	November 2021
Speed boards have been scheduled for this Fall on Athabasca Drive near Maple Trail Park.	To serve as community education tools to remind drivers to manage their traveling speeds in compliance with the posted speed limits.	September 2021
In-road flexible sign will be installed on Athabasca Drive, west of Appalachian Way.	To raise public awareness of the speed limit when entering the subdivision.	November 2021

Traffic Measures	Purpose	Anticipated Timeline
A yellow centreline will be installed on Athabasca Drive and Hunterwood Chase.	To guide motorists and provide roadway delineation.	November 2021
All stop bars will be refreshed as part of the annual pavement marking program.	To guide motorists of the intersection control.	November 2021
The pedestrian crosswalk on Athabasca Drive at Kootenay Ridge will be enhanced with painted ladder (zebra) markings.	To facilitate pedestrians crossing to the park	November 2021

A further consultant study will commence this fall for a comprehensive neighbourhood traffic and speed management study. Community engagement will be an integral component of this study.

A consultant assignment will be undertaken for the neighbourhood traffic and speed management study for the Athabasca area. This review will determine the feasibility of introducing and designating a community-wide 40 km/h neighbourhood area in accordance with Bill 65, *amending the Highway Traffic Act* and the City’s newly developed Speed Limit Policy. The study will also seek to identify additional measures beyond those currently identified by staff that could be implemented as a pilot and then utilized for other areas in the future. A community engagement will form part of the study and it is anticipated that will be conducted in Q4 of 2021, with the overall study completion planned in Q2/Q3 2022.

Financial Impact

The capital cost associated with the signage and pavement marking installation is estimated to be \$2,800 and is supported in the approved 2021 Operating Budget.

The ongoing maintenance cost for the sign and pavement markings is estimated to be \$600.00 per annum and will be incorporated in future year Operating Budget through the budget process.

Item	Qty.	Cost	Total cost
Signage			
Warning signs	9	\$ 75 each	\$ 675
In-road flexible sign	1	\$275 each	\$ 275
Pavement Markings			
Centreline	2,500m	\$0.5/m	\$ 1,250
Stop bars and Crosswalks	30 stop bars, 1 ladder crosswalk	\$0.5/m	\$ 600
Total Cost			\$ 2,800

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

The Province allowed the operation of automated speed enforcement technology in school and community safety zones.

The Province enacted Bill 65, the *Safer School Zones Act*, 2017, to allow the operation of automated speed enforcement (ASE) technology in school and community safety zones. Currently, the Province requires that ASE offences be processed, settled, and disputed using the Provincial Offences Court system. The Region's Provincial Offences Court system has indicated that it will not be able to absorb the additional charge volume from the ASE program with current facility and judicial resources.

York Region has commenced a two-year ASE pilot project (with limited use) at selected Regional road locations.

A meeting was held with York Region to discuss the possibility of installing a temporary photo radar unit (ASE) this year in the Athabasca community subdivision and allow it to be moved every three months as a pilot project. The Region has indicated that the current mandate provided by York Region Council for the implementation of ASE only includes the installation along the Regional road network at selected locations.

Regional staff will share their data and experience with local municipalities to support them in building their respective ASE program. The Region's pilot project is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2022.

The City of Vaughan and York Region continue to advocate the Province to consider implementation of an AMPS Program for ASE to help align road safety initiatives and enforcement.

The Ontario Traffic Council (OTC) ASE Municipal Working Group (MWG) has requested the Province to allow ASE charges to be administered through an Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS), instead of through *Provincial Offences Act* Court system. AMPS is a municipally administered alternative to the Provincial Offences Court system's judicial process for matters authorized by the Province that enables a more expedient alternative to addressing by-law violation disputes. The City has enacted AMPS for parking disputes and business licensing offences. City staff will continue to work with the OTC to facilitate the development of the framework allowing ASE charges to be administered through an AMPS program. It is anticipated that this framework will be developed in 2022. City staff will also work to develop guidelines to create and operate community safety zones to facilitate the implementation of ASE in the future.

Staff will be working in collaboration with Regional staff as the Athabasca study progresses, as it relates to impacts on regional roads.

Conclusion

Residents in the Athabasca area have raised concerns related to traffic and speeding issues in their community, and they have requested that the City investigate implementing measures to address these concerns. Council directed staff, at the June 22, 2021 meeting, to commence a neighbourhood traffic and speed management study for the Athabasca area aligned with the directions, programs, and plans outlined in the MoveSmart.

A traffic review of seven key intersections within the neighbourhood has determined that none of the intersections meet the warrant criteria for the installation of all-way stop controls at this time. There are opportunities to implement specific measures along Athabasca Drive and its surrounding road network by November 2021 that are aligned with existing municipal programs associated with MoveSmart. This includes signage and pavement markings along Athabasca Drive and Hunterwood Chase.

A further consultant study will commence this Fall to complete a comprehensive neighbourhood traffic and speed management study to identify additional measures that can be considered to raise awareness and improve public safety for all road users that support active and sustainable transportation options. Community engagement will form an integral part of the study process. The final report is anticipated to be completed in Q2/Q3 2022.

For more information, please contact:

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Attachments

1. Location Map of Athabasca Community area street network

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Approved by



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