



Subject: City of Port Colborne Traffic Calming Policy

To: Council

From: Public Works Department

Report Number: 2024-44

Meeting Date: March 12, 2024

Recommendation:

That Public Works Department Report 2024-44 be received; and

That the Traffic Calming Policy attached as Appendix A of Public Works Report 2024-44 be approved.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive traffic calming policy. The goals of the policy are to monitor traffic calming measures for laneway, local, and collector roads in the City of Port Colborne, and improve public safety for all road users.

Background:

The responsibility for managing and maintaining the City's road network lies with the Public Works Department. The quality of life in neighborhoods is greatly influenced by the traffic conditions on residential streets. Excessive speeds and high traffic volumes in residential areas can pose significant safety risks for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Introducing measures to calm traffic is essential for lowering speeds and improving safety for all road users, and is particularly vital in areas with vulnerable populations, including children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.

To establish a consistent process when considering measures to improve traffic related concerns, Public Works staff retained the services of R.V. Anderson Associates (RVA) to assist with the development and implementation of a comprehensive Traffic Calming Policy.

The implementation of the policy will set a transparent and standardized process for addressing resident concerns about vehicle speeds and/or traffic volumes on neighbourhood streets. The traffic calming policy also aligns with the Niagara Region's Vision Zero Road Safety Initiative, which aims to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries; increase safe, healthy, and fair mobility; consider all active modes of transportation, such as driving, walking, and cycling; and reduce all collisions by promoting major road safety initiatives across Niagara.

Discussion:

Traffic calming is crucial to maintaining the safety and quality of life for residents and the community. Infrastructure staff have been actively pursuing measures to address traffic related concerns and enhance pedestrian safety. The proposed policy aims to create a safer and more livable community by addressing community concerns. Typical concerns range from excessive noise, pedestrian safety, speeding, and traffic related risks.

The effectiveness of such policies relies on several factors such as community engagement, enforcement strategies, and consideration of local traffic patterns. The implementation of the policy provides a proactive and consistent approach to managing traffic related concerns while ensuring consensus for preferred solutions in areas that warrant traffic calming measures.

Traffic calming measures encompass a variety of approaches, including both passive and physical interventions, aimed at mitigating the negative impacts of motor vehicle use, altering driver behavior, and improving conditions for non-motorized street users. These measures are effective in reducing traffic speeds and enhancing overall neighborhood safety.

The main goal of traffic calming is to encourage drivers to adopt appropriate behavior for the specific area and street type, thereby improving conditions for other street users, such as pedestrians and cyclists. By successfully implementing traffic calming measures, communities can reduce their reliance on enforcement measures and cultivate a culture of responsible driving, leading to safer and more pleasant streets for all.

Policies from municipalities of similar size and characteristics in Ontario, including the City of Thorold, Town of Bracebridge, Town of Midland, Town of Wasaga Beach, Town of Lasalle, and Town of Pelham, were reviewed during the development of this proposed policy.

Internal Consultations:

The development of the policy included collaboration between Infrastructure and Roads Division staff to ensure the process and potential measures are appropriate for the operations and maintenance of the City's road network. City staff and RVA worked collaboratively in developing a policy that aligns with best practices set by the Canadian Guide to Traffic Calming.

Financial Implications:

All costs resulting of the implementation of a future traffic calming measures will be considered on a case-by-case basis as set out in the policy.

Public Engagement:

Upon approval of this report, City staff will be working with the City's Communication Division to ensure the Traffic Calming Policy and related processes are made available on the City's website and promoted on social media.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar(s) of the strategic plan:

- Environment & Climate Change
 - Welcoming, Livable, Healthy Community
 - Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure
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Conclusion:

City staff recommend the adoption and implementation of the proposed Traffic Calming Policy. The effectiveness of traffic calming measures has been demonstrated, highlighting the need to establish a structured process for addressing all traffic-related concerns effectively.

Appendices:

- a. By-law to adopt a Traffic Calming Policy
- b. Traffic Calming Policy PowerPoint Presentation

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Viccica
Civil Technologist/ Project Coordinator
905-228-8112
Chris.Viccica@portcolborne.ca

Joe Colasurdo
Manager of Infrastructure
905-228-8135
Joe.Colasurdo@portcolborne.ca

Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.