



Administrative Report

Office of the Director of Infrastructure Services

To: Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council

From: Jane Mustac, P. Eng.
Director of Infrastructure Services/County Engineer

Date: Wednesday, April 07, 2021

Subject: Traffic Calming Gosfield North Public School

Report #: 2021-0407-ISD-R011-JM

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide information related to the safety inquiry adjacent to Gosfield North School on County Road 27.

Background

The Infrastructure Services Department receives several requests each year to review traffic conditions. Guidance contained in the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Canadian Guide to Traffic Calming and Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads is used by staff to incorporate best practices for traffic calming and safety reviews with an effort to provide an appropriate, efficient, flexible and systematic framework to address traffic safety issues on the County Road network.

At the County Council meeting of March 17th, 2021, a notice of motion was brought forward to review the traffic conditions on County Road 27 adjacent to the Gosfield North Public School and implement measures to improve the safety. A Location Map is included as Appendix 1. As well, correspondence was received on March 30, 2021 advising of the Town of Kingsville Resolution 232-2021 requesting a school safety zone by the Gosfield North Public School, attached as Appendix 2.

CR 27 is a 2-lane rural arterial road with narrow lane widths of 3.5m. The road also includes a 2.0m gravel shoulder on both sides. Gosfield North school is not located in a community or built-up environment and has two access locations from CR 27.

Discussion

A preliminary site assessment of the subject location was conducted by staff using available data on geography, traffic counts, collision and speed data. The site assessment also verified road grades, sightlines, pavement markings and the placement of regulatory and warning signs.

The most recent traffic count (Oct-Nov 2020) shows an ADT of 1785 veh/day of which 5.77% are heavy vehicles. The 85th percentile speed was obtained as 88.1 km/h. To advise the drivers of the approaching school area, two oversized "SCHOOL AREA" signs (black and yellow) are installed on CR 27 on the north and south ends of the school area.

A full evaluation to determine if the issue can be resolved through traffic calming methods, and more importantly the selection of the most appropriate solution has not been completed. However, some activities have taken place to gather some background information.

Staff visited the site on two separate occasions to monitor the situation. Usually after school there is a line-up of parents parked in the Kiss and Ride awaiting the dismissal of their children. This is unavoidable without staggered start/end times as everyone comes at the same time to pick up their child. (See Appendix 3).

Staff also contacted the principle of the school on March 23rd to discuss the situation with an effort to understand the situation. In normal circumstances, there is no concern as almost all children travel by school bus with only a few children being driven. School Kiss and Ride zone locations are designed to drop off and pick up children in vehicles before and after school. The purpose of the Kiss and Ride lane is to provide a safe location for parents to stop their car, allow children to disembark and thus, allowing them to drive away in a safe manner. There is a kiss and ride facility, but this was only set up to handle a small number of cars.

During the pandemic more parents are driving their children to avoid traveling on the bus. The number of vehicles dropping off and picking up children are now much higher than the kiss and ride can handle so parents are forced to stop on the gravel shoulder of the County Road until a spot in the parking lot opens up. The parking lot is very congested with buses coming in and out, parents and staff exiting and parents entering the same access location. There is a designated staff member on duty to help navigate the traffic.

Stopping on the shoulder reduces sightlines at the access locations and presents a safety concern and should not continue. Staff will collaborate with school administration and potentially parent council to develop some options to improve safety and to better manage the kiss and ride until more kids return to taking the bus and things return to normal. The intent would be to help create a procedure which allows parents to drop off children for school in a safe and efficient manner. To do so we need the cooperation of staff, students and most of all parents, grandparents or guardians who are dropping off or picking up their children for school each morning. We will continue to work with them to try to ensure that their drop off and pick up program is safe and clearly articulated to the community members

A speed radar detector was installed and collection data is in process now to gain a better understanding of the travel behaviors. The equipment will remain in place approximately 2 weeks to collect pertinent information. Once field data is collected and reviewed, and consultation with the school and other stakeholders is completed, a subsequent report to council with recommendations will be prepared.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications at this time

Recommendation

That Essex County Council received report 2021-0407-ISD-R011-JM Traffic Calming Gosfield North Public School as information.

Respectfully Submitted

Jane Mustac

Jane Mustac, P.Eng, Director of Infrastructure Services/County Engineer

Concurred With,

Mike Galloway

Mike Galloway, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix Number	Title
1	Report Location Map
2	Resolution 232-2021 from Town of Kingsville
3	Gosfield North Public School Site Visit Photos