

**PLANNING and REGULATORY SERVICES
DEVELOPMENT ENGINEERING
Dan Terziewski**

**BUSINESS CASE – GROWTH & NEW CAPITAL
Review Traffic Operations and Safety
Warrants, Procedures, and Practices**

Background

The Development Engineering Division is responsible for addressing traffic operations and safety inquiries and complaints at the Town. Staff receives these inquiries and complaints on a regular basis through Access Richmond Hill, Council Members, internal departments, other agencies, or directly from residents.

On average, the Town (staff) has received over 125 traffic and parking related complaints per year that need to be investigated. However, over the past several months of 2015, there has been a spike in the number of complaints with 14 complaints received in April 2015, 35 in May and 17 in June, all higher than previous years. So far in the first 6 months of 2015, the number of complaints is 40% higher than in 2012, 179% higher than 2013, 88% higher than 2014.

Typically, these complaints have been dealt with on an individual, case-by-case basis, and depending on the complaint and the need to collect field data, the complaint could take between several days to several months to respond, or longer if a staff report is required to address the problem.

It appears that majority of the complaints received by the Development Engineering Division can be classified into three major categories: 1. speeding along municipal streets and the request for traffic calming or stop control; 2. non-compliance at stop signs; 3. On-street parking issues; 4. missing links and crossings. In addition, with the increase in volume, it has become apparent that these complaints cannot be reviewed on an individual case-by-case basis as it results in a significant amount of extra staff effort and redundancy, it has reduced consistency in our approach and solutions, and it has resulted in increased confusion and frustration for staff, Council, and the public.

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Project Description

In order to address these concerns, the Development Engineering Section proposes to undertake a project to review the street system in the Town and provide an evaluation of the current processes we use to evaluate the various types of inquiries and complaints and the types improvements that could be implemented throughout the Town to address the speeding, parking, and non-compliance issues. This project may include but is not limited to an inventory and review of:

- Location of traffic control signs
- Street lighting
- Location, width and configuration of pedestrian cross-walks
- Roundabouts and medians
- Sidewalks
- Review the Town's Material, Standard and Specifications as it relates to traffic.
- Review of the appropriate OTM (Ontario Traffic Manuals)
- Traffic signals and location of signal heads
- Tree trimming need
- Standard daylight triangles vs rounded daylights
- Need for traffic counts
- Other Provincial manuals
- Peer review of other Ontario municipalities
- Review current Maintenance and Operation process for line painting and crosswalk painting, replacement of worn-out traffic signs, etc.
- Development of benchmarking and KPI with respect to response processes and response times

The resulting product will result in a set of Council approved guidelines, procedures, and processes which can be applied uniformly and consistency throughout the Town to evaluate complaints and inquiries and where necessary, implement Council endorsed programs and improvements address these issues.

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Stakeholders & Impacts

The stake holders will be the Development Engineering Division, the EIS Division, Public Roads Operations, Council, Two District Police, and local residents.

Strategic Alignment

This proposed work program would meet the Goal One - Stronger Connections in Richmond Hill by “Responding to the changing needs of the community through adaptive services and programs” and, “Improve the function of buildings, streets and neighbourhoods”. And Goal Two – Better options to move around.

Ten Year Capital Forecast

Any future implications to the 10 year capital plan identified through this assessment will be addressed through subsequent staff reports or future Capital budgets

Comparative Analysis

The Consultant will be required to undertake a peer review of similar municipalities to determine if they have developed a more systematic approach to addressing traffic complaints. The Consultant will also be required to set up a response program to address “what is the acceptable lapse time to address a similar complaint”.

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Alternatives

The alternative is to continue to address complaints the same way staff has been doing it for the past 25 years. This would likely result in continued inefficiencies, even more staffing needs in the future, inconsistent application of solutions, and/or increased resident frustration as they have to wait extended periods of time to have their complaint reviewed and addressed.

Project Costs and Benefit

The cost for this undertaking will be \$75,000. The benefit will be in the delivery of how complaints are addressed.

Other funding Sources

Funding for the Review Traffic Operations and Safety Warrants, Procedures, and Practices project be funded 50% from Non-Growth Reserve fund and 50% from Town-wide Engineering Reserve Fund.

Conclusion

The project will streamline the review of complaints and subsequent response to the resident(s). The process developed for staff will also ensure that the appropriate amount of time is dedicated to reviewing the complaint and that once the solution have been introduced in the field that sufficient time has elapse before a similar complaint has to be addressed.