



Subject: 2021-24 Chippawa Road and Berkley Ave at Dolphin St Intersection

To: Council

From: Public Works Department

Report Number: 2021-236

Meeting Date: September 27, 2021

Recommendation:

That Public Works Department Report 2021-236 be received;

That Council approve the installation of a three-way stop intersection on Chippawa Road and Dolphin Street; and

That Council approve \$15,000 additional funding from the capital contingency reserve, for the construction and road reconfiguration at Chippawa Road, Berkley Avenue and Dolphin Street.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the feedback of the public engagement session as it relates to the safety and traffic speeding concerns along Chippawa Road and obtain approval for the proposed road reconfiguration at Dolphin Street and Berkley Avenue. If Council approves the reconfiguration, additional funding for the construction and enhancements would also be required to complete the project.

Background:

Chippawa Road is a local road that provides connectivity between Highway 140 and Regional Road 3. The posted speed limit is 40km/h for the entire section. The width of the road allowance varies and is less than the standard 20m width of a typical 2-lane local road allowance for most of its length.

In November 2020, residents presented their concerns regarding safety along Chippawa Road to Council. The main topics of the presentation included sidewalks, closing

Chippawa Road at Highway 140, speedbumps, turning the grass triangle into a park, speed feedback signs and other traffic calming solutions.

Thus, Council had directed staff, through Report 2020-169 to investigate the opportunity to install or place sidewalk along Chippawa Road from Berkley Avenue to Hwy 140. Report 2020-169 also approved the removal of the stop signs at Chippawa Road and Berkley Avenue [North].

On August 25, 2021, staff initiated a virtual Public Information Centre (PIC) to provide engineering alternatives to alleviate previously heard apprehensions and to understand and solicit resident current perspectives of their safety concerns at the intersections and to address the on-going speeding complaints.

Public Engagement:

Prior to the PIC, staff reached out to the three residents along Berkley Avenue (south) to solicit feedback that directly impacts their driveway access, garbage collection and snow clearing. Options presented included a one-way access off Chippawa Road and a complete closure of Berkley Avenue (south) off Chippawa Road. The residents' preference was to close Berkley Avenue off Chippawa Road. The responses from those residents narrowed down the engineering alternatives for the intersection reconfiguration.

Following the Berkley Avenue resident engagement meeting, staff held a PIC with residents from around the area on Wednesday, August 25th on Zoom. Staff presented the various speed mitigation solutions, signages and deterrent measures to encourage traffic to use Regional Road 3 (Main Street) as a faster and safer route to downtown Port Colborne. Staff also discussed the logistical and financial aspects of a potential sidewalk, intersection improvement alternatives, and options for the triangle grass space improvements.

Staff introduced a project website for residents to share the presentation materials of the public consultation and the survey engagement at the following link: <https://portcolborne.ca/en/living-here/redesign-of-chippawa-road-dolphin-street-berkley-avenue-intersection.aspx>.

Staff's impression of the public engagement had been positive. Residents are cautiously in support of the mitigation measures. Most feedback was in favour of the three-way stop sign intersection at Chippawa Road and Dolphin Street.

Discussion:

Speed Mitigation and Traffic Calming Solutions

City staff have acted and installed speed mitigation and traffic calming measures along Chippawa Road. In August 2021, three traffic mitigation markers were installed to visually narrow the lane in both directions of traffic. Speed radar devices have been purchased by the City and will be installed for both directions along Chippawa Road, midway between Berkley Avenue and Hwy 140. These speed radar signs, also known as driver feedback signs, can be effective at raising driver awareness regarding the speed at which they're travelling. The City will review the data collected by the radar device and provide any feedback to the Niagara Regional Police to take appropriate action if necessary.

Three-Way Stop at Dolphin Intersection

Staff identified the awkward intersection of the Berkley Avenue offshoot (south) with Dolphin Street as an area requiring reconfiguration to improve safety. It is recommended that the south Berkley section be stopped up and closed to eliminate vehicular and pedestrian confusion and interaction. This will also necessitate a turn around requirement for garbage pick up and snow removal, but also provide additional alternatives for low intensity recreational space at the grassed triangle area. Staff have also identified a risk of inadequate sightlines at Dolphin Street and Chippawa Road, specifically when looking westbound on Chippawa Road from Dolphin Street. The installation of a three-way stop at the intersection is a proposed remedy to this situation. See attached appendix "Intersection Reconstruction".

Other Signages

Staff have also been in contact with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and requested a new "Local Traffic Only" sign to be placed at the entrance to Chippawa Road from Highway 140. An existing "Local Access Only" sign was relocated to the other side of the entrance to Chippawa Road from Regional Road 3 for better visualization, with a new "No Truck Route" sign installed on the same post. Additionally, Truck Route (Green Circle) signage will be placed along Regional Road 3 to provide a better navigational tool for truck drivers.

Staff have contacted Google and indicated that Chippawa Road was designated as a "Local Traffic Only" road from Regional Road 3 to Highway 140. Applications such as Waze and Google Maps have now changed their "preferred route" to avoid Chippawa through that section. However, it should be noted that these Apps use a real time algorithm and if more vehicles ignore the signage and take Chippawa between Regional Road 3 and Highway 140, the algorithm will change back to make that route the preferred direction.

Sidewalk

Staff investigated the opportunity of installing a sidewalk along Chippawa Road as a means of providing additional safety for concerned pedestrians. Chippawa Road has a narrow right-of way (ROW) with open ditches and hydro poles along both sides of the

road. To construct a proper sidewalk, the ditch would need to be filled and installation of a storm sewer system and a curb would be required. Hydro poles would also require relocation to provide the space for the sidewalk. Residents yard frontage would be impacted by the sidewalk and clearing, and maintenance would also be required. The estimated capital cost for construction of the sidewalk is \$900,000 plus maintenance and operating costs. Due to the restrictions noted, staff are not recommending installation of the sidewalk on Chippawa at this time.

Internal Consultations:

The Asset and Development area are providing support and coordination for the installation of the speed radars and traffic mitigation markers along Chippawa Road. Staff are also developing a City Truck Route Map and, with the assistance of Roads staff, will be installing Truck Route (Green Circle) signage to create awareness and encourage proper truck routing along City streets.

At both the November 2020 Council presentation and the August 2021 PIC, residents inquired about the installation of speed bumps to assist with slowing traffic on Chippawa Road. Speed bumps (and similar features) are widely unpopular with Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Fire Departments due to potentially reducing response time. In addition, speed bumps impede effective and efficient snow removal, may cause damage to plow blades and impede proper drainage of the road. Staff will monitor the existing measures that have been selected and can revisit the speed bumps as a potential alternate solution, should the proposed measures not be as effective in reducing speed on Chippawa Road.

Financial Implications:

The project has approved funding of \$35,000 under Account 21C-PW-R40. Staff is requesting to increase funding by \$15,000 to a total amount of \$50,000. This additional funding is required for a catch basin relocation, park upgrades, additional paving of the turning circle for trucks and snow storage on Berkley, and contingency for unforeseen circumstances.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

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

- a. Governance: Communications, Engagement, and Decision-Making
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Conclusion:

The traffic mitigation measures will reduce incidents of speeding along Chippawa Road. The three-way stop will eliminate sightline issues on the Chippawa Road and Dolphin Street intersection. The stop sign installation at Dolphin Street along Chippawa Road also acknowledges resident feedback for wanting to retain the stop signs. Through the implementation of these recommendations, Chippawa Road, between Highway 140 and Regional Road 3 will be safer, more aesthetically pleasing and reduce traffic levels.

Appendices:

- a. Intersection Reconstruction

Respectfully submitted,

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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.

