

## Details on new traffic calming measures to come forward in weeks

**By Brock Weir**

Details of a new traffic calming pilot project on five Aurora streets are expected to be fleshed out over the coming weeks following a public meeting on Thursday.

Members of Aurora's Department of Infrastructure welcomed residents from affected streets and the community at large last week to sound off on a pilot project which could see speed cushions installed on Kennedy Street West from McGee Crescent to Murray Drive, on Stone Road from Cliff Road to Hawtin Lane, McMaster Avenue from Hollidge Boulevard to Hollandview Trail, on Mavrinac Boulevard from Borealis Avenue to Spring Farm Road, and from Conover Avenue from River Ridge Boulevard to Borealis Avenue.

These five streets were picked from a shortlist of 20 areas where Town Hall had received complaints from residents over excessive speeding. A pilot project to measure these streets and install speed cushions on the worst of the worst was approved by Council earlier this year.

Now that comments have been received from the public, it's time for municipal staff to take this feedback and devise a course of action, which will be up for Council ratification in the fall.

"I do want to bring a report back after talking to staff because I want Council to both understand the feedback from the community as well as [have] the community understand the feedback from the community because there are a number of roads on this list, of which only five have been recommended," said Ilmar Simanovskis, Aurora's Director of Infrastructure. "I want to make sure that we are as transparent and thorough as possible in our consultation."

During last week's Council meeting, members raised several questions about the pilot project moving forward, including whether or not these speed cushions would be installed outside of the warrants established by the Town of Aurora which sets the threshold in terms of speed and traffic volume in which these measures would ordinarily be called for.

"I would like an opportunity to make that final determination on how we move forward based on our policies and the warrants provided," said Councillor Michael Thompson. "One warrant talks about a 70 per cent support rate among residents in our area, so I think that is important. Some of us went through this in the last term where we were asked to approve a number of traffic calming measures after the fact, and that incurs a great cost to the municipality. If we are going to do it, I want to make sure that it is well-supported in these neighbourhoods."

Backing up this viewpoint, Councillor Thompson singled out Kennedy Street West. Back in 2012, staff recommended not installing speed cushions on the west Aurora thoroughfare, a recommendation that was supported by York Region EMS, the Central York Fire Services and York Region Transit. Since that time, however, Mr. Simanovskis said speed monitoring in the area has changed.

Councillor John Abel, who proposed the pilot project in a notice of motion this year, said the feedback he has received from residents on moving forward has been positive, and there might be an appetite to look at the balance of 15 streets on the shortlist as well.

"The residents I talked to [about getting traffic calming measures in their area] were not asking me about policy; they were saying they don't really care about our policies, but see if you can calm traffic so we can walk our streets safely with our children," he said. "I am not looking for any warrants and I don't think warrants matter. I think what you want to get is a buy-in from residents. I think the other areas want to see this go forward because there are always other streets that want it as well. They want traffic slowed."