

Report to Council

Report Title: Ridout Street Safety Concerns

Prepared By: Gregg Furtney, Director of Operations

Department: Operations

Date: September 22, 2020

Report Number: PW2020-28 **File Number:** C11PW

Attachments: N/A

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number PW2020-28 - Ridout Street Safety Concerns, prepared by Gregg Furtney, Director of Operations, for information purposes.

Report:

Background:

On September 12, 2020, a new resident of Brockton and Ridout Street, Walkerton, emailed Mayor Peabody with their concerns regarding the lack of sidewalks, and the volume and speed of traffic on Ridout Street.

The author of this email very clearly articulated their reasoning for contacting the Mayor and offered the following suggestions:

"I would ask that council immediately address these concerns by,

- 1. Reducing traffic flow on this street with additional traffic calming methods like, adding more speed bumps along Ridout, no right turns off Thomas onto Ridout, increasing the number of 3 way stops along Ridout etc.*
- 2. Lobby the bus companies to pick up all children along Ridout at their driveways. Where there are numerous children living close to each other, at the very least, increase the number of stops the buses make to decrease the distance children are walking along this very dangerous road.*
- 3. Make installation of sidewalks on the east side of Ridout Street a top priority."*

Analysis:

As Council is aware, speed concerns along Ridout Street continue to be a concern of some Ridout Street residents. As such, Staff have put up the BlackCat Radar a couple of different times and have purchased and installed speed humps, as per Council's direction.

The results from the first two BlackCat Radar installations revealed relatively low statistical numbers of speeders, as outlined in two (2) previous reports (PW2020-18 – July 14, 2020 and PW2020-20 – August 11, 2020).

The Speed Humps have been met with very mixed reviews, by residents and Members of Council. As with most traffic calming installations, drivers tend to slow into them, and then speed out of them. They are effective in that one location.

As Council is aware, Ridout Street is considered a “Collector Road”. A collector road or distributor road is a low-to-moderate-capacity road which serves to move traffic from local streets to arterial roads. Because Ridout Street is a collector road, it typically will have more traffic than local residential streets.

Speeding traffic is certainly a safety concern. Speeding is not enforceable by the Municipality, but is certainly enforceable by the OPP. Even with a reduced speed limit, drivers will continue to travel the speed that they feel comfortable with. Drivers are obligated by the law to drive according to the rules of the road. As Ridout Street is a residential area, the speed limit is a maximum of 50 km/ hour. A speed limit reduction would have to go hand in hand with some OPP enforcement. Staff have plans to install the BlackCat Radar further to the north on Ridout Street to capture some additional data. That data, will then be sent to the OPP for review and comment. That information and their recommendations will then be sent to the Brockton Police Services Board. The Police Services Board can then advise Council on their recommendations. Additional traffic calming measures are not currently in the 2020 Operating Budget. Installation of any additional traffic calming measures this fall is not advisable as staff will be retrieving the speed humps in the coming weeks to prepare for winter snow removal.

According to the Ontario Traffic Manual, Book 5 (page 17), “*STOP signs are not intended to be used as speed control devices. Their usage should be limited to the control of right-of-way conflicts. In general, STOP signs should only be used where traffic engineering studies considering such factors as traffic speeds, traffic volumes, restricted sight lines and collision experience, indicate that the use of STOP signs is warranted*”.

With regards to the school bus route along Ridout Street, staff have contacted Kunkle Bus Lines Limited who have redirected the question/ concern back to the School Board. The School Board has jurisdiction over the bus routes. Staff are in the midst of discussing these concerns with the School Board.

In regards to the installation of a sidewalk along Ridout Street, staff have had preliminary discussions with our consulting engineers. The cost estimates have not yet been established but the comment was that the project would be “hundreds of thousands of dollars”. One of the first challenges identified was the fact that either the hydro poles on one side of the street or the phone/ cable poles on the other side of the street would need to be relocated. To relocate the hydro poles would be approximately \$10,000 per pole. There would likely be similar costs associated with the relocation of the other services on the opposite side of the street. In addition to the above ground services, the underground infrastructure should be assessed and a determination should be made whether or not those utilities should be replaced or upgraded. It would be advisable that Council consider a “bigger picture” project that encompasses above and below ground infrastructure. A similar project is currently underway on McGivern Street, Walkerton. That project cost is approximately \$1.6 Million dollars.

Staff certainly understand and empathize with the concerns raised by the concerned resident. Staff recommend that the BlackCat Radar data be presented to the OPP for their review, assessment, and recommendations. Staff will continue to engage the School Board with regards to the school bus stop locations. Staff will bring back a report to Council with the results. If those results do not satisfy Members of Council, then Council can direct staff to get preliminary engineered plans/ options and cost estimates for either putting in a sidewalk or reworking/ re-engineering Ridout Street, which would also include a sidewalk. That project and associated costs would then be included in the 2021 Capital Budget request.

Sustainability Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? N/A
- Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy? N/A
- Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity? N/A
- Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity? N/A
- Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity? N/A

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective?
N/A

Aside from staff time to install and process the BlackCat Radar data, there are no other costs associated with this report.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Gregg Furtney, Director of Operations

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer