

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – SEPTEMBER 20, 2004

RESIDENTS OF GRAND VALLEY COALITION TRAFFIC CONCERNS REVIEW

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends:

1. That an all-way stop control not be installed at the intersection of Discovery Trail and Melia Lane;
2. That an all-way stop control not be installed at the intersection of Grand Valley Boulevard and Gianmarco Way / Melia Lane;
3. That an all-way stop control not be installed at the intersection of Grand Valley Boulevard and Discovery Trail;
4. That traffic calming measures not be installed on Grand Valley Boulevard, Discovery Trail, Treasure Road, Queen Isabella Crescent and Melia Lane;
5. That posting of signs to indicate the 50 km/h statutory urban area maximum speed limit for Melia Lane and Grand Valley Boulevard is not required;
6. That the speed limit not be reduced from the statutory 50 km/h posted speed limit to 40 km/h for all roads within the community; and
7. That the speed limit not be reduced from existing 40 km/h to 30 km/h in front of the elementary schools as a municipality cannot enact a speed limit below 40 km/h on a public highway as per the Ontario Highway Traffic Act.

Purpose

To review and report on the feasibility of installing all-way stop controls, speed humps, installation of additional speed limit signs and a reduction in the existing speed limit on several roads within the Block 33 East community, in response to direction from Council.

Background - Analysis and Options

At its meeting on June 28, 2004 Council directed:

“The Committee of the Whole recommends that the deputation of Ms. Penney Kouvelos-Mastathis, Chair, Residents of Grand Valley Coalition, 46 La Pinta Street, Maple, L6A 3H8, and written submissions dated June 17, 2004, be received and referred to staff for a report addressing the matter ”

A letter was received by Members of Council dated June 17, 2004 from the Residents of Grand Valley Coalition that expressed several concerns regarding safety and traffic within their community. Please refer to Attachment No. 2. The concerns raised by the residents are on the following roadways: Melia Lane, Grand Valley Boulevard, Discovery Trail, Treasure Road and Queen Isabella Crescent.

The subject streets are local roads with an existing statutory 50 km/h speed limit. There are designated existing 40 km/h speed limit zones adjacent to the two neighbourhood elementary schools. Refer to Attachment No. 1 for the area road network.

The following is a list of the items requested by the Residents of Grand Valley Coalition and Transportation Staff's reply to those items:

1. Requested speed bumps (or a similar alternative) along the following roadways:

- Melia Lane
- Grand Valley Boulevard
- Discovery Trail
- Treasure Road
- Queen Isabella Crescent

Staff collected speed data from Automated Traffic Recorders (ATRs) on the five streets in Block 33 East where speed humps were requested. The speed data was collected over a 24-hour period in August 2004 as summarized below with the exception of the Grand Valley Boulevard that was collected with a hand-held radar unit on September 19, 2002. The existing posted speed limit on these streets is a statutory 50 km/h.

LOCATION	DIRECTION	AVERAGE SPEED	85TH. PERCENTILE SPEED
Grand Valley Boulevard east of Discovery Trail	Eastbound	40 km/h	50 km/h
Grand Valley Boulevard east of Discovery Trail	Westbound	41 km/h	49 km/h
Grand Valley Boulevard west of Gianmarco Way – AM Peak Only (2002)	Eastbound	42 km/h	50 km/h
	Westbound	39 km/h	46 km/h
Grand Valley Boulevard west of Gianmarco Way – PM Peak Only (2002)	Eastbound	39 km/h	48 km/h
	Westbound	40 km/h	50 km/h
Discovery Trail south of Monti Cristi Street	Northbound	35 km/h	45 km/h
Discovery Trail south of Monti Cristi Street	Southbound	36 km/h	47 km/h
Treasure Road north of Monti Cristi Street	Northbound	35 km/h	45 km/h
Treasure Road north of Monti Cristi Street	Southbound	33 km/h	44 km/h
Queen Isabella Crescent west of Mast Road	Eastbound	22 km/h	31 km/h
Queen Isabella Crescent west of Mast Road	Westbound	22 km/h	34 km/h
Melia Lane west of Discovery Trail	Eastbound	30 km/h	43 km/h
Melia Lane west of Discovery Trail	Westbound	30 km/h	39 km/h

The average traffic speeds were identified to be below the statutory 50 km/h maximum speed limit that applies to all these streets. In addition, the 85th percentile speed results indicate that the 50 km/h speed limit is appropriate and no change to the speed limit is recommended. The 85th percentile speed is the rate at which 85% of motorists travel at or below. It is used by traffic engineers as a guideline to establish a road's speed limit.

In accordance with Council's Neighbourhood Traffic Committee Policy and Procedure, speed humps shall be considered only when the following three warrants are met: the street is not a primary emergency response route, the speed limit is 50 km/h or less, and the average speed is measured to be 10 km/h greater than the speed limit. The collected speeds do not exceed the 50 km/h speed limit by 10 km/h. Based on the above criteria, the warrant for the installation of speed humps on Grand Valley Boulevard, Discovery Trail, Treasure Road, Queen Isabella Crescent and Melia Lane is not met.

The Vaughan Fire and Emergency Services have indicated they are opposed to the installation of speed humps as they reduce the emergency response times and potentially impact / damage their vehicles. Given the large number of addresses that would be affected by the presence of speed humps, Grand Valley Boulevard can be classified as a primary emergency response route. Although not as critical to response times, Treasure Road and Discovery Trail should also be free of speed humps because of the large number of addresses accessible only from these streets.

The installation of medians, curb extensions or road narrowings shall be considered in existing areas only when the following two warrants are met: the speed limit is 50 km/h or less and the average speed on the street is measured to be 10 km/h greater than the speed limit. Based on the above criteria, the warrant for the installation of medians, curb extensions or road narrowings for Grand Valley Boulevard, Discovery Trail, Treasure Road, Queen Isabella Court and Melia Lane is not met.

It should be noted that at the Block Plan stage for the development area, a comprehensive traffic calming plan was developed and was implemented through the development process. That plan included curb extensions (chokers) and reduced pavement widths. From the speed data collected, it would appear that the traffic calming plan is effective in keeping vehicle speeds to appropriate levels.

Environmental Assessment Act Requirements

As required under the Environmental Assessment Act, whenever traffic calming measures are installed or removed a Schedule B Environmental Assessment process must be followed. This process requires public notification and consultation, the identification of alternates, and the filing of a Notice of Completion with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and publication in local media.

Should traffic calming measures be approved by Council for installation on any street in Block 33 East, then the City would be required to publish a Notice of Commencement, develop a plan for review by the public and publish a Notice of Completion. The notices would also have to be filed with the Ministry of the Environment and published in editions of the Vaughan Citizen, Lo Specchio and Vaughan Weekly newspapers. Prior to construction, the City's normal practice is to mail letters to the residents should traffic calming measures be approved informing them of their installation.

2. Requested All-way Stop controls for the following intersections:

- Discovery Trail at Melia Lane
- Grand Valley Boulevard and Gianmarco Way/ Melia Lane
- Grand Valley Boulevard and Discovery Trail

Staff conducted turning movement counts at the three intersections during peak travel periods. The times the counts were conducted were from 7:00am to 9:00am and from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. The collected traffic volumes compared to the Provincial Warrant for All-way Stop Control with the dates counted are as shown below.

Discovery Trail and Melia Lane (July 2, 2004)

- Warrant 1 – Minimum Vehicular Volumes Warranted 5%
- Warrant 2 – Accident Hazard Warranted 0%
- Warrant 3 – Sight Restriction Warranted 0%

Grand Valley Boulevard and Gianmarco Way/ Melia Lane (June 29, 2004)

- Warrant 1 – Minimum Vehicular Volumes Warranted 21%
- Warrant 2 – Accident Hazard Warranted 0%
- Warrant 3 – Sight Restriction Warranted 0%

Grand Valley Boulevard and Discovery Trail (June 30, 2004)

- Warrant 1 – Minimum Vehicular Volumes Warranted 60%
- Warrant 2 – Accident Hazard Warranted 0%
- Warrant 3 – Sight Restriction Warranted 0%

There were no reported vehicle collisions at these intersections. There are also no sight distance restrictions noted at these intersections. All intersections have streetlighting.

For an all-way stop control to be warranted, one or more of the three warrants must be satisfied 100% or more. The results indicate that all three subject intersections do not meet the requirements of the Provincial Warrant for All-Way Stop Control.

Installation of unwarranted stop signs is not recommended since many motorists tend not to stop as they are not challenged for right-of-way due to insufficient vehicular volumes. Staff are receiving an increasing number of complaints from residents regarding this problem elsewhere in the City. Lack of police resources renders frequent and strict enforcement impossible.

3. Speed limit signs to be installed on the following roadways:

- Melia Lane
- Grand Valley Boulevard

Under the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) the speed limit for all urban roads where speed limit signs are not present is a statutory 50 km/h maximum speed limit. It is not necessary to post signs for Police enforcement. All roads entering the Block 33 East neighbourhood from Jane Street and Teston Road are posted with a '50 km/h Begins' sign signifying a change from the higher speed limit that exists on the external Regional Roads. There are 40 km/h maximum limit signs posted on Discovery Trail in front of the Discovery Public School and on Mast Road in front of the St. James Elementary School. The installation of additional maximum speed limit signs is not required for Melia Lane, Grand Valley Boulevard and any other neighbourhood streets where the HTA statutory 50 km/h maximum speed limit applies otherwise.

Posting unnecessary speed limit signs is not recommended as their presence detracts from other necessary signage in the rights-of-way and reduces the effectiveness of speed limit reductions in school zones.

4. Request for a reduction in speed limits as follows:

- The current 50 km/h speed limit zones dropped down to 40 km/h speed limit zones.
- The current 40 km/h speed limit zones near the Public and Catholic elementary schools be lowered to a maximum 30 km/h speed limit.

The Residents of Grand Valley Coalition requested that all existing 50 km/h speed limit zones in Block 33 East be reduced to 40 km/h. In addition, they have requested that the 40 km/h speed limit zones adjacent to the elementary school sites be reduced to 30 km/h.

Based on the traffic operating speed information, it is not recommended to reduce the speed limit from the statutory 50 km/h speed limit to 40 km/h. The average speed information for the subject streets are well below the existing 50 km/h speed limit.

The roadways adjacent to a school have a reduced speed limit of 40 km/h. The Ontario Highway Traffic Act does not allow a municipality to enact a speed limit less than 40 km/h on a public highway. Therefore, 40 km/h speed limits for the roads adjacent to the neighbourhood schools will not be changed.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This traffic study is consistent with Vaughan Vision 2007 as to identify and implement innovative traffic management alternatives to improve general traffic safety (1.1.3).

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Conclusion

Engineering Staff recommend that an all-way stop control not be installed at the intersections of Discovery Trail and Melia Lane, Grand Valley Boulevard and Gianmarco Way / Melia Lane, and at Grand Valley Boulevard and Discovery Trail as warrants are not fulfilled for All-way Stop controls at these locations. Staff also recommend that traffic calming measures not be installed on Grand Valley Boulevard, Discovery Trail, Treasure Road, Queen Isabella Crescent and Melia Lane in accordance with the City's Neighbourhood Traffic Committee Policy and Procedure. The posting of signs to indicate the 50 km/h statutory urban area maximum speed limit for Melia Lane and Grand Valley Boulevard is not required under the Highway Traffic Act. It is also recommended that the speed limit not be reduced from the statutory 50 km/h speed limit to 40 km/h for all roads within the community and that the speed limit not be reduced from 40 km/h to 30 km/h in front of the elementary schools.

Attachments

1. Location Map
2. June 17, 2004 letter - Residents of Grand Valley Coalition

Report prepared by

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Mike Dokman, Supervisor, Traffic Engineering ext. 8031

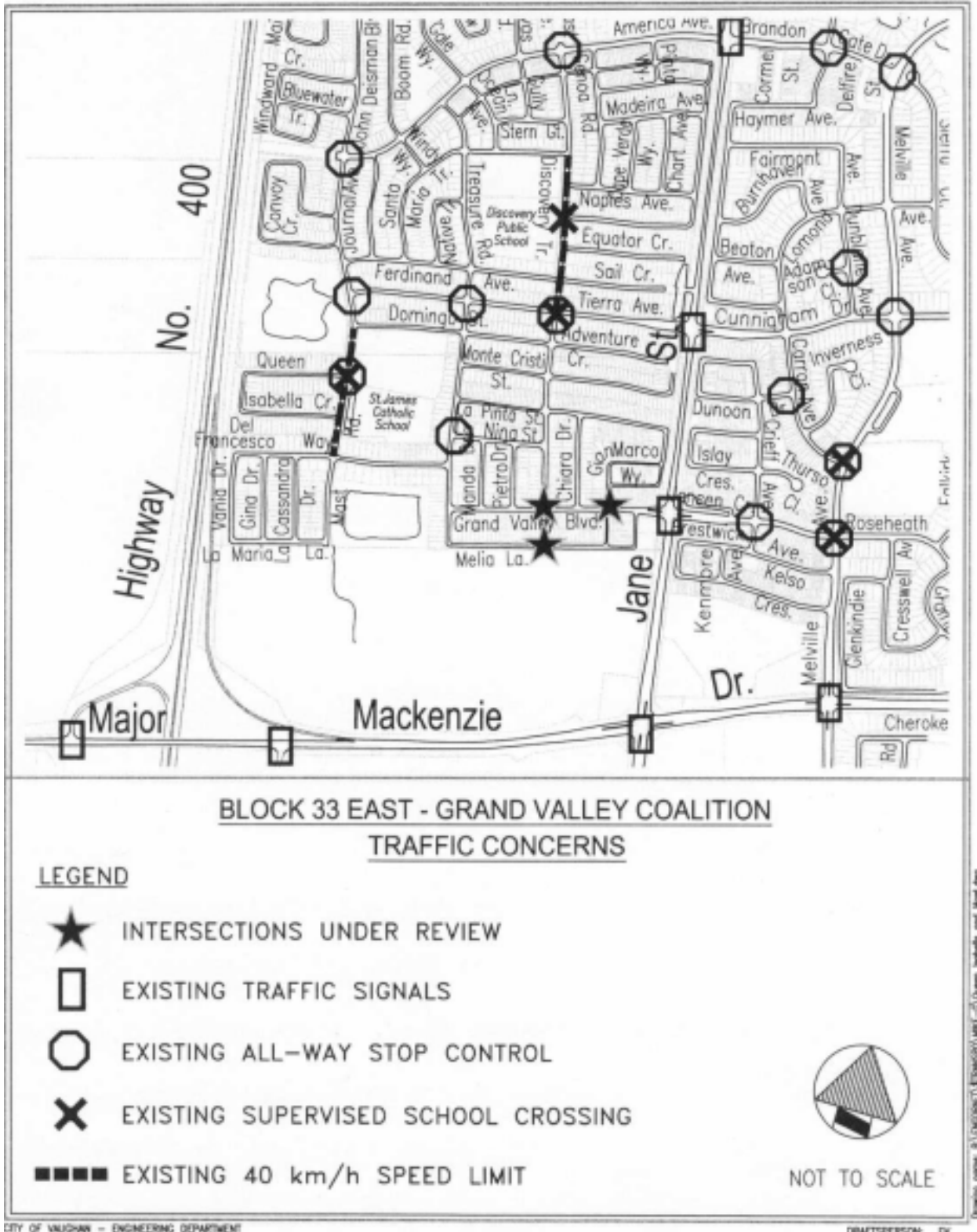
Respectfully submitted,

Bill Robinson, P. Eng.
Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works

Gary Carroll, P. Eng.
Director of Engineering Services

MG:

ATTACHMENT No. 1



ATTACHMENT NO. 2

Members of Council
The City of Vaughan
2141 Major MacKenzie Drive
Vaughan, ON L6A 1T1

June 17, 2004

Dear Members of Councils,

We, the Residents of Grand Valley Coalition ("ROGC") put forward the following issues with respect to safety and traffic concerns within our community.

As everyone may recall, it was part of the municipal politicians' platform in our community to have "police presence in our neighborhoods". Unfortunately, the "police presence in our neighborhoods" (i.e. radar monitoring or any other form of presence) has yet to come to light.

We anticipate that the City of Vaughan is open to working in conjunction with its concerned residents in order to keep our neighborhood safe for all of us, especially our children. Accordingly, we propose that the following measures be implemented into our neighborhood:

1. **Speed bumps (or a similar alternative) along the following roadways:**
 - Melia Lane
 - Grand Valley
 - Discovery Trail
 - Treasure Road
 - Queen Isabella Crescent

2. **ALLWAY Stop signs at the following intersections:**
 - Discovery Trail and Melia Lane
 - Grand Valley and Gian Marco Way
 - Grand Valley and Discovery Trail

June 17, 2004

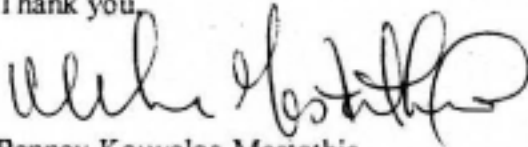
3. **Speed signs to be erected on the following roadways to ensure that ALL motorists are aware of the speed limits in our community:**
 - Melia Lane
 - Grand Valley

4. **A reduction of speed limits as follows:**
 - The current 50 km/h zones dropped down to 40 km/h zones
 - The current 40 km/h in all public and catholic school zones to be dropped down to 30 km/h zones

We look forward to working with the City of Vaughan in resolving the above concerns to ensure that we may all live in a more safe and sound community for everyone, but above all for our children who are our future.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,



Penney Kouvelos-Mastathis
Chair
Residents of Grand Valley Coalition

P.S. Signatures to follow