

North End Neighbourhood Traffic Policy Resolution

Submitted by the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce - NEN Traffic Study Sub-Committee to the Transportation Committee

Issue:

With the projection of new residential growth coupled with the future growth plans of the Hamilton Harbour and area, the North End Neighbourhood (NEN) Association requested the City of Hamilton to ensure that existing streets provide a safe environment for families, that minimized risks of potential increased traffic and concerns of excessive speed. Also noted was a need to reduce the amount of 'cut-through' traffic that use the NEN roads to move east/west bound on local roads.

Background:

The City hired IBI Consulting to review concerns of NEN and present traffic calming alternatives to manage the current and expected growth of vehicular traffic within the NEN area. For the purpose of the study, the area is bordered by Wellington to Bay, and Strachen to Guise.

The study confirmed that there was a high percentage of out-of-area vehicular traffic on NEN streets, however there was no data collected that identified how much of this traffic was 'cut-through' versus 'destination' traffic. The study also confirmed that there were various levels of speed that exceeded the posted limits.

Subsequent Public Information Centres (PICs) and Community Advisory Group (CAG) meetings brought forward several options on how to resolve the concerns of the residents of NEN. Through these meetings, NEN continued to push for a more affirmative action plan that would see new visionary options for traffic calming within the NEN area. NEN is an active group that is currently working with the City to divert an OMB meeting on other issues within the Setting Sail recommendations.

From the above communications, a sub-committee was formed and Chamber representation participated in the PIC and CAG to contribute support for a safe driving community. At a recent meeting, NEN requested that the Chamber support two key areas towards traffic calming measures. They are:

- Support a posted speed limit on ALL streets within the NEN area of 30km/hr.
- Support a plan that would see reduction in 'through' traffic from using NEN streets (primarily Burlington and Bay), by a plan that would see this traffic using Wellington and Victoria. Their vision is that 'destination' traffic would use James and Burlington as the primary roads to reach points of interest.

The final PIC will be held on June 26th at Bennetto School at 7pm. A map will be available to outline other traffic calming measures intended to minimize traffic flow within the NEN area.

While the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce supports safe speeds on residential roads, further investigation shows that neighbouring communities are moving away from

“Community Safety Zones” as they have shown to be ineffective. Posting a blanket speed on all streets, arterial and local, carries a risk of confusing vehicular traffic as to which is the appropriate road to use to get to a destination point.

And, while the Chamber also recognizes the concerns of ‘through’ traffic, there remains no actual source data to ascertain the amplitude of the concern. Notwithstanding the issue, the Chamber does understand that ‘through’ traffic exists. Moving towards traffic calming measures to minimize ‘through’ traffic carries real risks of discouraging ‘destination’ traffic to the Harbour, as ‘destination’ traffic uses the same roads as ‘through’ traffic.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce urges the City of Hamilton to consider the unintended negative effects of restrictive traffic flow to the Harbour and its various points of interest. The Chamber supports lower speed limits on ‘local’ roads, coupled with calming measures that allows for vehicular movement to clearly outline which roads are ‘arterial’ and which are ‘local’.