

## COMMON COUNCIL REPORT

M&C No.	2024-235
Report Date	August 26, 2024
Meeting Date	September 03, 2024
Service Area	Public Works and Transportation Services

Her Worship Mayor Donna Noade Reardon and Members of Common Council

**SUBJECT: Speed Limit Reduction to Support New Day Care**

### **AUTHORIZATION**

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	Chief Administrative Officer
<b>Tim O'Reilly</b>	<b>Michael Hugenholtz</b>	<b>J. Brent McGovern</b>

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Your Chief Administrative Officer recommends Common Council approved 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Readings to an Amendment of the Saint John Traffic By-Law as attached to M&C 2024-235

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City of Saint John is continuously improving road safety for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. Level of risk to roadway users is always a factor in prioritizing engineered solutions that aim to improve road safety.

The need for more traffic calming elements at and near the intersection of Foster Thurston Drive and Sandy Point Road has become a higher priority with the planned opening of a new day care at the former Cherry Brook Zoo site in the Fall of 2024. Temporary traffic calming elements are justified and planned for the first year of the day care's operation in advance of the construction of a modern roundabout at this intersection in 2025. To complement the temporary traffic calming elements, a speed limit reduction in the area from 50 KM/H to 40 KM/H is being recommended through a Traffic By-Law change. The permanency of the speed limit reduction (beyond approximately one year) will be re-evaluated with the modern roundabout design.

### **PREVIOUS RESOLUTION**

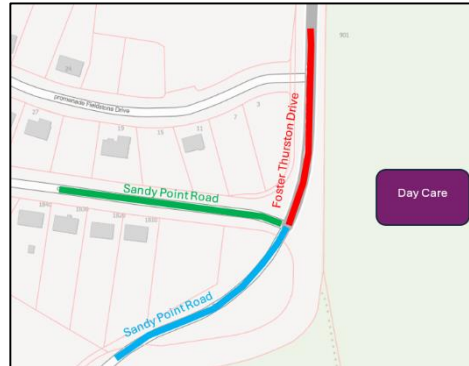
N/A

### **REPORT**

The City of Saint John divested itself of the former Cherry Brook Zoo site. The new owners are planning the opening of a day care, with the first phase planned to open in the Fall of 2024.

In 2011 City staff conducted a safety assessment of the adjacent intersection of Foster Thurston Drive and Sandy Point Road and the connecting streets. At the time, the average speed was measured at 58 KM/H. This was well above the 50 KM/H speed limit and above the threshold warranting traffic calming. Fifteen percent (15%) of motorists were travelling over 66 KM/H. The combination of the hill and curve on Foster Thurston to the north significantly reduced sight lines at the intersection, exacerbated by the evidence of speeding.

The image to the right helps orient the day care relative to the surrounding streets and intersection. The approximate location of the new day care is purple. Foster Thurston Drive, to the north is red, the south leg of Sandy Point Road is blue, and the west leg of Sandy Point Road is green.



In 2021, rumble strips and speed feedback signs were installed on the north Foster Thurston and south Sandy Point Road approaches to this intersection. The combination of these two traffic calming elements reduced average speeds by approximately 4 KM/H, from 58 KM/H to 54 KM/H. City staff consider the reduction in speeds a success relative to the level of investment.

A Modern Roundabout at the Foster Thurston/Sandy Point intersection was recommended in 2011 and reiterated during the Roundabout Strategy of MoveSJ. A Modern Roundabout would further and significantly reduce operating speeds and decrease risk of serious injury, should collisions at the intersection occur. Design for this roundabout is currently underway with construction planned for 2025 pending funding approval.

The planned day care further increases the priority of the need to reduce operating speeds, including advancing the timeline of the roundabout construction. The combination of the increase in turning vehicles between the street and the day care, sight lines also being constrained in the vicinity of the day care access, and the fact access would overlap with times of greater traffic on the road network (during morning and afternoon rush hours) were factors that increased the project's priority. City staff's intention is to incorporate the access for the day care into the roundabout.

Through collaboration between City staff and the day care owner, it was identified that interim traffic calming measures between the time the day care would open in Fall of 2024 and the construction of the roundabout finishing in 2025 were important to implement. In the Fall of 2024, City staff are implementing several further interim measures including travel lane narrowing on the north Foster Thurston and south Sandy Point intersection legs using traffic paint, introduction

of centre temporary bollards, reinforcing the posted speed limit with enhanced centre-of-street signage, and making improvements to the Stop sign placement from the west Sandy Point leg.

The proposed amendment to the Traffic By-Law would reduce the speed limit from 50 KM/H to 40 KM/H, complement the new traffic calming measures, and generally encourage lower speeds.

### ***STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT***

This report aligns with Council's MOVE priority, specifically the focus on safe movement of people.

This report also aligns with MoveSJ.

### ***SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES***

The necessary investments will be covered within the City's General Fund Operating Budget. However, the need for the temporary traffic calming measures were not contemplated when the 2024 Traffic Road Safety Improvement plan was presented to the Public Safety Committee this spring and this project has and may continue to divert attention from some of these previously planned projects.

### ***INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS***

The owners of the day care provided input into this report.

The General Counsel Office created the translated Amendment attached to this report.

### ***ATTACHMENTS***

*Amendment to City of Saint John Traffic By-Law*