

## 8. BOWENVALE AVENUE NEIGHBOURHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager City Environment, Jane Parfitt, DDI 941-8656
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Chris Kerr, Acting Transport and City Streets Manager
<b>Author:</b>	Kirsty Ferguson, Consultation Leader

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board to undertake a 'do nothing' approach for traffic calming measures along Bowenvale Avenue.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Bowenvale Avenue Neighbourhood Improvement Project was originally included in the Capital Works Programme following historical complaints received by the Council, which identified vehicles travelling at high speeds as a problem in Bowenvale Avenue.
3. Consultation was undertaken in September 2004 via an initial issues identification survey with the residents of Bowenvale Avenue and its side streets. The primary conclusion drawn from the survey was that speed was perceived to be a major problem in the street. However, a speed survey undertaken in late October/early November 2004 demonstrated that high speeds were recorded in the early to mid-morning period, through to late afternoon, which predominantly related to residential traffic.
4. A letter was sent to residents in December 2004, advising that the Council considered engineering solutions would not be the best solution to resolving the speed issue. In particular, as the residents were concerned about speed in Bowenvale Avenue, and the speed survey demonstrated that residents were predominantly responsible for speeding along the street, the project team suggested that the residents would be best equipped to resolve the speed issue by changing their driving behaviour.
5. The project team anticipated that once the reason(s) for speeding were clearly identified, a letter sent to all residents would be as effective as engineered traffic calming measures. A report was presented to the Community Board in September 2005 recommending a "do nothing" approach until a further speed survey was undertaken in early 2006. In the interim, the Council's speed trailer was placed on Bowenvale Avenue on several occasions to demonstrate vehicle speeds to residents using the street.
6. A speed survey was undertaken in April 2006 along Bowenvale Avenue, which showed that the mean and 85 percentile speeds have both dropped since the last speed survey undertaken in 2004. In addition, no complaints have been received about speed in Bowenvale Avenue in the past 12 months, and a prioritisation ranking undertaken done by the Transport and City Streets Network Operations team demonstrated that the current situation would now not be considered for funding.
7. Therefore, it is considered that no traffic calming measures are required on Bowenvale Avenue and the residents should be congratulated for responding positively to the concerns raised within their street.

### FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8. The neighbourhood improvement project works for Bowenvale Avenue were programmed in the Transport and City Street Unit's capital programme for implementation in the 2005/06 financial year. The budgeted funding is no longer required if the recommended 'do nothing' approach is adopted by the Community Board.
9. There are no legal implications for this project.

## BACKGROUND ON BOWENVALE AVENUE NEIGHBOURHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

10. The Council has historically received requests to address traffic speed in Bowenvale Avenue from the residents, who identified vehicles travelling at high speeds as a problem. Bowenvale Avenue has a closed and defined catchment, and therefore does not have a high number of vehicles commuting through the street to join onto other streets.
11. Consultation was undertaken with the residents of Bowenvale Avenue and its side streets in September 2004 to investigate the traffic speed issue and to ascertain whether this problem had since been resolved. A letter was delivered to all landowners and occupiers of Bowenvale Avenue and its side streets, which asked residents to confirm if there was a problem with traffic speed along Bowenvale Avenue. A cut-off slip and freepost envelope were provided to encourage residents to express their concerns, if they had any.
12. It was explicitly stated in the letter that this initial feedback would determine if the project proceeded or not. If it was found that there is a general concern relating to traffic speed in Bowenvale Avenue from residents, the Council would investigate and then further consult with residents regarding the types and locations of calming devices that could be installed. The Council had a good response to the initial consultation letter, with a 45% response rate (i.e. 147 responses received out of 326 delivered). Of these responses, 108 indicated that there was a speed related problem, 23 considered there was no problem, and 7 did not provide an answer to this question, but raised other issues.
13. Where no response was received from residents, it was assumed that they had no problem with traffic speed in Bowenvale Avenue. This was also explicitly stated in the letter sent out for consultation. The other common issues arising from the initial consultation included:
  - Cyclists in vehicles accessing tracks at the end of Bowenvale Ave (including mountain bikers) – 47 responses
  - Hoons/boy racers – 54 responses
  - Bus route and bus issues – 9 responses
  - Dark street (i.e. lighting issues) – 2 responses.
14. Due to the reasonably high response rate identifying speed-related issues along Bowenvale Avenue (i.e. 33% of the total delivered), a speed survey was carried out in late October/early November 2004. This survey found that the majority of speeding was generally occurring over the mid-morning to late afternoon period on weekdays, with the speed in one instance recorded at over 100 kph. There were 3-4 instances of speeds recorded between 80 to 100 kph on each day during the survey period.
15. Based on these findings, the project team concluded that the times when vehicles were speeding related predominantly to local residents, rather than late night speedsters, or cyclists/mountain bikers. It is important to note that this finding does not discount the occasional record of speeding vehicles late at night or in the early hours of the morning. Generally, hoons/boy racers tend to speed at night, while cycling/mountain biking generally occurs in the late afternoon (in summer) and on the weekends. However, the high speed issues identified appear to be the result of residents' themselves speeding during the day.
16. It was therefore concluded that:
  - Of those respondents who indicated that there was not a speed problem, it was interesting to note that they generally live in rear sections (i.e. not directly fronting Bowenvale Avenue) with the exception of 34, 99, 102, 103 and 109 Bowenvale Avenue.
  - While some respondents indicated the exact location of the speed problems, many of the respondents took a holistic approach and considered that speed was a problem for the entire length, and "speedsters" were seen along many parts of Bowenvale Avenue.
  - Of the other issues raised, the findings indicated that 32% of respondents perceived that cyclists and/or mountain bikers were the cause of the speed problem, while 37% perceived that hoons/boy racers were the cause of the problem.
  - Analysis of the speed survey data clearly showed that the higher speeds were occurring during the mid-morning to late afternoon time periods on weekdays. This time period does not occur when hoons/boy racers or cyclists/mountain bikers would commonly be in the area.

17. It was therefore recommended that the residents and local community should be encouraged to take ownership of the speed-related issues at this time, and that a further review of traffic speeds in this area should be carried out in 2005/06. At this time, if there was still an issue with high traffic speeds along Bowenvale Avenue, then the option of traffic speed reduction measures could be further investigated.
18. In the interim, the Council's speed trailer was placed in Bowenvale Avenue to demonstrate to residents the speed at which they travel along the street.
19. A further speed survey was undertaken in April 2006 with the following results:

Year	Mean Speed	85%-ile Speed
2004	50 km/hr	59 km/hr
2006	49 km/hr	57 km/hr

20. The *Procedures for LATMS Requests* guideline states that for a street to have traffic calming measures installed, the street should have a known speeding problem (i.e. 15% of vehicles are travelling over 58 km/hr). As the above speeds indicate, the April 2006 85%-ile is 57 km/hr, which does not meet this guideline for the installation of traffic calming measures.
21. A prioritisation ranking was also undertaken in May 2006 to see how this project would now rate in terms of funding for the relevant budget categories of the Capital Works Programme. It achieved a ranking of 34. A new project would need a minimum of 35 to be considered for funding on the Capital Works Programme.
22. The Network Operations team advised that they used to get regular calls about speeding along Bowenvale Avenue, and now they do not receive any. A search of the Councils 'Request for Service' (RFS) system confirmed that no complaints have been received between May 2005 and May 2006.
23. Therefore, the project team concluded that there is no justification for pursuing the installation of traffic calming measures along Bowenvale Avenue.

#### OPTIONS

24. While the initial consultation phase was largely an investigative process, potential options to address traffic speed along Bowenvale Avenue were identified as follows:
  - Speed humps
  - Chicanes
  - Road narrowing
  - Police enforcement
25. Respondents to the initial letter, sent to stakeholders in September 2004, divided their opinions on these options as follows:
  - Speed humps – 22 for, 17 against
  - Chicanes – 6 for, 11 against
  - Road narrowing – 8 for, 12 against
  - Police enforcement – 18 for, 1 against
26. Of those respondents who indicated a preference for engineering solutions, 36 were in favour of such options, with 40 against. The non-engineering option of police enforcement was favoured by 18 respondents, and opposed by one. Other suggestions to address traffic speed included the potential for construction of raised platforms on Bowenvale Avenue at each intersection with a side road and/or lane, and the installation of a centre white line.

### **PREFERRED OPTION**

27. It was considered that the most cost effective solution for the Council to reduce speeds along Bowenvale Avenue was to inform residents of the findings of the initial consultation and investigation with a view to encouraging residents and the local community to take ownership of the speed-related problem. This was carried out in December 2004.
28. Following the results of a speed survey undertaken in April 2006, the project team recommends a preferred option to 'do nothing' in relation to traffic calming measures along Bowenvale Avenue. The continued use of the speed trailer on occasion in Bowenvale Avenue is also recommended.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board support the staff recommendation to not undertake physical traffic calming work along Bowenvale Avenue.

### **CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION**

That the staff recommendation be supported.