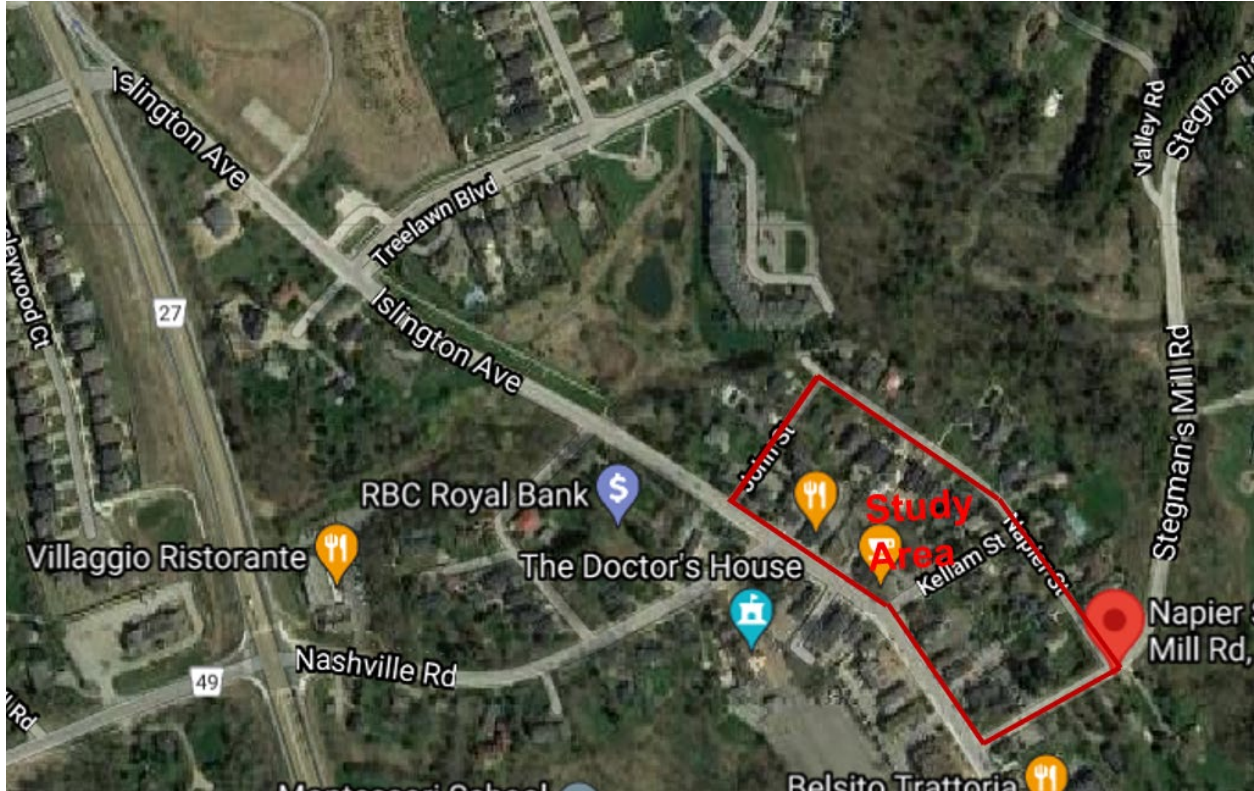


# Napier Street Area Traffic Operations and Road Safety Study

## Public Engagement Summary Report



Prepared by LURA Consulting

February 2022



## Executive Summary

The following 'What We Heard Summary' provides an overview of the feedback received by the City of Vaughan and its consultants on the proposed Napier Street Area Traffic Operations and Road Safety Study.

Community members provided feedback on elements of the proposed traffic operations and road safety study options. Through this process, which is elaborated further in the following pages, the project team heard several key perspectives shared by participants in the virtual public meeting and online survey, including the following:

- Though support for the proposed options was mixed, public meeting participants and survey respondents were eager to see the study area safety improved.
- Community members agreed that significant changes need to be made to this study area to improve traffic safety.
- Participants in the public meeting and online survey reiterated safety concerns about speed, a narrow roadway, through traffic on Napier Street and dangerous intersections.
- Residents sought clarity on how each mitigation option would impact the broader neighbourhood traffic patterns.
- Residents who live on Napier Street requested further enforcement of no parking.
- The influx of tourists and visitors who drive through this neighbourhood on the weekend contributes to resident concerns, especially on Kellam and Napier Streets.

# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	i
Introduction .....	1
Consultation and Engagement Approach .....	1
Engagement Summary.....	1
Virtual Public Meeting .....	1
Online Survey .....	1
Communication Methods .....	1
What we heard .....	2
Road Closure.....	2
Partial Closure .....	3
Traffic Mitigation .....	7
Transportation Issues .....	9
Additional Comments.....	9
Questions .....	10
Participant Characteristics.....	11
Next Steps.....	11

## Introduction

In November 2020, Vaughan Council directed staff to undertake a traffic mitigation study in Kleinburg. The streets included in the study area are John Street, Kellam Street, Islington Avenue (between Highway 27 and Nashville Road), Stegman's Mill Road (between Islington Avenue and Napier Street) and Nashville Road (between Highway 27 and Islington Avenue). The study includes assessing the feasibility of a partial or complete closure of Napier Street at Stegman's Mill Road. In addition, various traffic mitigation methods will be examined and reported.

## Consultation and Engagement Approach

During engagement for the Napier Street Area Traffic Study, participants were requested to provide feedback regarding the proposed options for traffic mitigation in the study area. The purpose of this community consultation was to give an overview of the proposed and preferred options for traffic mitigation, including:

- Full closure of Napier Street at Stegman's Mill Road
- Partial closure of Napier Street at Stegman's Mill Road
- Options to address operating speeds
- Options to manage traffic infiltration

Feedback gathered through this engagement will help to inform the final review and report for the Napier Street Area Traffic Study. The City of Vaughan engaged community members through a virtual public meeting and an online survey.

## Engagement Summary

### Virtual Public Meeting

A community meeting was held virtually on Nov. 23, 2021, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The event began with a presentation from Paradigm Solutions Inc. (Transportation Consultants) and the City of Vaughan Transportation Services staff, followed by questions and feedback from attendees. In total, 16 people attended the virtual public meeting. The presentation slides were made available online following the meeting for review on the City's webpage.

### Online Survey

An online survey was posted on the City's engagement platform Have Your Say, Vaughan, from Nov. 23, 2021, to Dec. 17, 2021. Additionally, a paper copy of the survey was mailed to all households in the Napier Street area. Eighteen people completed the survey online, and two people completed paper (mail-in) surveys.

### Communication Methods

The public meeting and online survey were advertised and promoted using the following methods:

Outreach Method	Outreach Activities
<b>Project Webpage</b>	A dedicated webpage – <a href="http://vaughan.ca/NapierStreet">vaughan.ca/NapierStreet</a> – was developed to host all project-related information. Through the webpage, interested residents could also subscribe to receive updates and information about the project, access the survey and public information session material.
<b>Mobile Signage</b>	Mobile signage was erected at Napier Street and Stegman’s Mill Road to inform the immediate area about the public information session.
<b>Council Packages</b>	Distributed Council packages for Councillors to share information about the Public Information Session and the survey through their targeted networks.
<b>Social media messages</b>	Distributed content on all City social channels to promote the public information session and the online survey.
<b>Engagement eNewsletter</b>	Promoted the study to a dedicated engagement mailing list.
<b>Surveys Mailed to Home</b>	A copy of the survey was mailed to residents' homes within the study area. Through this, residents could mail back the survey to the City of Vaughan.
<b>Public Meeting Direct Mail</b>	A flyer advertising the public meeting was mailed to 33 homes within the study area.

## What we heard

The following section summarizes the key themes from feedback received through the virtual public meeting and the online survey.

### Road Closure

To improve sightlines and safety, options for the complete closure of Napier Street and Stegman’s Mill Road intersection were investigated and presented for feedback:

- **Option 1b:** full closure of Napier Street at Stegman’s Mill Road via curb reinstatement along with bollards or other similar permanent traffic barriers, resulting in a dead-end.
- **Option 1c:** full closure of Napier Street at Stegman’s Mill Road via a traffic/barrier gate. The gate would always remain closed unless required access (i.e., by an emergency vehicle, waste collection vehicles, snowplows, etc.).

The study also investigated the complete closure of Napier Street and Stegman’s Mill Road (Option 1a in the presentation video) by creating a cul-de-sac. However, this option is not feasible due to spatial constraints and will not be pursued, and thus, was not presented for feedback.

Residents expressed equal support and opposition for a full closure of Napier Street on Stegman’s Mill Road.

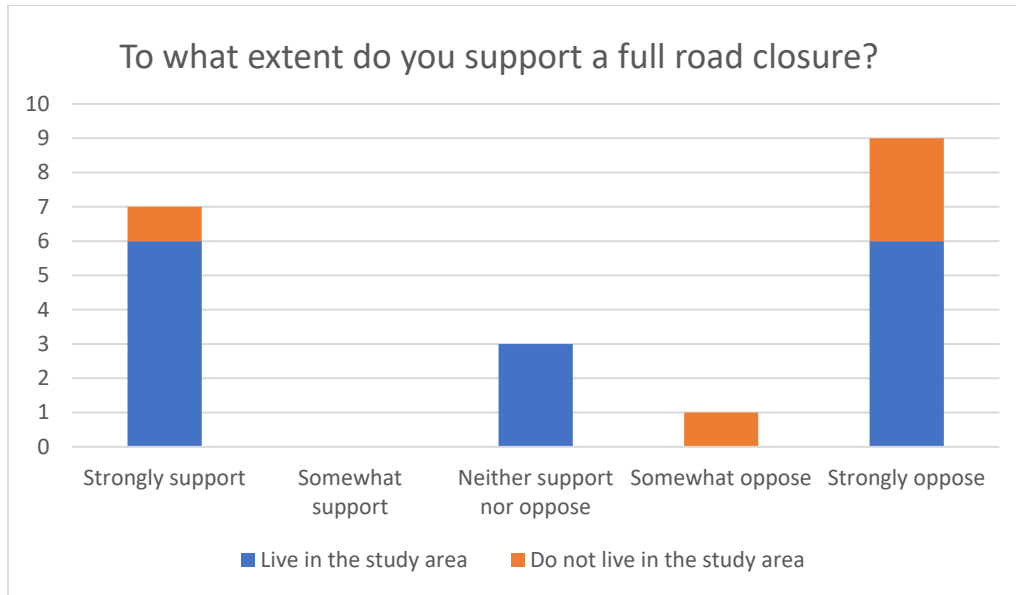


Figure 1. Chart showing support levels for a full road closure

Survey participants provided additional comments to elaborate on the options they preferred. These comments are summarized as follows:

- Residents have concerns with snow clearing, waste collection and emergency vehicles having access.
- Residents would like to see further efforts to slow traffic on Napier Street.
- Some residents felt this is the only solution that does not cause further safety issues.
- Some residents do not want to see the street closed.
- Residents noted the need to think about housing development in the area and how the closure would impact it.

Public meeting participants provided additional comments on the complete closure options. These comments are summarized as follows:

- Some residents noted that the full closure would not be supported due to emergency access concerns.

A comment received via email regarding a full closure of Napier Street indicated concern that full closure may disrupt access to the commercial core for visitors to the area. In summary, there is both concern and support for a full road closure.

### Partial Closure

#### Option 2a – “3/4” Access Only

Survey participants were then asked for feedback on Option 2a – the introduction of a “3/4” access only (left in/right in/right out), which would restrict the outbound left-turn movements from Napier Street. As shown in the figure below, residents generally did not prefer this option, with seven (35%) supporting it and 11 (55%) opposing it. There is slightly more opposition than support for this option among respondents who live in the Napier Street study area.

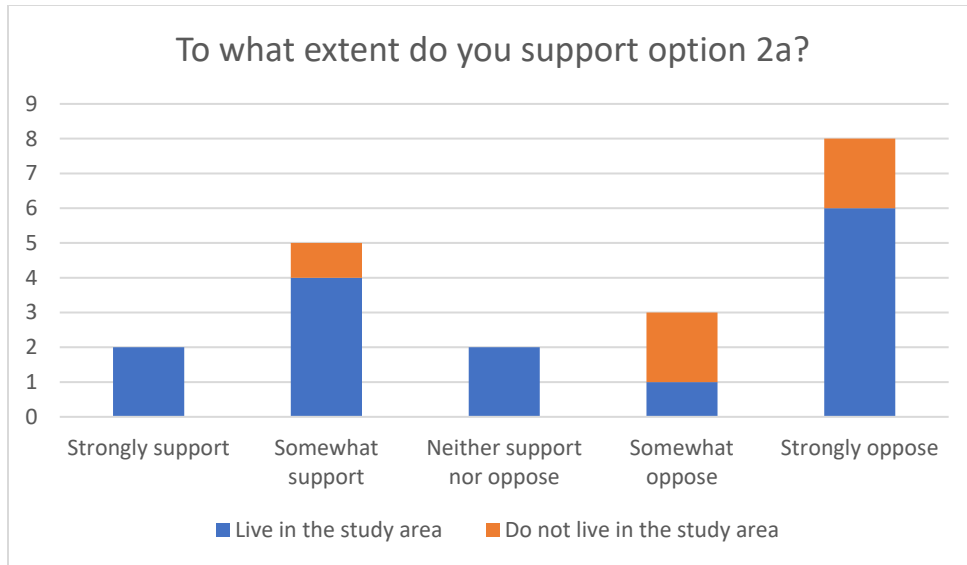


Figure 2. Chart showing support levels for the introduction of a  $\frac{3}{4}$  access option

Survey participants provided additional comments on Option 2a, summarized as follows:

- Residents would like access to Napier Street from Stegman’s Mill Road to remain.
- Some suggested the idea of permitting right turns only from Napier Street onto Stegman’s, with no left turns on Stegman’s.
- Some requested the City consider the addition of lights.
- Residents expressed concerns that this solution will not address the through traffic issue on Napier Street.
- Some felt the traffic volume is an issue and would like to see full closure.
- Some preferred a full closure; 2a would be their preferred option if a full closure is not possible.

Public meeting attendees provided additional comments on Option 2a, summarized as follows:

- Residents noted that the most critical issue that needs to be addressed is the unsafe intersection of Napier Street and Stegman’s Mill Road.

In summary, many participants surveyed either strongly oppose or somewhat oppose introducing a  $\frac{3}{4}$  access option. Residents further suggested that the City investigate the addition of lights and the permitting of right turns only onto Stegman’s Mill Road.

#### Option 2b – Right-in/Right-out Only

Survey participants were then asked about Option 2b – to introduce a “right-in/right-out” access that restricts outbound left-turn movements from Napier Street and inbound left-turn movements from Stegman’s Mill Road. Public meeting participants and the survey respondents who live within the study area equally provided support and opposition for right in/right out option. Further, while some participants noted that this option would be preferable with the addition of a traffic light, other residents did not feel that this option provides enough traffic mitigation.

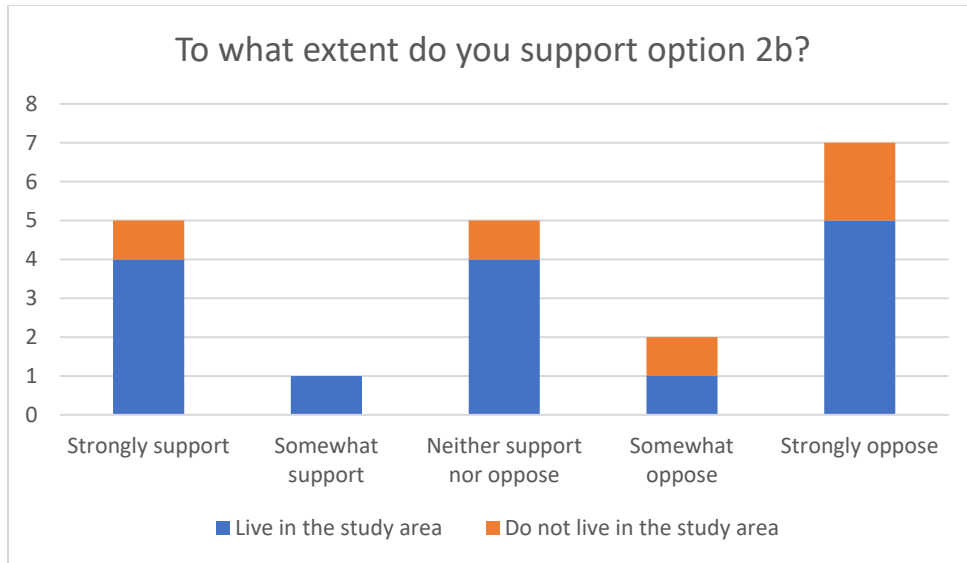


Figure 3. Chart showing support levels for the introduction of a right in/right out access option

Survey participants provided additional comments on Option 2b, summarized as follows:

- Residents noted concern that drivers may still make left turns regardless.
- Some residents raised concerns that this option only partially addresses the traffic issue.

Participants in the public meeting shared the following remarks:

- Residents shared that option 2b is the safest for emergency vehicle access.
- Some residents remarked that they would like this option and the addition of traffic lights.
- Residents noted concerns with how option 2b functions, feeling that it would not provide enough traffic mitigation.
- Some residents remarked that the right-in and right-out options make the most sense in this environment.

In summary, both participants of the public meeting and the survey who live within the study area were divided in their opinion on the right in/right out option. Further, while some participants noted that this option would be preferable with the addition of a traffic light, other residents did not feel that this option provides enough traffic mitigation.

#### Option 2c – Inbound Movements Only

Survey participants were then asked for feedback on Option 2c – a curb bump out to restrict all outbound movements from Napier Street. As shown in the figure below, most (70%) opposed this option, and only 20% supported it. Among respondents who live in the Napier Street study area, most were opposed.



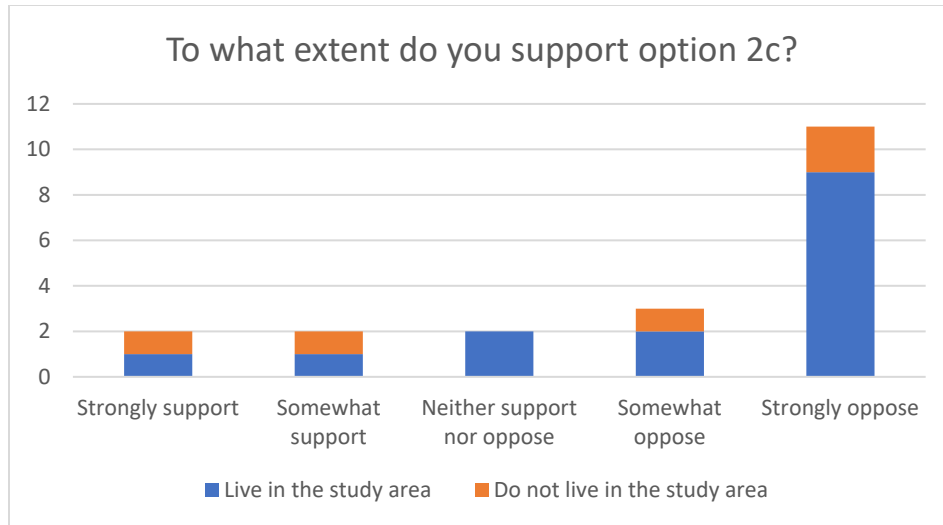


Figure 4. Chart showing support levels for the introduction of a curb bump out

Survey participants provided additional comments on Option 2c, summarized as follows:

- Residents noted that this option creates the potential for collisions with southbound traffic on Napier Street forced to turn around.
- Some residents noted that it partially addresses the issue and helps reduce traffic flow.

#### Full or Partial Closure

When survey participants were asked to indicate whether they prefer a full or partial closure, there was a slight preference for partial closure (60%), as shown in the figure below.

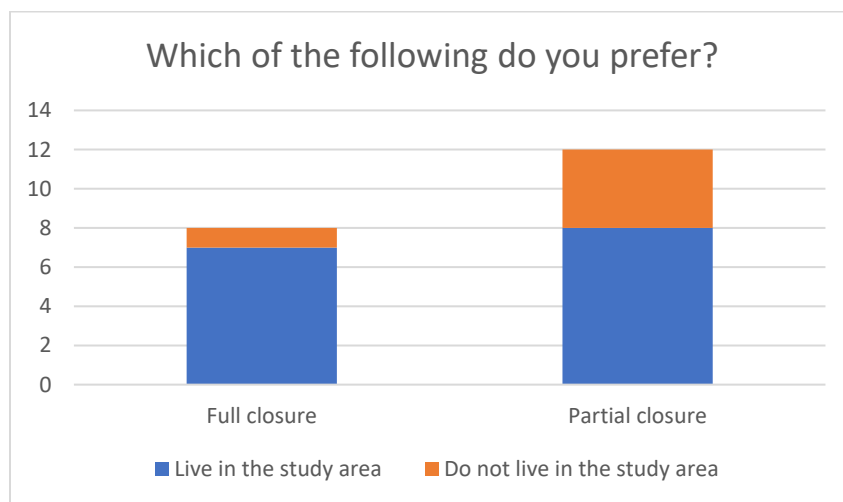


Figure 5. Chart showing support levels for both full closure and partial closure options

Survey participants provided additional comments on their preference, summarized as follows:

- Some suggested that only a right turn from Napier Street onto Stegman's Mill be permitted with no left turns onto Stegman's Mill Road.
- Some supported any level of closure to help address safety issues.
- Some indicated they are not supportive of any level of closure.

Public meeting participants provided additional comments on their preference, summarized as follows:

- Attendee support was split between a complete closure and the right-in/right-out option.

In summary:

- 60% responded in support of a partial road closure, and based on the partial road closure, the option of right in/right out (option 2b) is preferred.
- 75% of survey respondents live in the study area, and 25% do not.

### Traffic Mitigation

Survey participants have presented traffic mitigation measures proposed to manage traffic speeds in the area, as follows:

- **Option 3:** application of pavement markings to influence drivers' perceptions of the roadway environment. It will include the application of longitudinal edge of pavement markings to narrow the roadway and travel lanes artificially.
- **Option 4:** application of pavement markings to influence drivers' perceptions of the roadway environment. Regulatory speed limits will be stenciled on the roadway to increase driver awareness.
- **Option 5:** implement "rumble strips" as a measure to alert motorists and as a physical means of reducing travel speed. There are speed humps in place along Islington Avenue. However, the current spacing results in short speed decreases with motorists speeding up between speed hump locations. Implementation of "rumble strips" may result in road noise.
- **Option 6:** implement flexible bollards (i.e., "flexposts") at locations that will artificially narrow the roadway creating the perceived need to slow down. This may require further discussion with the larger community for alignment with the community's historical character.
- **Option 7:** lowering the posted speed limit on Islington Avenue from 50 km/h to 40 km/h between Highway 27 and Lester B. Pearson Street for consistency with the rest of the corridor.
- **Option 8:** increased signage along the corridor (i.e., slow pedestrians) and installation of speed boards to raise awareness of the environment.
- **Option 9:** designating the residential area as a "Neighborhood Area" per the City's [Speed Limit Policy](#). The speed limit would be set using specialized signage. The entry points to the area would be signed and accompanied by roadway stenciled pavement markings illustrating the regulatory speed limits to increase driver awareness when entering these zones.
- **Option 10:** prohibition of left-turning movements from Islington Avenue to John Street and Kellam Street to deter cut-through traffic. However, without effective enforcement, the travel route may continue to be utilized by non-local traffic. This will restrict access by residents and non-residents alike.

Participants in the online survey showed varying levels of support for the traffic mitigation options, as shown in the figure below. Options 7, 8 and 9 had the highest levels of strong support. Option 3 and 4 were also widely supported.

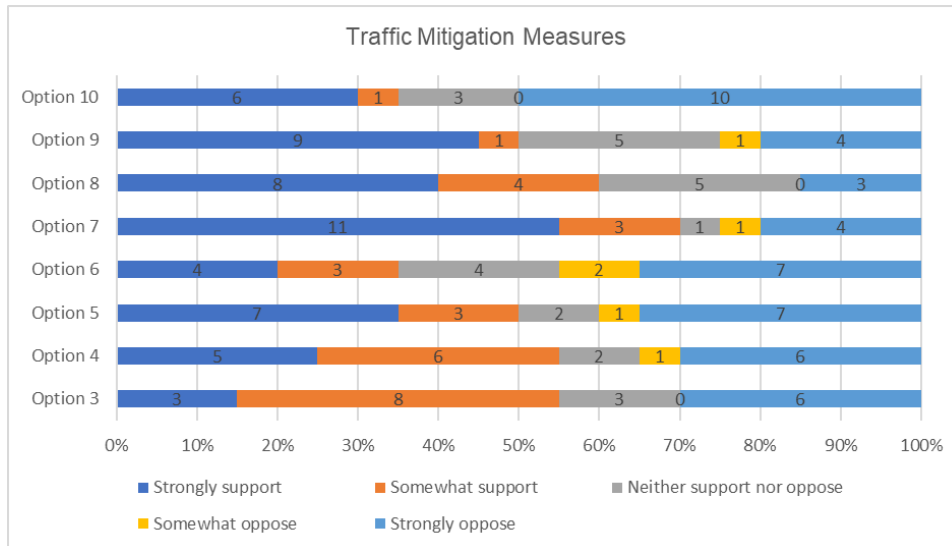


Figure 6. Chart showing support levels for traffic mitigation options

Survey participants provided additional comments on the mitigation options, summarized as follows:

- Participants noted the need for community awareness on traffic safety issues.
- Participants noted concern about the noise created from rumble strips.
- Participants remain aware of the implications of decisions on the Islington Avenue commercial area (especially regarding option 10).
- Participants remarked that option 10 left turn limitations could be only morning and evening peak hours.
- Participants remarked that a right turn only option from Napier Street to Stegman’s should be explored.
- Participants noted that the mitigation options would only be necessary if there is no full closure.

Public meeting participants provided additional comments on the mitigation options, summarized as follows.

- Participants noted concern about the increased traffic these changes will create for Islington Avenue.
- Participants requested to see the City’s speed board program on Islington Avenue.
- Participants remarked that mitigation options presented will create changes for traffic flow on Islington; this should be considered.
- Participants would like to see speed bumps on John Street and Napier Street.

Feedback received via email included a suggestion to convert the stop sign at Stegman’s Mill Road and Islington Avenue to a signalized intersection.

## Transportation Issues

Participants in the public meeting were asked what local transportation issues and concerns they had noticed. The following list summarizes their responses:

- Participants noted that with the new housing development, traffic would become worse with additional cars in the area.
- Participants remarked that the addition of a pedestrian crosswalk at Islington Avenue and Kipling Avenue.
- Participants noted that a lack of parking in the downtown business core pushes vehicles into this neighbourhood.

## Additional Comments

Participants in the public meeting were asked if they would like to make any additional comments. Survey participants also provided other comments in their responses. The following is a summary of additional comments received.

### **Speed Bumps**

Residents noted a desire to see speed bumps on Napier, Kellam and John Street. Staff noted that the City has a traffic-calming policy that speaks to the installation of speed bumps. They would need to study this independently. Staff also noted the disadvantages of speed bumps, include noise due to braking, snow clearing implications, slowing emergency vehicles and the overall effectiveness of speed bumps in slowing vehicles. Travel speeds within the study area were reviewed, and was determined that the operating speeds along the local roadways of Napier Street, John Street, and Kellam Street were found to be in the range of 37km/h to 43km/h in compliance with the statutory speed limit.

### **Extending the study**

Residents requested traffic to be studied further outside the study area to include more of Islington Avenue. The intersection of Kellam Street and Islington Avenue is perceived as dangerous, and residents felt it needed to be addressed. Residents want the speeding on Islington addressed and would like to see additional signage extend beyond the study area to assist with traffic calming, such as speed boards.

### **Parking**

Residents noted that there are many illegally parked cars on local streets, which block driveways and narrow the road. They would like to see further enforcement and additional signage in this area to outline parking rules, including hours and how close they can park to an intersection. This is also compounded by local businesses using this area for their customers to park, creating increased traffic and limiting visibility at corners. This is worse during weekends due to people coming to shop in the village.

Participants in the public meeting noted that inlay parking on Kellam Street should be removed as they felt it congested the street and created unsafe conditions.

### **Speeding and safety**

It was noted during the public meeting that the intersection of Napier Street and Stegman's Mill Road is unsafe, cars speed through it, and there is a concern for the safety of the children who

live and walk to school in this area. Residents also felt the road at the intersection needed repair as it is slippery and in poor condition. They also expressed that drivers rarely use a mirror.

Participants noted that many drivers coming off Islington Avenue use these small roads to bypass traffic, speed along Napier Street and make it very unsafe.

Survey respondents noted the importance of providing safe routes for cyclists and that if road access is restricted to cars, then cyclists should be exempt.

Feedback received via email requested additional signage to warn drivers of speeding penalties and engine noise, as the noise from car acceleration and driver behaviour is very disruptive.

### **Housing Development (357, 365, & 375 Stegman's Mill Road)**

Many residents in the public meeting and the online survey noted concern with the future housing development at municipal addresses 357, 365, & 375 Stegman's Mill Road. They were concerned that growth would bring additional traffic and people to the area. Residents asked if the intersection at Napier Street and Stegman Avenue could be turned into a four-way stop.

City staff commented that vehicular access would be offset from Napier Street, and movement would be restricted from the development onto Napier Street. The City will improve sightlines for vehicles and pedestrians who utilize this neighbourhood. During the development application phase, City staff foresee that a right-in/right-out closure would benefit the larger community when the development at 357, 365, & 375 Stegman's Mill Road is built.

### **Questions**

The following questions were received during the public meeting:

Q: Did you consider a stoplight at Islington Avenue and Stegman's Mill Road?

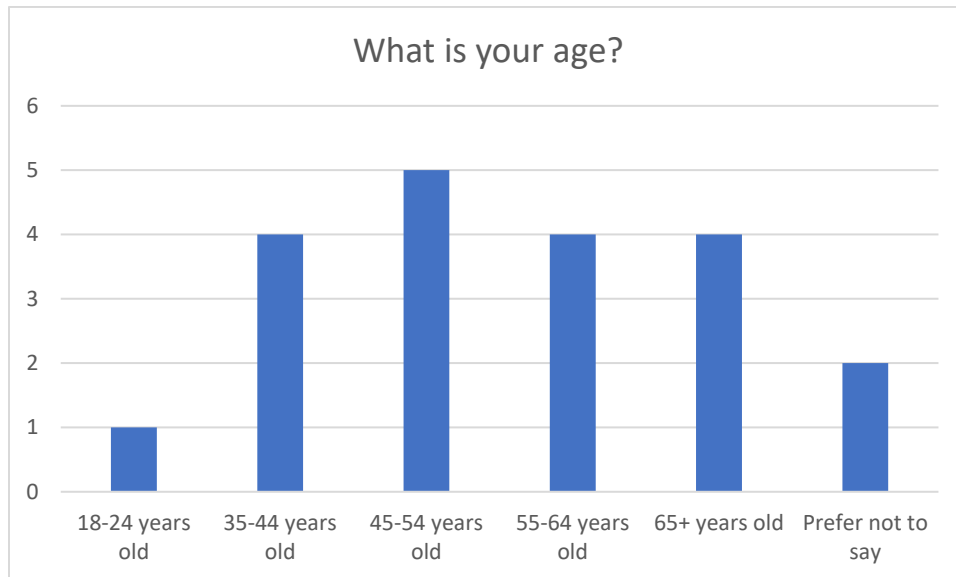
A: Traffic signals were examined but based on current volumes, the addition of a traffic signal was not warranted. There is also the additional concern of the impact of a signalized intersection onto vehicles cueing onto Islington Avenue.

Q: Is the data that has been collected for this study sufficient? Due to COVID-19, residents are concerned the numbers do not provide an accurate sense of the issue. Did you consider the number of tourists that visit and the commuters who use this route daily, cars parking on Napier Street, construction and delivery trucks, and the busy park across the street?

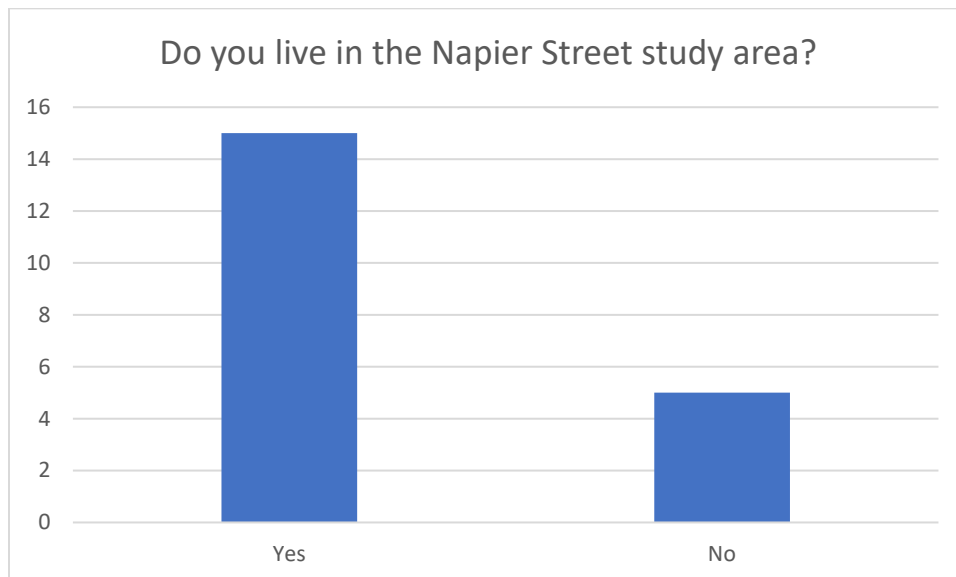
A: While there were obstacles to data collection due to COVID-19, efforts were made to address those impacts and challenges. Data collection began in late May and was collected again in July and mid-October. Staff ensured the data was in line with historical counts and were adjusted to ensure the statistics were accurate and that COVID-19 would not negatively impact the study.

## Participant Characteristics

Survey participants were asked for their age, shown in the figure below.



Survey participants were asked whether they lived in the Napier Street study area, shown in the figure below.



## Next Steps

This feedback and the additional details provided in this document will help evaluate potential solutions. The report developed will be available in the winter of 2022. Following that, City staff will prepare a final report to City Council.