

Active and Public Transportation

Safety, Accessibility and Equity

RECOMMENDATION

That the April 12, 2022, Integrated Infrastructure Services report IIS00934, be received for information.

Report Purpose

Information only.

To inform Urban Planning Committee of current policies relating to ensuring safety, accessibility and equity for active and public transportation in the development of traffic accommodation plans.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the December 13, 2021, City Council meeting the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report to Urban Planning Committee with an overview of current policy guidance and potential recommended policy changes relating to ensuring safety, accessibility and equity for active and public transportation in the development of traffic accommodation plans.

Executive Summary

- The review of current policies and procedures has identified that they are sufficient to ensure safety, accessibility and equity for active and public transportation and therefore no changes are recommended at this time.
- Safety, accessibility and equity for active and public modes of transportation are identified in numerous existing City of Edmonton policies, plans and strategies.
- Processes, permits and contract obligations are used to implement the policies, plans and strategies.

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- In 2021, the Manual of Temporary Traffic Control was updated to include improvements related to the regulation, administration and enforcement of processes for travel disruptions on roadways, sidewalks, bike lanes and shared-use paths.
- Implementation of the Manual of Temporary Traffic Control is underway, including educational training for applicable City employees. Exploration for ways to educate and train external partners is also underway.
- Administration has completed significant work on these equity components for sidewalk accessibility, safe mobility and transit including updates to traffic accommodation requirements for both City-led work and for external contractors.

REPORT

The City of Edmonton has a number of methods that guide and ensure safety, accessibility and equity for active and public transportation when traffic accommodations are required. With these foundational policies and procedures in place, Administration's continual improvement focus is ensuring they are understood and proactively integrated into all accommodations in an equitable way.

As part of continuous improvement, Administration is proactive in ensuring pedestrian and cycling access is maintained whenever possible in order to minimize disruptions. Administration is intentionally focusing on shifting the mindset of all who work for the city to accommodate all modes of transportation in an equitable way.

The ways Administration is guided include:

- Plans, policies and strategies;
- Permitting and manuals; and
- Contractor obligations.

Each of these are detailed below with descriptions of relevance and intent.

Plans, Policies and Strategies

There are a number of plans, policies and strategies that direct the practices and procedures that provide the foundation for the infrastructure to allow Edmontonians to be mobile throughout the City by their choice of mode while keeping them safe.

ConnectEdmonton aims to provide mobility options to support the goal of Urban Places. The City Plan envisions a vibrant and prosperous city with an integrated mobility system that provides all users convenient, safe and inclusive options. It envisions a mobility system that should facilitate opportunity, connection, and health, while being safe, inclusive and barrier free for all users. This system includes transit and roadway networks that are integrated with pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to support choice. Further to The City Plan, the Bike Plan (2020) lays the foundation for a network that is accessible, predictable, and clear for the inexperienced rider and the most experienced rider alike. It supports active transportation as an integral part of Edmonton's mobility system.

Other relevant City policies and how they relate are as follows:

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- **Active Transportation Policy 2009 (C544)** provides Edmontonians with opportunities to walk, roll, and cycle, regardless of age, ability, or socio-economic status; to enhance the safety, inclusivity and diversity of our communities.
- **Accessibility for People with Disabilities Policy 2019 (C602)** guides the development and implementation of City policies, civic engagement, programs and services, communications and technology, employee services and infrastructure that considers individual needs and diverse abilities.
- **Complete Streets Policy 2015 (C573A)** guides the planning and design of all streets to reflect the characteristics of the area and all users (i.e. cyclists, pedestrians, truck drivers, auto drivers, all ages and people who have mobility challenges) of the roadway, as well as supports an integrated, connected network approach to serve all modes of transportation.
- **Construction Hoarding Policy 2017 (C580A)** provides guidance related to the use of temporary traffic control in support of construction activities to balance the interests of all parties in order to achieve public safety, transportation mode equity, vibrant streetscapes and community.
- **The Safe Mobility Strategy 2021-2025** guides work toward achieving Vision Zero, zero traffic related fatalities and serious injuries, through safe and livable streets in Edmonton.

Permitting and Manuals

The City's policies and procedures are implemented through specific processes that consider traffic accommodations for equity and safety of all mobility types. The following two processes apply policy to ensure that when traffic accommodations are created that there is safety, accessibility and equity for active and public transportation.

The On-Street Construction and Maintenance (OSCAM) permit system is used to regulate the operations of the City's mobility network. An OSCAM permit is required for work on City road-right-of-way, including sidewalks, shared pathways, boulevards and roads. These permits work to enhance the safety and accessibility of work sites by ensuring the appropriate accommodations are in place for all modes of transportation, provide a mechanism to coordinate and minimize the potential impacts of nearby worksites, make disruption information available and transparent to citizens and support clearly defined enforcement.

The City's Manual of Temporary Traffic Control 2021 (Attachment 1) was recently updated in 2021 as a result of revisions to the Construction Hoarding Policy C580A, and includes improvements related to the regulation, administration, and enforcement of processes for travel disruptions on roadways, sidewalks, bike lanes, and shared-use paths. The City's Manual of Temporary Traffic Control provides guidance to internal and external agencies on the planning and implementation of temporary traffic control required when work sites may interfere with access to sidewalks, bike infrastructure or roadways and outlines the minimum safety precautions that should be taken at worksites to protect workers and the traveling public regardless of how they move. Consideration for prioritizing active modes is addressed in the manual, as described in section 1.3. The

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prescribed planning, signage and site upkeep related to active modes are addressed throughout the manual.

The 2021 update includes new direction on selection and design of temporary traffic controls for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities, so construction projects do not inadvertently make it more difficult for people to walk, wheel and cycle. The manual highlights walking, cycling and transit as modal priorities and provides detailed guidance on how these modes may be accommodated, including information on pedestrian wayfinding and the accommodation of pedestrians with limited mobility or low vision. An e-learning course on the updated procedures for the administration and setup of temporary traffic control has been developed for internal audiences, including traffic technicians, crew leaders and construction project managers. Administration is also exploring providing this educational tool to external partners such as utility groups, Alberta Road Builders Association, developers and home building industry partners.

Contractor Obligations

When roadway construction or maintenance projects are undertaken by the City, there are specific minimum requirements outlined as part of the scope of the contract documents.

In an effort to ensure equitable and safe access for all modes of transportation within a roadway construction zone, contracts contain clauses that specifically require multi-modal traffic accommodation including active and public transportation. The contractor is required to prepare Transportation Management Plans and Traffic Accommodations Plans. These plans delineate the proposed public accessible space and how it is utilized to support provision of detour routes including the supply and installation of temporary traffic control devices for the duration of construction. Administration reviews, provides feedback and comments before providing approval to ensure they align with the expectations set out in the contract documents.

Where applicable, there are also specific requirements for safe pedestrian and cyclist thoroughfares as well as continuous pedestrian access within the work site where pedestrian thoroughfares presently exist. These requirements are project specific and dependent upon the site context, safety and risk, as well as the schedule and user demand requirements.

In summary, at this time no policy changes are considered necessary based on the existing policy and guidance summarized, which currently addresses safety, accessibility and equity for active and public transportation in the development of traffic accommodation plans.

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

As a relationship based city, Administration listens and learns from the community in many ways: research, meetings with stakeholders (residents, businesses, organizations, etc), through partnerships, social media listening, public engagement, online petitions, 311 inquiries and other forms of community conversation and connections.

Public Engagement for this information report was not completed, as this report is related to an administrative review of existing policies and processes where public and stakeholder engagement was already completed.

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GBA+

As this report is a summary of existing policies and processes, GBA+ was not applied to the information in this report; however, it was considered in much of the referenced work such as the City Plan, Safe Mobility Strategy, design of On Demand transit service and Manual of Temporary Traffic Control. In addition, an equity analysis is underway on the transit network, as a follow up to the implementation of the revised bus network and On Demand transit service.

The Safe Mobility Strategy also prioritizes equity both in its development and in the implementation of key actions identified for 2021/2022. As one of the GBA+ pilot projects for the City of Edmonton, an equity analysis was completed to support the focus and approach of how Edmonton's transportation system can become safer and more livable. In practice, this equity analysis has informed the evolution of programs and initiatives, such as the Safe Crossing Program. Previously, crossing assessments were initiated based on volumes of 311 inquiries where now a refreshed approach integrates many factors, including current stage use, future growth outlined by the City Plan, equity considerations, and lived experience.

ATTACHMENT

1. Manual of Temporary Traffic Control