

# Public Engagement on Residential Speed Limits

## Recommendation:

That the June 7, 2017, City Operations report CR\_4266, be received for information.

## Report Summary

**This report provides the results of public engagement surveys that address decreasing speed limits within residential areas in the City of Edmonton.**

## Previous Council/Committee Action

At the November 23, 2016, Urban Planning Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report on the results of the public engagement on slower speed limits within residential communities.

## Report

Residential speeding continues to be an important topic for the City. Currently, speed limits under 50 km/hr are in place for school zones and in three residential communities. In 2010, the City initiated a pilot project to reduce the posted speed limit from 50 km/hr to 40 km/hr within the communities of Woodcroft, Ottewell, and King Edward Park. This project was delivered by the City in collaboration with several partners including the Edmonton Police Service and the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. The project's major findings included the impact on the frequency and severity of collisions, changes in driver behaviours, and the community perception of traffic safety. The report and its associated components provide a wealth of information regarding the impact of reducing the posted speed limit on the level of safety within the three residential communities.

In October 2012, the City passed the Speed Reduction Policy (C566) that allows individual neighbourhoods, with 67 percent community support, to request the reduction of their residential speed limit.

More recently, the City's 2015 adoption of Vision Zero makes investigating the reduction of residential speed limits more imperative. A key component of the Vision Zero strategy is the Safe Systems Approach, which advocates for a shared accountability between road users and those who design, maintain, and operate all parts of the road transportation system. It also includes public initiatives around improving road safety. Incorporating road safety into engagement with the public on transportation-related projects helps to increase citizens' understanding of

Administration's public safety initiatives and to improve Edmonton's road-safety culture.

A number of traffic safety studies have shown that lowering the posted speed limit effectively reduces traveling speed and, by extension, the frequency and severity of collisions. Other studies have suggested different supplementary measures should accompany posted speed limit changes to improve speed compliance and safety of the road. These measures could include additional public education to heighten driver awareness of speed-related safety issues, road design changes, staffed and automated speed enforcement, neighbourhood traffic management programs, and increased driver feedback signage and speed limit signage.

### Current Situation

Community perception of public safety requires an understanding of how roads are classified. Residential roads are divided into two types - collector roads and local roads. Collector roads connect residents and local roads to the major arterial roads of the city. Some collector roads are also bus routes. By contrast, local roads are the streets that are primarily used to gain access to the properties bordering them. They usually have less volume than collector roads.

In March 2017, Administration received the results of the Residential Speed Limits Survey done by Banister Research and Consulting Inc. The "Residential Speed Limits and Community Traffic Management Plan Survey" was sent to the Edmonton Insight Community and was available to the general public on the City of Edmonton's website from January 5 to 15, 2017. To ensure that all participants understood which roads might be affected by reduced speed limits, the survey began by outlining the difference between collector roads and local roads. The overall findings are listed below.

<b>Question Posed:</b>	<b>General Public (405)</b>	<b>Insight Community (734)</b>
Do you know what the difference is between collector roads and local roads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 39% -- yes</li> <li>● 61% -- no</li> <li>● 1% -- don't know/not stated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 68% -- yes</li> <li>● 22% -- no</li> <li>● 10% -- don't know/not stated</li> </ul>
Do these descriptions match what you believed to be collector roads and local roads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 97% -- yes</li> <li>● 1% -- somewhat</li> <li>● 1% -- don't know</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 95% -- yes</li> <li>● 5% -- somewhat</li> </ul>

When those who indicated they <u>did not know</u> the difference were read a definition, they were asked: Is the difference between collector roads and local roads clear to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 90% --now understood</li> <li>● 9% -- found it somewhat clear</li> <li>● 1% -- were still not clear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 85% -- now understood</li> <li>● 14% -- found it somewhat clear</li> <li>● 1% - were still not clear</li> </ul>
Do you believe that speeding on collector roads is an important issue the City should address?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 80% -- yes (definitely or probably)</li> <li>● 19% -- no (definitely or probably not)</li> <li>● 1% -- don't know or not stated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 72% -- yes (definitely or probably)</li> <li>● 24% -- no (definitely or probably not)</li> <li>● 4% -- don't know or not stated</li> </ul>
What do you believe the speed limit on collector roads should be?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 60% -- 50 km/hr</li> <li>● 21% -- 40 km/hr</li> <li>● 6% -- 30 km/hr</li> <li>● 12% -- "other"*</li> <li>● 1% -- don't know, or not stated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 69% -- 50 km/hr</li> <li>● 16% -- 40 km/hr</li> <li>● 4% -- 30 km/hr</li> <li>● 10% -- "other"</li> </ul>
Do you believe speeding on local roads is an important issue the City should address?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 80% -- yes (definitely or probably)</li> <li>● 19% -- no (definitely or probably not)</li> <li>● 1% -- don't know, not stated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 71% -- yes (definitely or probably)</li> <li>● 25% -- no (definitely or, probably not)</li> <li>● 3% -- don't know, not stated</li> </ul>
What do you believe the speed limits on local roads should be?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 36% -- 50 km/hr</li> <li>● 34% -- 40 km/hr</li> <li>● 20% -- 30 km/hr</li> <li>● 9% -- "other"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 35% -- 50 km/hr</li> <li>● 39% -- 40 km/hr</li> <li>● 23% -- 30 km/hr</li> <li>● 4% -- "other"</li> </ul>

\*The "other" could mean any speed, higher or lower, or some random number.

### Overall Findings

A strong majority of respondents believe that speeding in residential areas is an important issue to address, and it is not okay to drive over the speed limit. However, findings from another survey conducted by the City in 2016, provided to the Insight Community, posted online, and conducted by telephone, explored driver attitudes and behaviours in relation to residential speeding. The survey found that a significant number regularly drive 6-10 km/hr over the posted speed limit.

Question Posed:	Insight Community (1,824)	Online (778)	Telephone (1,031)
On a residential street, how many kilometres above the posted speed limit do you, personally, feel it is okay to drive?	> 15 km/hr: 0% 11-15 km/hr: <1% 6-10 km/hr: >7% 1-5 km/hr: >26% 0 km/hr: >66%	> 15 km/hr: <1% 11-15 km/hr: <1% 6-10 km/hr: >9% 1-5 km/hr: >24% 0 km/hr: <64%	> 15 km/hr: <1% 11-15 km/hr: >1% 6-10 km/hr: 5% 1-5 km/hr: > 27% 0 km/hr: <66%
In the past 30 days, how often have you found yourself travelling above (over) the posted speed limit on a residential street?	Always: <1% Often: <2% Sometimes: 13% Rarely: <42% Never: <42%	Always: >1% Often: <3% Sometimes: >15% Rarely: >44% Never: >34%	Always: 1% Often: >1% Sometimes: >9% Rarely: <30% Never: <57%
About how much would you say you typically drive above (over) the posted speed limit on a residential street?	> 15 km/hr: 0% 11-15 km/hr: >1% 6-10 km/hr: >12% 1-5 km/hr: <87%	> 15 km/hr: 1% 11-15 km/hr: >1% 6-10 km/hr: 17% 1-5 km/hr: <81%	> 15 km/hr: <1% 11-15 km/hr: >1% 6-10 km/hr: >11% 1-5 km/hr: <87%

In short, the 2017 Banister survey revealed 80 percent of the general public believe that speeding on local roads is an issue that should be addressed, and 19 percent of the general public do not believe that speeding is an important issue. The 2016 City survey revealed as many as 18% of those surveyed online drive 6-15 km/hr or more above the speed limit on residential (local) streets. Respondents did not identify any particular factors that would make them more likely to follow the speed limit, which suggests a multifaceted speed reduction strategy may be required.

Overall, respondents indicate support for lowering the speed limit on local roads; there is a stronger preference (62 percent versus 20 percent) for speed limits to be less than 50 km/hr. For collector roads, 60 percent believe the speed limit should be 50 km/hr.

**Next Steps**

If Administration were directed to pursue a reduced speed limit on local roads, survey findings indicate that a majority of the public would be in support. A number of preliminary steps are required to facilitate a public engagement process on the issue of slower residential speed limits in Edmonton communities, which may include some or all of the following:

- reviewing the outcome of the City Charter proposal to allow cities to make

- changes to 'default' speed limits on residential streets
- reviewing the costs related to scheduling changes for transit service
- supporting a city-wide dialogue on the Vision Zero initiative, with residential speeding as an important topic in this dialogue
- conducting further engagement through focus groups
- reviewing and communicating the findings of the 2016 Traffic Safety Culture Survey
- surveying community members for public engagement and, based on the results of the preliminary preparatory work, executing an engagement plan (as detailed above).

Further research to better understand the gap between driver beliefs and driver behaviour when it comes to residential speeding should be considered. This could bring to light answers that would better inform the strategies used to address residential speeding as part of the Vision Zero initiative. This research should take into consideration both driver and multi-modal perspectives.

Given the high level of support for a local road speed limit of 40 km/hr or less, consideration may be given to the benefits of a citywide speed limit for local roads, as opposed to the current practice of 40 km/hr eligibility on an individual community basis. In conjunction with the results of the public engagement, the discussions with the Province of Alberta through the City Charters work may allow the City to set its own default speed limit, which would enable the implementation of a citywide speed limit for local roads. It is recommended that any changes to local speed limits be deferred until direction is provided from the Province in regards to the authority for designation of default speed limits.

### **Policy**

Edmonton Road Safety Policy 2016-2020 - Policy C513

This report aligns with City Council's vision outlined in *The Way We Live*.

- Objective 1.1: The City of Edmonton provides opportunities in neighbourhood, community and public spaces to connect people and build vibrant communities.
- Objective 2.2: The City of Edmonton provides for the well-being of its citizens through outstanding parks, natural, green and public spaces.
- 3.2: The City of Edmonton increases opportunities to improve the lives of its vulnerable population.
- 4.1 Edmontonians enjoy safety and security of person, place and community.

### **Public Engagement**

Public engagement took place in January 2016, in the form of a survey provided to the Insight Community, posted online, and conducted by telephone. Another survey done

by Banister Research and Consulting Inc. in January 2017 was given to the general public and to the Insight Community.

Future communications and engagement strategies should provide reasons for why the City is considering lowering the speed limit in residential areas, assess the public's response to specific proposals, and gather information to guide the development of strategies to encourage behaviour modification and mitigate any concerns for the change.

### Budget/Financial Implications

This report has no immediate financial implications. If further research and public engagement is conducted on slower residential speed limits in Edmonton communities, the cost for future public engagement will be covered within the existing Traffic Safety budget.

### Metrics, Targets and Outcomes

Metrics	Targets	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of injuries from motor vehicle collisions per 1000 population.</li> <li>• Number of intersection collisions involving motor vehicles per 1000 population.</li> </ul> <p><b>2016 Actuals (as of Feb 3, 2017):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.7 injuries from motor vehicle collisions per 1000 population.</li> <li>• 14.8 intersection collisions involving motor vehicles per 1000 population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.4 - 2016</li> <li>• 3.3 - 2017</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14.8 - 2016</li> <li>• 14.5 - 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Long-term aspirational goals</b> are: Zero fatalities and serious injuries resulting from motor vehicle collisions on Edmonton's roads</li> </ul>
Reduce percentage of vehicles exceeding the local and collector road speed limits.	To be determined based on speed limit.	<b>Long-term aspirational goals</b> are: Zero fatalities and serious injuries resulting from motor vehicle collisions on Edmonton's roads.

**Others Reviewing this Report**

- T. Burge, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- R. G. Klassen, Deputy City Manager, Sustainable Development
- A. Laughlin, Deputy City Manager, Integrated Infrastructure Services
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- C. Campbell, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement