

# Traffic Shortcutting Issues

## Interim Actions Taken

**Recommendation:**

That the March 23, 2016, City Operations Department report CR\_2697, be received for information.

**Report Summary**

This report summarizes the results of the Traffic Shortcutting Pilot Project implemented to evaluate the public involvement process and potential traffic calming measures as part of the development of a streamlined process for addressing localized traffic issues in the communities of Newton, Crestwood, Ormsby Place and Ottewell.

**Previous Council/Committee Action**

At the July 7, 2015, meeting of City Council, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report to Transportation Committee, on interim actions that will be taken to address minor traffic shortcutting issues as they arise (hot-spots).

At the June 22, 2015, meeting of the Audit Committee, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report on interim actions that will be taken to address minor traffic shortcutting issues as they arise (hot spots).

**Report****Background**

In the fall of 2015, a Traffic Shortcutting Pilot Project was undertaken in the communities of Crestwood, Newton, Ottewell and Ormsby Place to develop a streamlined process to address localized shortcutting and speeding concerns.

The traffic management measures of the pilot project included speed humps, speed tables (speed hump with a flat top), driver feedback signs, the review of traffic signal timings and the restriction of vehicle access (Ormsby Place only).

The public involvement process consisted of meetings with concerned citizens, community league members and Ward Councillors both before and after the implementation of the traffic management measures. Impacted households and roadway users were provided notification prior to the installation of traffic management measures through roadway signs and bulletins. In early 2016, public meetings and

follow-up phone surveys were provided in each neighbourhood to collect input from area residents. A website, project email address and a 311 contact was provided throughout the pilot project to provide updates, collect feedback and answer questions.

### **Post-Implementation Results**

#### *Public Involvement Process*

As a summary of the feedback from the four neighbourhoods involved in the pilot project, 450 inquiries were received by email, letters and phone calls, 740 questionnaires were completed through a phone survey, and 480 participated in the drop-in public meetings, with 400 questionnaires completed as part of the public meeting and online, since the implementation of the traffic management measures in the fall of 2015.

The results of the questionnaire indicate that:

- most of the respondents were aware of the community traffic management process
- half felt they had enough information to clearly understand the project
- one-third felt the project included opportunities to provide input into decisions

Detailed results from the Ottewell, Newton, Crestwood and Ormsby Place neighbourhoods are included in Attachments 1, 2, 3 and 4, respectively.

#### *Traffic Management Measures*

In general, the respondents to the questionnaire:

- were split in their comfort level with the speed humps and speed tables
- one-quarter of the respondents indicated the measures improved the traffic safety
- one-third indicated the measures benefited their community

In the case of restricting vehicle access at the intersection of 69 Avenue and 188 Street in Ormsby Place, 35 percent of the residents felt comfortable with the measures, while 20 percent of the respondents felt the measures improved traffic safety along Ormsby Road East.

Overall, the installation of the speed humps and speed tables were effective in reducing vehicle speeds. The more obstructive speed humps resulted in vehicle speed reductions of up to 10 km/h. Two different speed table designs were used to test a smoother obstruction, resulting in speed reductions of up to 5 km/h. The installation of the speed humps and speed tables were not effective in reducing vehicle volumes and had minimal impact on traffic shortcutting.

The banning of through movements at the intersection of 69 Avenue and 188 Street in Ormsby Place worked to significantly lower vehicle volumes, however, it was not effective in reducing vehicle speeds along Ormsby Road East. The banning of through movements in the absence of physical measures has been problematic and a potential traffic safety issue, as traffic surveys indicate 400 to 600 motorists per day are violating the signage.

Detailed results from the Crestwood, Newton, Ottewell and Ormsby Place neighbourhoods are included in each attachment.

### *Impacts to City Services*

Due to the characteristics of this snow season, residential blading has not been completed along the study corridors with speed humps or speed tables. Currently, these measures do not represent a maintenance concern; however, the impacts of the speed humps and speed tables will continue to be monitored.

Fire Rescue Services completed test runs along the corridors with speed humps and speed tables to assess impact on emergency response. Results indicate the traffic management measures do have an impact on response times. Fire Rescue Services recommends that further evaluation be undertaken as part of the development of a traffic shortcutting policy.

A survey was conducted on bus routes in Crestwood and Ottewell to understand the impact of the speed humps and speed tables on transit riders. More than 70 percent of those surveyed indicated that there was no effect or minimal effect on their comfort.

### **Lessons Learned**

Through the Traffic Shortcutting Pilot Project process in the Ottewell, Crestwood, Newton and Ormsby Place neighbourhoods, the following items were identified for consideration in the development of a streamlined process to address localized shortcutting and speeding concerns:

- **Project Initiation:** Need to establish criteria for the identification of issues and the prioritization of projects that includes consideration for quality of life, traffic data and traffic safety.
- **Project Coordination:** Projects should be coordinated with other capital projects to minimize construction costs and more efficiently engage the public.
- **Community Awareness:** Need to first build broad public involvement and engage communities before addressing traffic concerns.
  - Include the immediate neighbourhood along with the surrounding communities.
  - Establish a public stakeholder group with membership that represents diverse views and interests of the community and surrounding areas.

- Education: Ensure community awareness and project understanding and informed participation through the education of stakeholders on the traffic management process, criteria, measures and impacts.
- Roles and Responsibilities: Establish clear roles and responsibilities for Administration, public stakeholder groups, including decision-making at key points in the process.
- Process Flexibility: Every neighbourhood is unique, thus a flexible process can be tailored to the specific needs of a community.
- Traffic Management Measures: Continue to establish a series of traffic management measures to address localized speeding and shortcutting concerns that align with the principles of the Road Safety Strategy.
  - Non-physical traffic management measures, such as signage on its own, are not always effective in addressing traffic shortcutting and may create ongoing traffic enforcement challenges.
- Internal Stakeholders and utilities: Projects must be coordinated with internal stakeholders who may be impacted or needed to support the implementation. The stakeholders may include Edmonton Transit System, Edmonton Police Service, Edmonton Fire Rescue Service, Roadway Maintenance, Office of Traffic Safety, and Utilities.
- Project Timelines: The process needs to be responsive to community needs in a timely manner and adequate time must be allocated to properly engage the public and complete comprehensive before and after traffic studies.

### Next Steps

The lessons learned will be considered in the development of the Policy on Traffic Shortcutting (CR\_2696) that will be before Transportation Committee on June 22, 2016.

The banning of the through movements at the intersection of 69 Avenue and 188 Street will be removed, due to the traffic safety concern regarding the significant number of motorists violating the through ban. The traffic shortcutting and speeding concerns along Ormsby Road East may be further reviewed in the future following the development of a City traffic shortcutting policy.

### Policy

*The Way We Move*, Edmonton's Transportation Master Plan:

- Strategic Objective 7.6: The City will appropriately mitigate the impacts of the transportation network on existing and future residential communities.
- Strategic Action 7.6.a.: Undertake Community Traffic Management Plans to address community speeding and shortcutting traffic issues.
- Strategic Action 7.6.b.: Address isolated incidents of speeding and shortcutting traffic within communities through education, enforcement and engineering.

*The Way We Grow*, Edmonton's Municipal Development Plan:

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- Strategic Objective 5.7.1: Ensure that streets, sidewalks and boulevards are designed to perform their diverse roles and to enable safe access for all users.

### *The Way We Live, Edmonton's People Plan:*

- Strategic Objective 1.1: The City of Edmonton provides opportunities in neighbourhood, community and public spaces to connect people and build vibrant communities.
- Strategic Objective 4.1: Edmontonians enjoy safety and security of person, place and community.

### *Complete Streets Policy C573A:*

- Community Traffic Management / Shortcutting Reduction Initiatives will conform to the principles of the City's Complete Streets Policy and Guidelines.

### *Vision Zero:*

- Community Traffic Management / Shortcutting Reduction Initiatives are also included as "Engineering" interventions in Edmonton's recently approved Road Safety Strategy.

## **Public Consultation**

- The engagement strategy has followed the process outlined in the August 19, 2015, Transportation Services report CR\_2773.
- Administration met with small stakeholder groups in each of the four neighbourhoods, ranging from 3-12 people each before and after the traffic management measures were installed. Administration also met with each Ward Councillor prior to the installation of the measures.
- Impacted households and roadway users were provided notification prior to the installation of traffic management measures through roadway signs and bulletins.(September/October 2015).
- In early 2016, public meetings and follow-up phone surveys were provided in each neighbourhood to collect input from area residents. A website was provided throughout the pilot project to provide updates, collect feedback and answer questions.

## **Budget/Financial Implications**

No financial implications from the review of the pilot program have been identified. Subsequent policy changes may have financial considerations.

## **Attachments**

1. Ottewell
2. Newton

3. Crestwood
4. Ormsby Place

### **Others Reviewing this Report**

- R. Smyth, General Manager, Citizen Services
- R. G. Klassen, General Manager, Sustainable Development
- T. Burge, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer and General Manager, Financial & Corporate Services