

Study to Reduce 112 Avenue Traffic Lanes

Recommendation:

That the March 13, 2013, Transportation Services report 2013TS1056, be received for information.

Report Summary

This report presents the results of a study to investigate the potential reduction of the number of traffic lanes along 112 Avenue through Highlands, including the rationale used to reach the decision to retain 112 Avenue as a four-lane roadway.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the November 1, 2011, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

Study to Reduce 112 Avenue Traffic Lanes: That, subject to inclusion of 112 Avenue (Highlands) in the Arterial Rehabilitation Program (12-66-1020) and budget approval of the Arterial Rehabilitation Program 12-66-1020 in the 2012-2014 Capital Budget, Administration undertake a study to reduce the number of traffic lanes on 112 Avenue through Highlands, with the results of the study to be brought to Transportation and Infrastructure Committee before the end of 2012.

At the February 27, 2007, Transportation and Public Works Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration review the concept of road diets with relevant communities approximately 18 months before scheduled reconstruction of 112 Avenue occurs.

Report

Background

The section of 112 Avenue between 50 Street and 68 Street is planned for reconstruction in 2014, as part of the Arterial Rehabilitation Program (12-66-1020). In advance of its reconstruction an investigation of the potential reduction of the number of travel lanes from the existing four lanes to three lanes was undertaken. The lane reduction option included one lane in each direction in combination with a common (two-way) left turn lane and wider sidewalks/boulevards.

Technical Assessment

Traffic computer simulation was undertaken for 112 Avenue for both the four-lane (Attachment 1) and three-lane (Attachment 2) options. Under the three-lane option, the results of the model show traffic along the corridor ranges from moderately congested to congested. The model estimated that about 10% to 15% of traffic currently using 112 Avenue would shift away from the morning and afternoon rush hour periods due to motorists altering their travel time to travel outside of the peak period or finding an alternate route. Overall, the travel time along the corridor would not be significantly impacted by the reduction in a travel lane, with increases in travel times along the route of one to three minutes.

Four-Lane Option:

The existing four-lane roadway is operating at an acceptable level of

service, providing the capacity to accommodate smooth traffic flow and support residential and commercial access. The collision history has been low over the past five years. The travel lane reduction would not significantly improve pedestrian safety nor improve the walkability along the corridor. The four-lane option provides sidewalk widths equivalent to those proposed within the three-lane option and provides safe crossing opportunities at key locations along 112 Avenue.

The results of the public involvement process indicate significant overall support for retaining the existing four-lane roadway, with a polarization of views regarding the potential lane reduction within the Highlands and Bellevue neighbourhoods located directly adjacent to the corridor. Some of the public expressed concern that the inability to provide bus bays along the corridor due to road right-of-way constraints will result in traffic delays caused by stopping buses, increased traffic congestion and potential neighbourhood shortcutting with the three-lane option.

Corporate Outcomes

- Citizens are connected to their diverse communities and have pride in their city.
- Edmonton has sustainable infrastructure that fosters and supports civic and community needs.
- The transportation system is integrated, safe and gives citizens a choice to their mode of movement.

Public Consultation

Public input was gathered from key stakeholders, user groups and the

general public on draft concepts, potential lane reduction impacts and key areas for aesthetic enhancements (Attachment 3).

This five-month process began in September 2012, and included stakeholder interviews, two community workshops, two open houses and a telephone poll.

Approximately 600 people attended the community meetings and completed the online comment forms. A telephone poll was also conducted at the end of the process with 900 respondents in the study area.

The public input revealed that the most important factors to consider for the reconstruction of 112 Avenue include pedestrian safety, walkability, traffic flow and residential access.

Telephone poll results indicated that 70% of the population in the study area would prefer a four-lane roadway configuration, while 27% indicated support for the three-lane option. In the Highlands community, 45% of the respondents indicated support for the four-lane configuration and 48% indicated support for the three-lane option. In the Bellevue community, the results indicated 57% of respondents support the four-lane configuration and 42% support the three-lane option.

Most respondents felt bus pullouts would be important if a traffic lane reduction was to succeed.

Attachments

1. 112 Avenue, 50 - 68 Street - 4 Lane Residential Area Concept Plan

Study to Reduce 112 Avenue Traffic Lanes

2. 112 Avenue, 50 – 68 Street - 3 Lane Residential Area Concept Plan
3. 112 Avenue Reconstruction – Traffic Lane Reduction and Concept Planning Study - Public Involvement Report 2012 - 13