

Speed Limit Reductions on Main Streets and Other High Pedestrian Locations

Recommendation

That the February 26, 2020, City Operations report CR_7257, be received for information.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the May 14, 2019, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report on possible appropriate speed limit reductions on Main Streets and other high pedestrian locations, and return to Committee.

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of analysis to identify possible appropriate speed limit reductions on Main Streets and high pedestrian areas.

Administration is comfortable with speed reductions on Whyte Avenue, Jasper Avenue, areas adjacent to Main Streets and the Downtown neighborhood.

Report

The draft City Plan proposes a network of nodes and corridors. Growth in these locations can maximize the value and utilization of existing infrastructure, such as sidewalks, bicycle facilities, parks, public transit, and underground utilities.

The evolution of Edmonton's Main Streets policy to a nodes and corridors approach represents a large shift in Edmonton's city building policy. The specific form and density of development will vary depending on location, but nodes and corridors at all scales will be designed for both transportation and land use functions. Successful corridors function as links to other places and as places in their own right. Many of Edmonton's existing corridors are, or are on their way to becoming, Main Streets.

Main Streets

Main Streets are important places and transportation routes that act as strong community places, tie into business and community revitalization, support a mix of street oriented land uses, and are designed and maintained to an enhanced standard. In order to be

considered a Main Street, a road must meet three qualifying criteria over a distance of a minimum of 350 meters:

1. Street Oriented Buildings: at least 45 percent of buildings face the street with four or more doorways for every 100 metres
2. Link: traffic volumes ranging from 10,000 to 35,000 vehicles per day
3. Active Land Uses: there are at least three commercial businesses for every 100 metres

Attachment 1 provides a map showing the Main Streets in Edmonton.

Current State

Administration analyzed existing conditions on Main Streets to identify opportunities to reduce speed limits and reviewed crosswalk data to locate other high pedestrian areas where reduced speed limits may be appropriate. Through a systematic review of traffic safety data, Administration determined that:

- Average vehicle speeds on Main Streets are typically below posted speed limits, especially on Jasper Avenue and Whyte Avenue;
- Outside of Main Streets, high pedestrian locations are primarily concentrated within the Downtown; and
- Other high pedestrian locations are adjacent to Main Streets and the Downtown neighbourhood.

High pedestrian crosswalk locations are reviewed on an ongoing basis to determine whether traffic safety engineering improvements, such as pavement markings and signs, pedestrian signals, and/or pedestrian controlled amber flashers are required. Attachment 2 provides a map showing the high pedestrian areas in Edmonton. The pedestrian volume data that informed this map is a primary factor in determining crosswalk priority; other factors include traffic volumes, road size, speed limit and collision history.

Evaluation Results

Based on this analysis, the following locations could have speed limits reduced to 40 km/hr:

- Main Street portion of Whyte Avenue (109 Street to 99 Street); and
- Main Street portion of Jasper Avenue (124 Street to 97 Street).

The following high pedestrian locations adjacent to Whyte Avenue and Downtown could fall within the 40 km/hr citywide default speed limit or become 30 km/hr consistent with the centrally located Core Zone:

- Chinatown
 - 97 Street to 101 Street from 103A Avenue to 108A Avenue, not including these boundary roads or 107A Avenue
- Roadways with adjacent commercial uses, North of Columbia Avenue (105 Avenue)

- The north-south streets between 105 Avenue and 106 Avenue from 101 Street to 116 Street but not including 101 Street, 109 Street or 116 Street
- Roadways with adjacent commercial uses, South of Whyte Avenue
 - The east-west avenues between Gateway Boulevard and Calgary Trail from University Avenue to Whyte Avenue
- Other high pedestrian locations
 - Saskatchewan Drive (100 Street to Emily Murphy Park Road)
 - Fortway Drive (River Valley Road to 107 Street)

Attachment 3 provides a summary of the redesign projects currently planned for Main Streets. As Main Streets continue to undergo renewal and redesign projects, Administration will apply the Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards and the Main Streets Guidelines enhanced design standards to align with a 40 km/hr speed limit.

To achieve the City's vision of creating walkable, attractive, safe and universally accessible Downtown streets, Administration would consider Downtown holistically as a neighborhood for speed limit reductions. In alignment with Council's preferred approach to reducing residential speed limits, as outlined within CR_7769 Reducing Speed Limits: Increasing Safety and Livability in Edmonton, Downtown would either fall within the 40 km/hr citywide default speed limit or become 30 km/hr consistent with the centrally located Core Zone.

Applying a consistent speed limit to roadways within the Downtown neighbourhood supports the Downtown Urban Design Strategy and the development of exciting urban spaces, human scale architecture and a pedestrian-orientated street, park and open space environment. With the exception of 97 Street south of 104 Avenue, the boundaries of the downtown neighborhood (109 Street, 104 Avenue and 97 Avenue) would remain at their current speed limits.

Implementation & Monitoring

Should Council decide to proceed with reducing speed limits on Whyte Avenue, Jasper Avenue and within the Downtown neighbourhood, these changes would be implemented as a part of Council's preferred approach to lowering speed limits, as outlined within CR_7769 Reducing Speed Limits: Increasing Safety and Livability in Edmonton, and through the applicable bylaw process, outlined in CR_7258 Default Speed Limits - Draft Bylaws Report.

Administration has engaged the Business Improvement Areas (BIA) that would be impacted by changes to main street speed limits. Continued partnership with the affected Business Improvement Areas will support a robust communications plan and education activities.

Should speed limit reductions be implemented, a robust monitoring process will be undertaken, as outlined in CR_7769 Reducing Speed Limits: Increasing Safety and Livability in Edmonton.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Edmonton is a safe city			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Edmonton is a safe city	Road Safety Strategy, Fatalities	TBD (2019) 19 (2018) 27 (2017) 22 (2016)	17 (2020)
	Road Safety Strategy, Serious Injuries	TBD (2019) 319 (2018) 341 (2017) 325 (2016)	293 (2020)
	Road Safety Strategy, Collision Injuries/1,000 people	TBD (2019) 3.4 (2018) 3.9 (2017) 3.5 (2016)	3.0 (2020)
	Road Safety Strategy, Collisions at Intersections/1,000 people	TBD (2019) 13.9 (2018) 14.6 (2017) 14.4 (2016)	13.5 (2020)

Attachments

1. Main Streets and Other High Pedestrian Locations
2. High Pedestrian Locations, 2017-2019
3. Main Streets & Aspiring Main Streets Project Summary

Others Reviewing this Report

- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- J. Meliefste, Acting Deputy City Manager, Integrated Infrastructure Services
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor