

Residential Speed Reduction Pilot Program

Follow-up Actions

Recommendations:

That Administration:

1. Conduct public surveys in the six pilot communities and engage the Community Leagues in the six pilot communities to determine the level of support for maintaining or removing reduced 40 km/hr speed limit.
2. Provide a report to Transportation and Public Works Committee by July 2011, with the results of the public surveys, along with possible draft amendments to Bylaw 6894.

Report Summary

This report outlines the results of the pilot Neighbourhood 40 km/hr Speed Limit Reduction Program and the process that will be used. Based on the conclusions of the pilot project, the use of 40 km/hr speed limits is an appropriate tool for improving safety, but the use of this tool requires that community support for the measure is demonstrated.

Report

In 2010, the City of Edmonton implemented a 40 km/hr Speed Reduction Pilot in six neighbourhoods representing a cross section of community types and areas of the city. During this implementation, extensive tracking of speeds and collisions took place in these six communities, along with a number of adjoining communities

and other communities that were not close to the six pilot communities.

The results of this pilot project are summarized in a separate report prepared for April 12, 2011, Transportation and Public Works Committee (2011TD3376). It is noted that the community selection criteria resulted in the nomination of the six communities, and that participation of the communities in the pilot program only took place following consultation with the individual community leagues to secure their support for participation. Aside from consultation with the community leagues, broad public consultation did not take place, and the community leagues, as partners in the program, were provided with material to help educate their residents.

The conclusions of the pilot project are summarized as follows:

- Five of the six pilot communities, showed a statistically significant reduction in collisions occurred.
- All of the six pilot communities shared significant speed reductions.

Based on surveys of residents undertaken prior to and after the pilot, there was a significant variation in resident understanding of the reasons for the pilot and their level of support for the speed limit reductions.

Looking at the comparison of adjoining neighbourhoods, it appears that those neighbourhoods adjacent to the pilot communities benefited from both a reduction in speed and a reduction in collisions.

Communities remote from the pilot communities did not see a reduction in either speeds or collisions through this time period and some increase in speeds was actually noted.

Given the mixed results regarding community support, as well as the potential for use of this strategy as one of a number to improve traffic safety, the pilot project does not provide evidence of support for a city-wide reduced speed limit in residential neighbourhoods.

Proposed action for existing 40 km/hr speed limits

Given the variation in support for maintaining speed limits in existing 40 km/hr communities, the following process will be followed:

- presentation of results of reports at a general community meeting in each of the six communities, along with general results from the pilot project and random resident surveys for the individual community
- request for a general resolution from the Community League for either continuation of the 40 km/hr speed limits, or removal of the speed limits and review of other options
- Administration summarizes results of the process and recommends any proposed bylaw amendments resulting for City Council

Process for any additional 40 km/hr speed limits

Although it is recognized that reduced speed limits are an appropriate tool for improving traffic safety and reducing collisions, it is one of a number of available tools, and effectiveness of this, versus other measures, needs to be demonstrated prior to implementation.

This requires, prior to considering this measure, that a good understanding of both existing speeding and collision problems within the neighbourhoods are known, as well as a determination of whether the problems are community wide or isolated to specific roadways, intersections or areas (such as school frontage). Other measures, such as additional traffic controls and/or physical reduction of excessive roadway width need to be considered, as well as other speed management programs, in partnership with the City and community.

Implementation of a 40 km/hr speed limit requires a Speed Bylaw amendment and approval by City Council. Prior to this, a community consultation is necessary. This will take place once the following process is complete:

- community league and Administration identify speed and/or collision problem through data collection
- community reviews speed management options and/or traffic control changes with Administration
- implementation of speed management or traffic control changes, and assessment of effectiveness
- should these measures, by themselves, not improve traffic safety and speeds, then 40 km/hr reduced speed limit will be considered an option
- Administration provides information to residents regarding the proposed speed reduction program, in partnership with community
- Administration uses a polling process that ensures broad input from residents

- presentation of results of polling to community if support for program demonstrated and community league formally supports, then Administration will prepare a Speed Bylaw amendment for City Council's consideration

Oversized collector roadways

Overall, two of the six pilot communities included wide (14 metres) collector roadways, and the speed surveys both prior to and during the pilot program, showed continued high rates of speeding on these oversized collector roadways. This evidence has resulted in the City modifying standards for new neighbourhoods to limit the use of 14 metres collector roadways.

Reducing the size of oversized collector roadways to 11.5 metres has also been included within the scope of neighbourhood reconstruction programs; however, there are a number of oversized collector roadways that are in place in communities that do not have an opportunity for reconstruction within the foreseeable future. Options for cost effective programs to narrow these roadways are being developed to address the ongoing speed issues and associated collisions.

Policy

Speed Zones, Bylaw 6894.

Corporate Outcomes

The information contained in this report is consistent with City Council's Strategic Plan in terms of improving Edmonton's livability.

Justification of Recommendations

Until this bylaw is amended, 40 km/hr remains in effect. Given significant variation between communities, a formal consultation process with the communities and demonstration of support or removal of the program is considered necessary before changes to the Speed Bylaw are brought forward. This consultation needs to be completed prior to the end of June, in order to ensure that bylaw amendments and any changes in street controls are completed before the start of the fall school year.