

# Neighbourhood Renewal Program Design Practices Update

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## Recommendation

That the February 26, 2020, Integrated Infrastructure Services report CR\_7260, 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 the following:

An update on potential implications to new neighbourhood design and the Neighbourhood Renewal Program to incorporate design elements that support Complete Streets, Winter City guidelines and Vision Zero moving forward and; draft changes, if required, to the current neighbourhood renewal policy or any other relevant policies to accomplish this.

## Executive Summary

This report outlines the current approach to neighbourhood renewal and describes how the Complete Streets Standards, Winter City guidelines, and Vision Zero design elements are incorporated into neighbourhood reconstruction. The report also outlines how various City funding sources are leveraged to implement these initiatives as part of the Neighbourhood Renewal Program. The types of growth improvements that support Complete Streets, Winter City guidelines and Vision Zero will continue to be incorporated into Renewal Program neighbourhoods in the future within the existing renewal policy.

## Report

### Current Approach to Neighbourhood Renewal

The Neighbourhood Renewal Program follows a cost-effective, long-term strategy to renew and rebuild roads, sidewalks and street lights in existing neighbourhoods and collector roadways. The program balances the need to rebuild in some neighbourhoods with a rehabilitation approach in others. The program's greatest opportunity is to implement modern design concepts in conjunction with neighbourhood reconstruction projects.

In recent years, neighbourhood renewal has taken an integrated approach to public engagement, planning and design. The scope of work for neighbourhood reconstruction typically includes the following elements:

- Replacement of sidewalks, local roadways and collector roadways
- Upgrading street lights to LED with an opportunity for neighbourhoods to consider options for a decorative street lighting upgrade
- Construction of curb ramps and other intersection improvements
- Addressing missing links in the sidewalk and bike network

The Neighbourhood Renewal Program leverages the City's design practices and standards to support ConnectEdmonton's strategic goals of Healthy City and Urban Places by designing safe roads that promote active transportation, year-round accessibility for people of all ages and abilities, and lower traffic speeds. The Complete Streets Standards, Winter City Guidelines and Vision Zero have been applied to the Neighbourhood Renewal Program's integrated scope of work.

### **Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards**

The Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards ensure that streets reflect their context and users, and operate safely for everyone. Within the retrofit context, these standards are applied by considering:

- Reducing vehicle travel lane widths on key roadways
- Increasing sidewalk widths and introducing separate sidewalks from roadways with boulevards and trees
- Adding missing sidewalks or shared-use paths and enhance key intersections points

### **Winter Design Guidelines**

Winter design guidelines encourage winter use and operability of neighborhood infrastructure. Administration investigates this approach as part of the public engagement, planning and design processes and includes;

- Infrastructure that enables all season activities for people who wish to walk and bike
- Snow storage space requirements
- Lighting improvements along key pedestrian routes and in gathering places

### **Vision Zero**

To achieve Vision Zero, the City applies the Safe Systems Approach to road safety management. This approach is based on the principle that life and health should not be compromised by the need to travel and holds that no number of fatalities or serious injuries is acceptable. In addition to safer vehicles, safe systems are also made up of safer roads, speeds and road use. These elements are incorporated into the design of

the roadways in neighbourhoods by:

- Improving safety at pedestrian crossings with a focus around schools and playgrounds;
- Including traffic calming measures to address speeding and shortcutting; and
- Incorporating bike infrastructure to reduce potential conflicts between people who drive and those who bike.

Safe speeds positively impact both collision frequency and outcomes and improve environments that support active modes of travel. CR\_7769 Reducing Speed Limits: Increasing Safety and Livability in Edmonton Report provides additional information on proposed speed limit reductions for residential areas, Main Streets and other high pedestrian locations.

While the City applies the same integrated approach to renewal in each neighbourhood, each community is unique and the final neighborhood design may differ to suit the context. The City makes decisions about what infrastructure or operational improvements are included as part of renewal by considering public input, technical feasibility, and City policy. Not all neighbourhoods desire or require the same scope of change.

### **Budget/Financial**

The Neighbourhood Renewal Program is funded through the tax-levy, and managed through a Neighbourhood Renewal Reserve.

As outlined in the Neighbourhood Renewal Program City Policy C595, the Neighbourhood Renewal Program provides for infrastructure enhancements where there is a need to adopt current design or functional standards. These enhanced costs are generally in the order of 5 percent and will not exceed 10 percent of the overall program budget expended in any given four-year capital cycle.

The original Neighbourhood Renewal Program and targets were created before the City adopted Vision Zero and developed the Complete Streets Standards and Winter Design guidelines. Enhancements such as extensive traffic calming and the addition of bike infrastructure may not be accommodated within the limits set out in City Policy C595. To deliver these enhancements, the Neighbourhood Renewal Program has leveraged other program funding to deliver better value as part of neighbourhood reconstruction.

The following table summarizes the proportions of growth versus renewal funding allocated for the 2019 Neighbourhood Renewal Program projects, including the amount of growth funding that was reallocated from complementary growth programs.

| 2019 Neighbourhood Renewal Program - Reconstruction Projects |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Funding Source   | % of Total Funding |
| Renewal Program - Renewal                                    | 88%                |
| Renewal Program - Growth                                     | 5%                 |
| Other Programs - Growth                                      | 7%                 |

The above table identifies that program objectives are currently being met with the collective budget percentages. These are based on a number of other growth funding program contributions, including the Community Traffic Safety Countermeasures and Traffic Safety Engineering Measures that are proposed to no longer be funded due to budget pressures, as summarized in CR\_7853 Traffic Safety Automated Enforcement Reserve Update Report. The proposed adjustments to the Traffic Safety Automated Enforcement Reserve will require an increase in the growth percentage from the renewal program but will still be within the 10 percent policy limit.

Although the proposed Traffic Safety Automated Enforcement Reserve budget reductions related to the Neighbourhood Renewal Program will require more renewal dollars, Administration feels that the program will be sustainable throughout the 2019-2022 budget cycle within current policy limits. Administration will continue to monitor the program to ensure Council approved renewal targets are on track to be achieved. If renewal targets are compromised due to the scale of growth elements that need to be managed within the program budget, Administration will bring forward a budget adjustment in the future to ensure the program can meet its long term targets.

## Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

| Corporate Outcome(s): Edmonton is attractive and compact |  |            |            |
|--|--|------------|------------|
| Outcome(s)   | Measure(s)   | Result(s)  | Target(s)  |
| Edmonton is attractive and compact                       | Edmontonians' Assessment: Well-Designed Attractive City (percent of survey respondents who agree / strongly agree) | 53% (2017) | 55% (2018) |

## Others Reviewing this Report

- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development

- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor