

Neighbourhood Planning Transit Framework

Recommendation:

That the January 25, 2011, Transportation Department report 2011TD9799 be received for information.

Report Summary

This report provides information on transit considerations in the neighbourhood design process and options for promoting more efficient transit routings and faster travel times.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the June 15, 2010, Transportation and Public Works Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration return to Transportation and Public Works Committee with a report outlining Administration's framework when transit is considered during neighbourhood planning, including pedestrian linkages to transit, and Administration's recommendations for options to reduce transit traveling time.

Report

As part of the overall review of the neighbourhood planning process, design elements affecting future transit operations are reviewed at each stage of the process. In general, Transportation Department assesses the design and layout of all new land use plans for transit suitability in accordance with the policies of Council's

strategic plans: The Way We Move, The Way We Grow and The Way We Live. Further, Transportation Department assesses the plans for consistency with the upcoming Transit Oriented Development Guidelines: Principles and Standards for the Integration of Transit and Land Use ensuring appropriate land uses are located near major transit infrastructure or corridors.

At each land use planning stage the following factors are considered:

Area Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans:

- Review of arterial and collector roadway infrastructure and location.
- Identify potential locations for transit centres.
- Initial definition of the future bus routes.
- Review location of higher density development, ensuring that the higher density land uses are in close proximity to bus routes and transit facilities.

Neighbourhood Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Area Structure Plans:

- Ensure that collector roadways penetrate neighbourhoods.
- Ensure that homes are located within a 400 metre walking distance from bus stops. The application of these walking distance guidelines ensures that planned transit routings maximize user convenience. The walking distance criteria are also applied at the subdivision planning stage.
- Review and suggest the location of walkways to ensure safe, convenient access to bus stops, and to generally promote neighbourhood walkability.

- Review proposed zoning, ensuring that the higher density land uses are in close proximity to bus routes and transit facilities.
- Identify potential bus stop locations.

Zoning and Subdivision

- Confirm bus stop locations. The placement of bus stops at this stage of planning also allows lot purchasers to be made aware of a bus stop that could be located in front of their houses.
- Confirm walkway locations, ensuring lots are within 400 metres walking distance of bus stops when direct access along local residential roads is indirect or inconvenient.
- For staged development, identify temporary transit turnarounds for the interim terminus of the collector road.
- Identify potential locations for transit priority signals, which would allow for improved access and operational safety when exiting neighbourhoods.

Detailed Engineering Drawings and Major Development Permit Applications

- Identify exact locations of bus stops, bus pads (i.e. customer waiting area for boulevard curb and sidewalk), shelter pads and areas where sidewalks should be widened to meet accessibility standards.
- Consideration is made to avoid conflict with other street furniture, accesses, curb ramps, potential driveways, utilities and streetscape elements.
- Confirm roadway geometry is suitable for bus operations (for example, corner radius at intersections).
- Confirm the geometry and pavement structure for temporary turnarounds.

In addition to the factors considered at each level of the land use planning process, the following options are available to promote more efficient transit routings and travel times.

- **More direct routings through neighbourhoods.** In recent years, the collector road networks have been more curvilinear. Operation on a grid collector road system within a neighbourhood could result in quicker, more direct bus service.
- **Direct access between neighbourhoods across arterial roadways.** There are situations where collector roads in adjacent neighbourhoods are offset at the arterial roadway. To travel between neighbourhoods, buses must turn on and off of the arterial roads, reducing the directness of travel and increasing travel time.
- **Provision of bus-only roadways to achieve the more direct routing.** These can be located within neighbourhoods, linking collector roads that buses operate on while reducing shortcutting by private vehicles, or as access from within a neighborhood to an adjacent arterial road. Existing bus-only roads within Edmonton are located in Clareview (two locations), Inglewood (114 Avenue) and a bus only roadway has been approved as part of the Eaux Claires Transit Centre.
- **Provision of bus-activated signals, for efficient bus access onto or across arterial roads from neighbourhood collector roads.**

These options need to be considered within the context of the overall neighbourhood planning design process and infrastructure requirements. The goal of providing bus routes that

promote faster travel times for passengers has potential to conflict with other planning and urban design objectives (for example, discouraging traffic shortcutting in neighbourhoods. Optimizing transit service can be addressed through new Neighbourhood Design Guidelines required under the Municipal Development Plan.

Policy

- Policy C539 – Transit Service Standards
- Policy 4.1.1.1.1 of the Municipal Development Plan which directs the City to develop and implement design guidelines for new neighbourhoods.

Focus Area

- Transportation Master Plan – The Way We Move
- The Way We Live
- Municipal Development Plan – The Way We Grow
- Draft Transit Oriented Development Guidelines

Others Reviewing this Report

- R. G. Klassen, General Manager, Planning and Development Department