

# Traffic Shortcutting Issues

## Interim Planning Update

### Recommendation:

That the August 19, 2015, Transportation Services report CR\_2773, be received for information.

### Report Summary

**This report outlines strategies to address traffic shortcutting concerns in four neighbourhoods as part of phase one of an expedited traffic management process.**

### Previous Council/Committee Action

At the July 7, 2015, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report to Transportation Committee, on interim actions that will be taken to address minor traffic shortcutting issues as they arise (hot spots).

### Report

Arterial roadways are intended to carry traffic travelling longer distances, typically around, and not through, residential communities. When drivers leave the arterial road network to find quicker or easier routes through a community's residential roads, citizens of that community become concerned about their safety and quality of life. Currently, 26 communities have approached Transportation Services with requests for traffic management in response to shortcutting-related issues.

The City of Edmonton has had a Community Traffic Management program for the past 30 years, and has been working with communities to address traffic shortcutting issues since the mid-1980's. The need to mitigate traffic shortcutting issues has been entrenched in both the 1999 Transportation Master Plan and the current Transportation Master Plan: "The Way We Move". In 2003, City Council approved "Public Participation Guidelines for the Community Traffic Management Process", a document that guides Transportation Services in delivering programs to address traffic shortcutting.

In October 2014, Transportation Committee approved the implementation of a pilot process to assess changes to public participation guidelines for the Community Traffic Management Process. The proposed changes would give communities a greater role in guiding the process, and more flexibility in determining how the guidelines would be applied to meet the needs of the community. This process is currently being piloted in the Prince Charles and Pleasantview communities. Over this past winter and spring, the Prince Charles and Pleasantview Traffic committees consulted with City staff to decide on specific traffic calming measures for their neighbourhoods. These traffic calming measures were installed in July in Prince Charles and Pleasantview on a trial basis.

The trials will be in place until Spring 2016. After the trial phase, an assessment of the traffic measures will determine if the installations should be made permanent.

City Council has also recently approved the City Auditor's recommendation that Administration develop a City Policy for Community Traffic Management; this policy will be considered in June of 2016. As a key finding of the audit, the City must be able to quickly respond to community concerns with traffic modification strategies to provide the best chance to curb traffic shortcutting issues before they affect the safety and quality of life of citizens.

The 2015 "Traffic Shortcutting Audit" reviewed practices in other municipalities, including the City of Calgary, and based on the findings of this review, suggested that there may be shorter-term options to deal with emerging and more localized shortcutting issues in some neighbourhoods. In response to this suggestion, Transportation Services has begun to develop an expedited program that may be applied to selected neighbourhoods where shortcutting is considered to be localized - confined primarily to one roadway / route through the neighbourhood.

Seven neighbourhoods were shortlisted for consideration based on the nature and scope of the reported shortcutting issues: Ormsby Place, Crestwood, Parkview, Ottewell, Highlands, Newton, and Sherbrooke. Four of these neighbourhoods have been selected for this first phase of the program: Ormsby Place, Crestwood, Ottewell, and Newton. Further detail on each of the four neighbourhoods selected, including available background information and potential solutions to address key issues, is included in Attachment 1.

All potential traffic management measures were reviewed for applicability for this initiative. However, given the nature of the expedited program, only those measures that can be implemented in the short term, without incurring significant costs, are being considered as potential solutions to address the shortcutting concerns. These include:

- Signal timing changes on adjacent arterials to improve traffic flow
- Signal timing changes at entrances / exits from the neighbourhood to discourage shortcutting
- Review of traffic sign controls (stop and yield signs) and changes as required
- Mini-roundabouts
- Turn bans (all day or portions of the day)
- Conversion to a one-way roadway
- Speed humps (where interference with drainage is minimal)
- Digital feedback signs for speed limits

While public engagement is necessary for any traffic management program, the short turnaround time anticipated with this new Traffic Shortcutting pilot project will constrain typical public engagement strategies in favour of faster implementation of traffic management measures to better respond to concerns voiced by the communities. There is also the constraint that implemented measures and outcomes are expected to be reported back to Transportation Committee on October 7, 2015. While traditional

engagement practice timelines will be modified, meetings with Councillors, Community Leagues, and the citizen(s) who initiated the shortcutting concern will still take place early in September, with wider notification of the adjacent / impacted residents and stakeholders to follow immediately, and implementation to occur in the last two weeks of September.

### **Policy**

Public Participation Guidelines for the Community Traffic Management Process.

### **Budget/Financial Implications**

The first phase will be funded by existing Transportation Operations.

Later phases would require a long-term funding strategy, which may include funding from the Traffic Safety Strategy and Neighbourhood Renewal Programs, or from the Traffic Safety and Automated Enforcement Reserve.

### **Attachment**

1. Traffic Shortcutting Initiative - Pilot Project Neighbourhoods