From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 11/18/2021 4:51:03 PM
Subject: Neighbourhood Traffic Management Program and Slow Streets Update
Attachments: Memo - Neighbourhood Traffic Management Program and Slow Streets Update.pdf

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Lon LaClaire. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- Staff are developing a new Neighbourhood Traffic Management Program. The program will take a proactive, equity-informed and data-driven approach to traffic calming on local streets, and operate at a neighbourhood scale, with the goal of prioritizing neighbourhoods with the highest need.
- The Strathcona and Adanac Overpass neighbourhoods have been prioritized as pilot neighbourhoods in response to known concerns. Data collection and early stakeholder engagement for these neighbourhoods will take place in Q4 2021.
- The Slow Streets network, though popular with residents, has been challenging to maintain. Staff will maintain the current network through the winter as an unfunded program, while exploring options to capture the benefits of the program in the long term.
- Staff will report back on the Neighbourhood Traffic Management Program strategy, pilot neighbourhoods, and the future of Slow Streets in a Council report at the end of Q1 2022.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca

CITY OF VANCOUVER

The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

CITY OF VANCOUVER

ENGINEERING SERVICES
Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
City Engineer/General Manager

MEMORANDUM

November 18, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Maria Pontikis, Director, Civic Engagement and Communications
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office

FROM: Lon LaClaire
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Neighbourhood Traffic Management Program and Slow Streets Update

RTS #: N/A

Purpose

This memo provides information on early directions for a new and expanded *Neighbourhood Traffic Management (NTM) Program* and work that staff will be undertaking in the coming months. This also provides an update to the *Slow Streets Program*. A summary of existing NTM related programs and initiatives is provided in Appendix A.

The Neighbourhood Traffic Management Program

Building off of the existing framework of programs, staff will report back in Q1 2022 with a proposed approach for neighbourhood traffic management moving forward. This approach would:

- Be **proactive** rather than reactive
- Use a **data-driven** prioritization strategy (including variables like collision, speed, volume history, equity variables, and location of community amenities)
- Incorporate **greenways**, **bikeways** and other **road space reallocation** efforts
- Include **follow-up** and **evaluation** of changes
- Take place at the **neighbourhood-level** scale

Existing programs such as the *Speed Hump Program* and the *Local Improvement Program* (LIP) are anticipated to remain.

With resourcing now in place, staff will continue to develop the new strategy over the coming months, and report back at the end of Q1 2022. This report will include a proposed prioritization strategy, early directions for pilot neighbourhoods, and considerations for program scale and potential funding.

Key Opportunities for a New Program

The new program will provide opportunities to improve how the City addresses neighbourhood traffic management, including:

1. Improving Equity: The majority of neighbourhood traffic management responses today are resident-initiated and reactive. This means that the program likely has a bias towards neighbourhoods with residents who have more time to participate in public process, comfort with engaging with the City, and/or financial resources funds (for LIP cases). By reflecting equity variables as part of a neighbourhood prioritization framework, the city could reduce potential bias between neighbourhoods.

2. Expanding Scale: Most existing NTM processes operate at the individual street or block level. Taking a neighbourhood based approach can improve overall performance and reduce the chances that traffic simply diverts to other streets, without resolving the root causes.

3. Improving Efficiency: By taking a proactive approach across neighbourhoods, the revised NTM program should help to reduce the number of citizen NTM requests over time, which in turn should reduce the resources needed to investigate these concerns.

Strathcona and Adanac Overpass Neighbourhoods

The Strathcona and Adanac Overpass neighbourhoods have a history of neighbourhood traffic management issues and have been prioritized as pilot neighbourhoods.

Work within Strathcona relates to and will be informed by the ongoing collector traffic calming pilot on Prior St to improve walkability, reduce vehicle speeds and increase street lighting levels. Strathcona also scored highly in an objective review of collisions, speed, vulnerable users and community amenities.

Staff will begin data collection and early stakeholder engagement for these neighbourhoods in Q4 2021. Emerging directions will be included in the broader NTM Council report in Q1 2022.

Slow Streets

Slow Streets were implemented as part of the ‘rapid response’ phase of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to provide more space for social distancing while walking, cycling and rolling. In total, 40km of slow streets were installed, at a total cost of approximately $340,000 through the end of 2020. The network was envisioned as a short term program, to connect green spaces, high streets and neighbourhoods with consideration for equity and accessibility goals.

The initiative has been popular with residents (with over 70% support in City surveys), but the temporary plastic water filled barriers used across the network have been challenging to maintain, as barriers are frequently damaged by vehicles, moved or vandalized. To address these challenges, there has been a significant, unbudgeted effort across the network to monitor, replace, clean and reset barriers, with ongoing future costs of approximately $25,000-$30,000 per month.

The Future of Slow Streets

Based on ongoing public support for the program and concerns with potential for removals, staff expect to maintain the current network of slow streets through the winter as an unfunded program. This will be presented to council in the future as part of the 2022 operating budget as a one time expense.

Community stewardship of barriers has been considered as an interim solution, however there are challenges with coordination across the large network of slow streets, staff resources required to develop and manage the network of stewards, and safety considerations that would result from asking residents to manage equipment in the street.

Staff are exploring a number of options to capture the benefits of the program in the long term. Staff believe that a longer term Slow Street Network using lower maintenance materials is possible. Staff will provide an update on the future of Slow Streets as part of the Council report in Q1 2022 and outline next steps for maintaining a Slow Street network.

Sincerely,

Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering Services
604.873.7336 | lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca

Appendix A: Summary of Neighbourhood Traffic Management Programs and Initiatives

Resident Requests for Neighbourhood Traffic Management

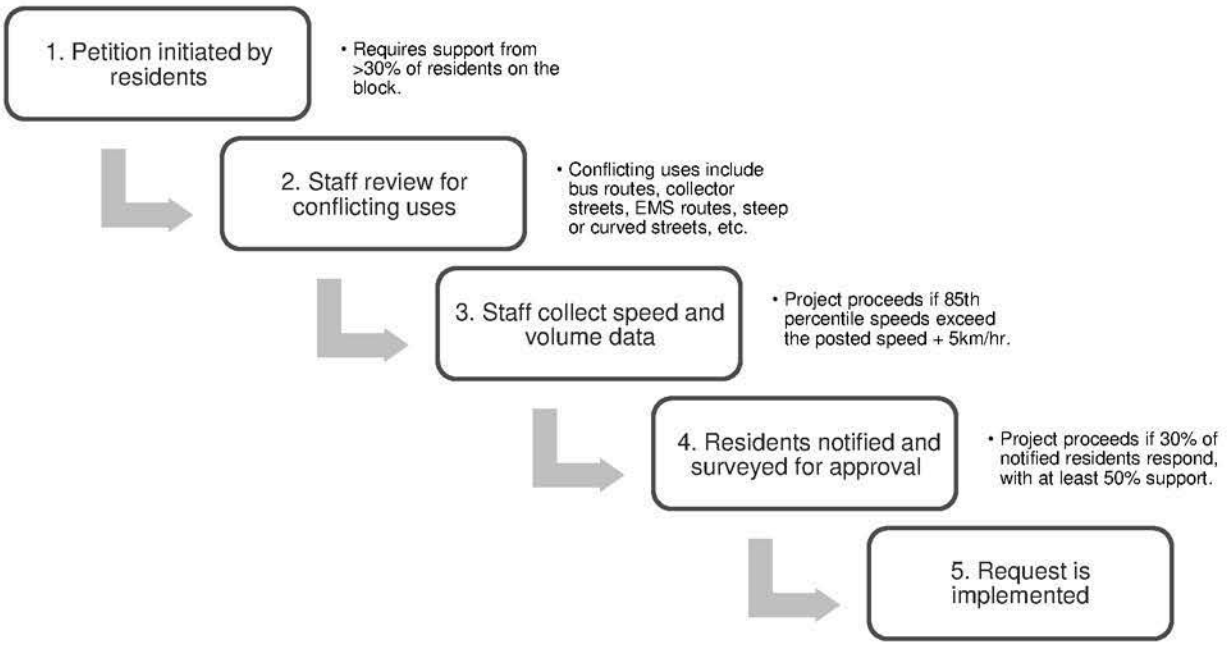
The City receives between 250-450 resident-initiated neighbourhood traffic management cases per year which are primarily received through 3-1-1. Residents request a range of measures, including speed humps, traffic circles, curb bulges, stop signs, full vehicle restrictions and turn bans.

Staff review each request by evaluating existing data, collecting new data, and/or conducting a site visit as necessary. This data and observed traffic behaviour are then compared with conditions on nearby local streets, as well as data from comparable streets in the city. In each case, staff make assessments and implement changes where needed. While changes in the street are not correlated to particular requests, in 2019 there were 111 revisions to signage and pavement markings, which are often completed in response to NTM concerns. This does not include other minor street changes which are often captured as part of larger projects or through other processes.

A number of programs and opportunities exist to implement NTM measures in the City.

Speed Hump Program

The *Speed Hump Program* allows residents to request speed humps on their block via petition. Projects are approved if the data shows that speed humps are warranted, and sufficient neighbourhood support exists. The approval process is detailed in the diagram below:



The Program has a $250,000 annual budget which typically allows for speed humps to be built on 20 to 30 blocks. In recent years, locations for speed humps that align with City priorities for traffic calming around schools and parks have been prioritized. In 2020, the city received 11 neighbourhood-initiated requests, but none met the criteria for implementation. There are currently 10 resident-initiated speed hump requests under review.

Local Improvement Program (LIP)

The *Local Improvement Program* allows residents to request and fund a variety of street improvements to their block. Potential improvements under the program include:

- Lane paving
- Lane lighting
- Traffic circles
- Corner bulges
- Lane speed humps

Requests are initiated via petition, which is followed up by data collection and analysis. Approval is based on the requirements set in the *Local Improvement Procedures Bylaw 3614* and the *Vancouver Charter*. In the last three years the program was active (2017-2019), two instances of laneway speed humps were successfully approved via this process. The program has been paused for 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Slow Zones and 30km/hr Signage Regulations

In spring 2021, the City launched a trial 30km/hr 'Slow Zone' in the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood. Grandview Woodland was identified by staff as the top ranked neighbourhood based on speed, collisions, proportion of vulnerable populations, and number of community amenities. The trial features 30km/hr gateway signs, speed limit signs, and paint markings but did not impact access or parking. Preliminary results of the trial show a small reduction in average speeds of about 1km/hr. Staff will report back with a full summary of results and next steps in 2022.

Staff have been in communication with the Province, and have recently been in discussions with Legal Services regarding signage requirements for a blanket rollout of 30km/hr speed limits on local streets. Discussions are ongoing, and staff will provide an update when more information is available.

Capital Projects + Development Opportunities

Neighbourhood traffic management features are often incorporated into capital projects and off-site improvements delivered through development projects.

School Active Travel Program (SATP)

The SATP works with school communities to improve walking, cycling and rolling infrastructure around schools and to educate and encourage students to use active travel to and from school.

Infrastructure upgrades as part of the program include speed humps, crosswalks, ramps, curb bulges and pedestrian signals. In the 2019 and 2020 years, the program featured:

- School Active Travel Planning at 8 schools (over the two years)
- Walk + Bike + Roll grants for school-led programming at 15 schools
- Walking and cycling education courses for 1,153 grade 6 and 7 students

School Streets

School Streets is a new pilot program that creates a car-free block beside a school during pick-up/drop-off. Three schools were piloted in April/May 2021. Results from the pilots included:

- A reduction in motor vehicle traffic observed on all streets adjacent to schools
- 32% of families reported walking more
- 29% of parents reported driving less