
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: June 14, 2001
File No.: 5460-04

To: City Manager

From: Transportation Manager

Subject: **Neighborhood Traffic Management Policy**

Report Prepared by: Traffic & Transportation Engineer

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council adopt the Neighbourhood Traffic Management Policy,

AND THAT the 10 Year Capital Plan be amended to include an annual allocation of \$30,000 to support the policy.

BACKGROUND

As in most urban municipalities, traffic has become an issue on many neighbourhood streets in the City of Kelowna. With increasing traffic congestion on major roads, some motorists begin looking for short cuts or drive inappropriately along the residential street system. As a result, many residents have become concerned about speeding, shortcutting, safety for pedestrians and its impact on the quality of life within their community.

In order to discourage undesirable traffic patterns and/or travel behaviour, many municipalities have implemented neighborhood traffic management strategies, including the provision of traffic calming measures as well as education, enforcement and awareness programs. In general, the experiences with these strategies have been viewed as a success.

The development of the City of Kelowna's *Neighbourhood Traffic Management Policy* is designed to guide the process of administering plans on an ongoing basis, as well as developing and implementing traffic management measures as appropriate. It is expected that this will essentially be a 'living document' that will evolve along with the City's experience in neighbourhood traffic calming.

It should be recognized that the *Neighbourhood Traffic Management Policy* is not intended to address land use, operational or safety issues – although these may arise during the course of developing a neighbourhood plan. Also, this policy is intended to apply only to local and minor collector residential roadways at this point in time.

POLICY

The policy document itself, as attached, is divided in six sections. Each section is listed below along with a brief description:

- **Background.** The rationale for the policy is offered.
- **Responding to Public Requests.** A methodology for handling public inquiries as they pertain to this policy is outlined.
- **Study Areas.** A rationale for following the 'neighbourhood' approach to dealing with traffic issues is offered along with statements relating to how the neighbourhoods are to be defined and considered.
- **Prioritizing Studies.** A methodology for evaluating, comparing and prioritizing competing neighbourhood interests is identified. This is critical due to limited financial resources.
- **Funding.** A confirmation of the funding source for dealing with neighbourhood traffic management issues is identified.
- **Preparing Plans.** A methodology for developing neighbourhood traffic management plans is offered.

FUNDING & RESOURCES

The general costs for developing neighborhood traffic management plans, implementing measures as well as operating and maintenance measures are briefly described below:

- **Neighbourhood Traffic Management Study.** The costs to undertake a study and develop a plan for a neighborhood may range anywhere from \$5,000 to \$25,000, depending upon the magnitude of the project and the availability of in-house staff resources.
- **Implementation.** Costs of implementing traffic management techniques can vary widely, depending on the size of the neighbourhood and the extent of traffic problems. Based on benchmarks established in other BC communities, an allocation of \$20,000 for a given neighbourhood plan is considered to be sufficient at this point in time, and will be reviewed annually.
- **Operations and Maintenance.** The added operation and maintenance costs attributed to traffic management measures are generally not considered as significant as the benefits generated by the improvements to neighbourhood livability. However, minor maintenance cost increases may be incurred from time to time which will need to be reflected in the budget.
- **City Personnel Resources.** Presently, the resources to undertake and develop a neighborhood traffic management plan in its entirety do not exist internally. The process involves intense consultation with the community. Even if consultants are used to develop and implement neighbourhood traffic management plans, internal personnel resources of the City will be required to:
 - receive, record and respond to public requests for traffic calming.
 - compile data and undertake annual reviews for the prioritization of plans.
 - represent the City in the development of neighbourhood plans.
 - manage the implementation of traffic calming measures and monitor the effectiveness.

In this regard, funding for the procurement of external support has been considered in the recommended increase to the 10-year capital plan.

There are four optional funding strategies that are available to the City for the development and implementation of neighbourhood traffic management plans that were considered in the development of the Policy, as follows:

- ***Appropriation from General Revenues.*** Council votes on general revenue appropriation for traffic management in a particular area each year as part of the overall City budget.
- ***Specified Area (Initiative Plan).*** Council votes on a bylaw to establish an annual specified area tax on properties deemed to benefit by the implementation of a neighbourhood traffic management plan. If more than 50% of the property owners in the area object, the bylaw is defeated.
- ***Specified Area (Petition Plan).*** Council implements a project based on a petition of property owners. If two-thirds of the owners representing more than half of the assessed value are in favour, the petition succeeds.
- ***Specified Reserve Fund.*** Council votes to establish a traffic calming program that extends through their mandate and applies reserve funds toward different priorities.

In most BC communities, the development and implementation of neighbourhood traffic management plans have been funded through the appropriation of general revenues. The basic rationale for doing so is that other road and transportation improvements are funded from general revenues, and that causes of traffic problems within neighbourhoods are typically city-wide or regional in nature and not specific to a neighbourhood. The draft policy is consistent with this approach.

CONCLUSION

The draft Neighbourhood Traffic Management Policy represents a major commitment to dealing with traffic issues in residential areas. Once adopted, the City of Kelowna will be in a strong position to being able to deal with and respond to the numerous traffic related issues raised by the Community on a regular basis.

As noted, an annual allocation of \$30,000 is proposed to get the policy off the ground and in use in the Community. The funds are to be used for initial issue assessment, consultation, design, installation and monitoring. This should allow for a full reaction to one neighbourhood issue each year.

A running initial list of sites to be considered under this policy include Abbott Street, Caramillo Road/Spruceglen Drive, Fisher Road, Peck Road, Buckland Avenue/Marshall Street, Wilkinson Street and Westridge Drive.

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CITY OF KELOWNA

COUNCIL POLICY MANUAL

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SUBJECT: NEIGHBOURHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT POLICY

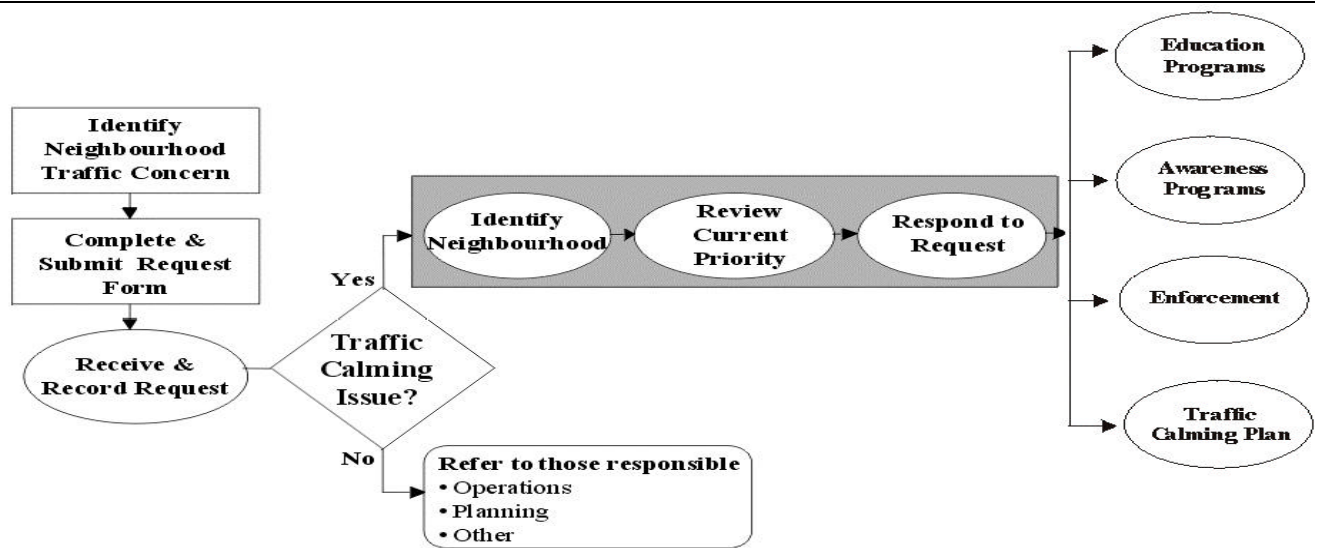
1. BACKGROUND

The City Of Kelowna recognizes that there are a range of neighbourhood traffic related issues that may arise and many of the current functions within the City administration already address these issues (e. safety at intersections, pedestrian crossings, etc.). However, issues such as high vehicular traffic volumes, short-cutting and speeding vehicles on residential roadways however are not addressed through any current functions of the City Transportation Division and require a comprehensive approach to develop solutions beyond spot treatments.

The solutions to neighbourhood traffic issues and concerns may include education, awareness and enforcement programs as well as traffic calming measures. These strategies to be developed for individual neighborhoods are essentially intended to address concerns by restoring the local residential streets to their intended function by slowing traffic, discouraging short-cutting and reducing conflicts. Due to the requirement for mobility within the community, this policy does not apply to roadways classified as major collectors or arterials.

2. RESPONDING TO PUBLIC REQUESTS

The City will utilize the following customer-friendly process for handling requests for neighbourhood traffic management on an ongoing basis. In general, the process is designed to ensure that all requests in the community and other neighborhoods are considered in a fair and equitable manner, and that the concerns of all residents and other members of the community are considered together. The process is illustrated and briefly summarized below.



- a. Residents may identify neighbourhood traffic issues to the City Transportation Division in writing, by phone, fax or email.
- b. The City will review comments and requests, which will then be combined with the overall requests for that neighbourhood and/or referred to other related departments for appropriate actions (i.e., Operations, Planning, etc.).
- c. The City will respond to all requests, and, if applicable, inform the resident of the process for considering neighbourhood traffic issues and indicate the City's current priorities.

3. STUDY AREAS

Although measures can be implemented at a single point of concern, the City will develop plans at a neighbourhood level. The experience of other municipalities strongly suggests that the success in developing and implementing neighborhood traffic management plans is influenced by the involvement of the entire community. In general, this approach recognizes the whole system of streets and land uses within the area and treats the road network as a community facility.

- a. The City has established boundaries for approximately 50 neighbourhoods for the purpose of recording community traffic concerns on an ongoing basis. While the boundaries generally follow the arterial and major collector street system as well as other natural features, they are designed to incorporate those areas where the implementation of traffic management measures on a given street may impact residents on adjacent streets within the area.
- b. It is not the City's intent to develop neighbourhood traffic management plans in every neighbourhood. The neighbourhood boundaries outlined in the Policy merely facilitate the collection and monitoring of community concerns as part of the annual review process.
- c. For the purpose of undertaking the development of neighbourhood traffic management plans, the City may combine areas that are in close proximity and / or with similar issues in order to deliver overall economies of scale with the level of effort required to develop the plan.

4. PRIORITIZING STUDIES

Each of the neighbourhoods will be prioritized based on primary and secondary criteria as follows:

- a. The primary criterion is limited to the request for neighbourhood traffic management. In other words, if there are no requests to address such issues the neighbourhood would not be considered.
- b. The secondary criteria would be applied to those areas where requests for neighbourhood traffic management measures have been made. The secondary criteria include quantitative and qualitative factors such as:
 - i) **Number of Request Locations** The number of locations within a community in which traffic calming concerns have been identified. NOTE that what is being referenced is the number of *locations or separate issues* within a neighbourhood, and not the number of individual requests.
 - ii) **Reported Collisions** The number of reported collisions within each neighbourhood not including the arterial road system (if data is available).
 - iii) **Availability of Sidewalks in Pedestrian Areas** The presence, or lack thereof, of sidewalks in key pedestrian zones.
 - iv) **Difficult Road Geometry** Locations in which neighbourhood traffic issues have been raised and the road geometry is known to be poor.
 - v) **Pending Road Improvements** Any changes to the major road network that may alleviate some of the neighbourhood concerns and therefore delay (perhaps indefinitely) the need to develop a traffic management plan.
 - vi) **Road Rehabilitation Programs** Any planned rehabilitation of neighbourhood streets that may accelerate need to address concerns and combine the implementation of traffic calming measures.

Each secondary criterion will be rated for each neighbourhood on a scale of 1 through 5, where 1 indicates that criterion is not significant within a particular community, and 5 indicates that it is very significant, and the potential projects will be ranked accordingly.

5. FUNDING

The City of Kelowna will fund neighbourhood traffic issue assessment, neighbourhood plan development, implementation of measures, on-going monitoring, and operations and maintenance of any neighbourhood traffic management priorities that have been delivered through the scope of this policy. The activity level in any given year will be dictated by budget limitations.

6. PREPARING PLANS

a). Community Involvement

For a neighbourhood traffic management plan to be successful, the community must be supportive of the plan. The only means of gaining this support is to involve the entire community from the earliest stages of developing the plan. In this regard, a neighbourhood advisory group will be established for each plan being considered. The community involvement strategy is consistent with the Transportation Division's Communication Guidelines.

b). Study Process

Neighbourhood traffic management plans will be developed through a four-step process that is comprised of technical activities as well as the involvement of the community. The four -step process is highlighted as follows:

- ii **Study Initiation** involves the preparatory activities and initiatives to increase awareness of the study as well as commitment from members of the community.
- iii **Problem Identification** ensures that all issues are identified early in the study process through community involvement. Additionally, data is collected to confirm the actual problems and define patterns and locations a

necessary.

- iiii **Plan Development** stage is designed to identify all traffic calming measures throughout the neighbourhood proposed to address traffic management issues. The community and key agencies are involved in identifying candidate measures and developing the preferred plan.
- iiiv **Implementation Strategy** involves the phasing and design of traffic calming measures, as well as defining a monitoring program subsequent to the installation of measures.

c). Range of Traffic Calming Measures

The Canadian Guide to Neighbourhood Traffic Calming, published jointly by the Transportation Association of Canada and the Institute of Transportation Engineers in 1998 is the primary reference for this policy where traffic calming measures are being considered. It provides details on the application (suitability and effectiveness) of traffic calming measures as well as guidelines for design. Additionally, as experience continues to develop, this document will be supplemented by the City's Transportation Division to provide further information in terms of selecting measures within the City of Kelowna and specific local design treatments.