

Priorities Committee Meeting_Jun18_2019

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND UPDATE

Jim Common Drive Traffic Calming Project Update 2019

Report Purpose

To provide an update to Priorities Committee on the Jim Common Drive Traffic Calming project.

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals

Goal 2 - Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure

Goal 7 - Provide opportunities for public engagement and communication

Goal 8 - Foster an environment for safe communities

Report

In 2016, a traffic calming and management project was initiated for Jim Common Drive (JCD) South and North. This project was initiated in advance of upcoming road rehabilitation based on resident concerns with traffic speed and pedestrian safety, which was also substantiated by collected speed data that indicated traffic speeds were in excess of the 50 km/h speed limit.

Upon the completion of a thorough engineering review and a public engagement process, traffic calming and management features were installed on JCD South and North during the 2017 scheduled rehabilitation of the roads. Now that the traffic features have been in place for over a year, Strathcona County is conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the public engagement process and a preliminary evaluation of the traffic impact outcomes of the project.

Public engagement for this initiative was conducted at the "Listen and Learn" level. All residents of Strathcona County were provided with an opportunity to participate in both phases of the public engagement undertaken for this project, although those in the neighbourhoods of Clover Bar Ranch and Charlton Heights, as well as nearby condominium complexes off JCD South were most aggressively recruited.

Based on public engagement, resident priorities for JCD South were:

- reduce traffic speeds
- improve pedestrian safety
- improve sightlines at intersections
- discourage shortcutting
- maintain traffic flow
- minimize traffic noise

Based on engineering review, engineering goals for JCD South were:

- decrease traffic speeds
- improve sightlines at Cranford Drive
- decrease pedestrian risk at Crystal Lane (high number of vulnerable road users)
- improve intersection safety at Brower Drive (due to collision history)

Based on public engagement, resident priorities for JCD North were:

- improve pedestrian safety at the trail crossing on southern end of the road and near the playground
- reduce traffic speeds, particularly at the playground
- manage parking concerns at the playground (parking too close to crosswalks, corners)

Priorities Committee Meeting_Jun18_2019

Based on engineering review, engineering goals for JCD North were:

- decrease traffic speeds near the trail crossing and at the playground (during effective hours)
- clarify parking at the playground
- create a single crosswalk at Canyon Drive

Despite an extensive communication process for the project, including personally addressed mail-outs to 1144 nearby residences, participation was low in public engagement for the JCD Traffic Calming Project. SCOOP proved to be very effective in recruiting participation for the evaluation survey and is proving to be a valuable tool. For residents who did participate in the project engagement, generally, the upfront portion of the public engagement was rated favourably, including communication about the events, their purpose and scope, information provided, and moderation of the sessions. The format of one in-person event combined with an online survey for each phase of engagement appears to have met the needs of the majority of residents.

Residents were less positive about communication of the project results and agreement that the input made a difference to the outcomes of the project was divided. Resident belief that public engagement is genuine and meaningful is essential to build resident participation in the engagement process in Strathcona County. The results of this question suggest that the County needed to do better at showing how resident concerns were understood and reflected in the alternatives developed and the final implemented outcomes of this project.

From an engineering perspective, this preliminary evaluation of the JCD South and North Traffic Calming Project was largely successful in meeting project goals. While some speed data collected shows 85th percentile speeds over the speed limit in some locations, roads are generally operating within design capacity and are functioning as expected for the road classifications. Significant speed reductions were achieved at some locations, and most importantly in areas of pedestrian activity.

Transportation Planning and Engineering will continue to monitor speeds, volumes, and collisions periodically in the project area. When full three-year, post-construction collision data is available, a full analysis of the safety impacts of the changes will be completed and evaluated.

From a resident perspective, the success of the project in meeting resident goals on JCD South is marred by concerns about an increase/persistence in aggressive driving behaviour and by lack of driver understanding of how to negotiate roundabouts. Significant increases in resident satisfaction with road noise and safety may be possible with improved driver understanding and behaviour.

Driver understanding of the rules of the road for the use and operation of roundabouts appears to require additional education. Through this engagement and conversations with residents, it is apparent that the right-of-way rules of a roundabout are not always understood by the travelling public. In an effort to provide consistent information to those who are unsure, an explanation that vehicles using a roundabout must yield to all traffic on the left has been used rather than the message to yield to drivers in the circle. It became apparent that some drivers felt the roundabout was intended to operate like an all-way stop and that drivers take turns entering the roundabout.

Priorities Committee Meeting_Jun18_2019

Roundabout designs work well because the primary flow of traffic is generally maintained with the joining roads needing to yield to only one direction versus all directions.

A comprehensive and innovative education campaign is needed to improve driver understanding.

Stakeholder feedback suggests roundabouts are a preferred design to an all-way stop control for Strathcona County Transit, Student Transportation agencies, the RCMP and Enforcement Services, and Emergency Services. Where multiple traffic calming features are implemented on a road, there is the potential to significantly impact Emergency Services' response time.

Council and Committee History

March 14, 2017 The Committee was provided an update and final recommendations on the Jim Common Drive Traffic Calming Study.

Other Impacts

Policy: SER-009-040 Traffic Calming Policy, SER-009-017 Traffic Control Devices

Legislative/Legal: n/a

Interdepartmental: RCMP and Enforcement Services, Transit, Emergency Services

Master Plan/Framework: n/a

Communication Plan

The project website is to be updated with up to date data and results.

Enclosures

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Jim Common Drive Traffic Calming Project – Evaluation Report |
| 2 | Jim Common Drive Traffic Calming Project – Evaluation Survey Results |
| 3 | Jim Common Drive Traffic Calming Project – Presentation |