



To: Public Works and Transportation Committee **Date:** September 3, 2002
From: Gordon Chan, P. Eng.
Director, Transportation **File:** 6450-01
Re: **TRAFFIC CALMING PROGRAM – PROPOSED APPROVAL PROCESS**

Staff Recommendation

That the proposed policy for the approval of traffic calming related measures (as described in the report dated September 3rd, 2002, from the Director, Transportation) be endorsed.

Gordon Chan, P. Eng.
Director, Transportation

Att. 2

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CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER

Staff Report

Origin

At the July 17, 2002 meeting of the Public Works and Transportation Committee, as part of the review of a number of traffic calming projects, the following resolution was passed:

“That staff prepare for report to the Public Works & Transportation Committee, an administrative procedure to deal with future traffic calming measures which would eliminate the need for reports to Council on the implementation of such measures unless necessary.”

This report recommends an administrative procedure that would streamline the approval process for implementing traffic calming and other local area traffic and pedestrian safety measures found to be warranted by staff. The proposed procedures, if approved, will result in improved customer service in terms of addressing neighbourhood traffic issues put forward by residents, as well as reducing the turnaround time of implementing the recommended improvements.

Analysis

1. Objectives and Types of Traffic Calming Measures

Traffic conditions on residential streets can greatly affect neighbourhood liveability and community safety and well being. Traffic calming measures are intended to address one or more of the following concerns on local and collector residential streets:

- *Excessive Vehicular Speeds* – excessive speed creates a safety concern, increases the risk for pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicular traffic using the street and creates more noise;
- *Through Traffic (“Rat Running”)* – non-local traffic travelling through a neighbourhood increases traffic volumes, which can create traffic congestion, cause delays and potential safety hazards for pedestrians, cyclists and local road users, and increase noise and vehicle emissions; and
- *Other Road Safety Hazards and Road User Conflicts* – excessive vehicle speeds and volumes, geometric deficiencies and poor sightlines can create conflicts among motorists, cyclists, pedestrians and other street users.

Traffic calming measures seek to address these neighbourhood traffic safety concerns by altering driver behaviour primarily through physical geometric changes to the roadway. Examples of traffic calming measures implemented in Richmond to-date include:

- *Traffic Circle* – a raised island located in the centre of an intersection;
- *Raised Median and “Channelized” Island* – concrete curb or island located along the centre of a street; “channelized” island to restrict certain direction of traffic movements;
- *Curb Extension* – widened sidewalk or landscaped parking strip that narrows the street; and
- *Other Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Measures* - traffic and pedestrian safety measures such as improved signage and the provision of pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, delineated walkways, roadside barriers, extruded curbs, etc.) also contribute to neighbourhood liveability and community safety and well-being by minimizing conflicts among all road users.

2. Current City Practices for the Implementation of Traffic Calming Related Measures

The following steps outline the City's current traffic calming practices from the initiation of a traffic study through to the implementation and monitoring of the effectiveness of the measures.

Define Issue – The City initiates a traffic study based on regular reviews of reported traffic accidents and feedback from area residents regarding a neighbourhood traffic and/or pedestrian safety issue. Traffic speeds and volumes, accident data and other information related to pedestrian and traffic safety are also collected and assessed on a regular basis to identify any significant neighbourhood traffic safety issues.

Develop Options – Options to address the issues identified by the traffic study are developed. It may be possible to enhance neighbourhood traffic safety by increasing speed and parking regulation enforcement, educating those causing the problem and/or implementing regulatory measures, rather than introducing physical measures. If non-engineering measures are not adequate to enhance traffic safety, then physical measures are considered. Staff assess what measures could enhance traffic safety in the area in terms of speed reduction, traffic volume reduction, road user conflict reduction, and impact on the local environment.

Initial Report to Council – Staff prepare an initial report to Council on the recommended traffic calming measures. If the project will not result in any physical changes to the street (e.g., problem can be resolved by means of new signage, speed enforcement, etc.), staff proceed with implementation of the project without reporting to Council. If the project will result in physical changes to the street (e.g., curb extensions, raised medians, etc.), staff seek approval of the measures in principle and direction from Council to consult with area residents about the proposed project and report back on the outcome of a public consultation process.

Consultation with Area Residents – Staff consult with area residents about the physical changes to the street to determine if the proposed project is satisfactory to residents. If most residents support the proposed project, the design is refined to incorporate comments and suggestions received. If most residents do not support the proposals, new options are considered based on feedback from resident surveys.

Further Report to Council – If residents support the project, staff seek approval from Council to proceed with implementation and monitor the effectiveness of the project for one year. If there have been major changes to the project design or development of a new option as a result of the public consultation, staff seek approval of the new design or option from Council and proceed with the project.

Implementation – Traffic safety projects are generally funded from the Minor or Major Capital Works Programs (Neighbourhood Traffic Safety Program). In some cases, the traffic safety measures are implemented as part of the requirements for a new development. In some situations, financial contribution towards the project may be made by an external agency.

Monitoring – Staff monitor traffic conditions (including speed, traffic volume and accidents) for one year to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. If the project has not improved traffic conditions on the street, other actions may be considered.

The advantage of the current procedure is that Council is not only kept apprised of proposed traffic calming measures in the City but also has the opportunity to directly influence the implementation of the measures through the Council approval process. More importantly, the process offers an open forum for local residents, either for or against a particular project, to express their views in front of Committee and/or Council. Conversely, the process can result in a lengthened time frame between the initiation of the traffic study and the implementation of traffic safety measures.

3. Proposed Policy for the Approval of Traffic Calming Related Measures

Staff propose to modify the current process outlined in Section 2 of this report to eliminate the need for Council approval for the implementation of minor traffic calming and/or traffic and pedestrian safety measures where feasible and found to be warranted by staff. The criteria for the requirement of Council approval would be based on the impact of the project on the travelled portion of an arterial or collector street and the scale of the project in terms of funding requirement. The proposed process is described below.

3.1 Projects Requiring Council Approval

Staff propose to continue to seek Council approval of projects that meet any of the following conditions:

- (a) involves physical changes to the travelled portion of arterial or collector streets (e.g., installation of a traffic circle, raised median, curb extensions);
- (b) has significant estimated construction costs relative to similar projects;
- (c) is controversial within the neighbourhood affected; or
- (d) requires additional funding beyond the program budget for the current year.

3.2 Projects Not Requiring Council Approval

With reference to the existing process outlined in Section 2, staff propose to eliminate the requirement for making an initial submission and a final recommendation to Council if the proposed projects meet all of the following conditions (for such projects, Council would be advised of the implementation of the measure via an internal memorandum):

- (a) has the support of the majority of residents affected by the project;
- (b) does not involve physical changes to the travelled portion of arterial or collector streets (e.g., installation of signage or a paved walkway adjacent to the roadway); and
- (c) will be implemented on a local street or laneway (regardless of whether or not the project involves physical changes to the lane).

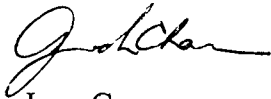
A summary chart of the key steps in the Traffic Calming and Traffic Safety Programs for both the existing and proposed procedures is shown in Attachment 1. A significant advantage of the proposed process is improved customer service. It is estimated that the revised procedure would improve the turnaround time from receipt of the public request to implementation of the traffic safety measures by at least four weeks. Attachment 2 contains a draft policy describing the above noted approval process.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact to the City at this time. However, the elimination of the need for Council approval for some traffic calming and traffic safety projects may result in potential project cost savings due to more flexible timing of construction start-up.

Conclusion

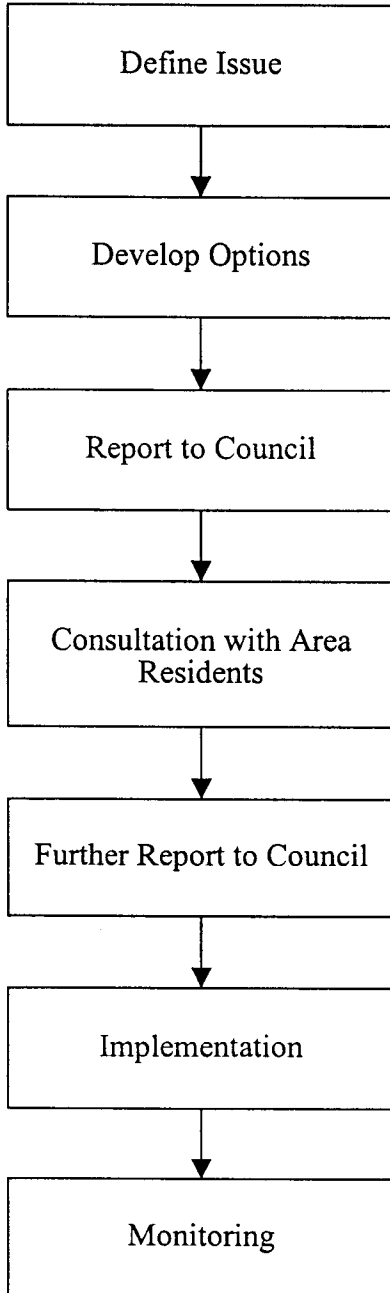
Staff propose a policy that eliminates the need for Council approval of the implementation of traffic calming and other traffic and pedestrian safety measures provided the project does not involve physical changes to the travelled portion of an arterial or collector street or the project will be implemented on a local street or laneway. Projects involving physical changes to arterial or collector streets and projects requiring significant capital funding will continue to be submitted to Council for approval prior to implementation. The proposed procedure is intended to streamline the approval process for traffic calming measures in order to provide the public with enhanced customer service and improved timing of the implementation of these traffic safety-related minor roadway improvements.



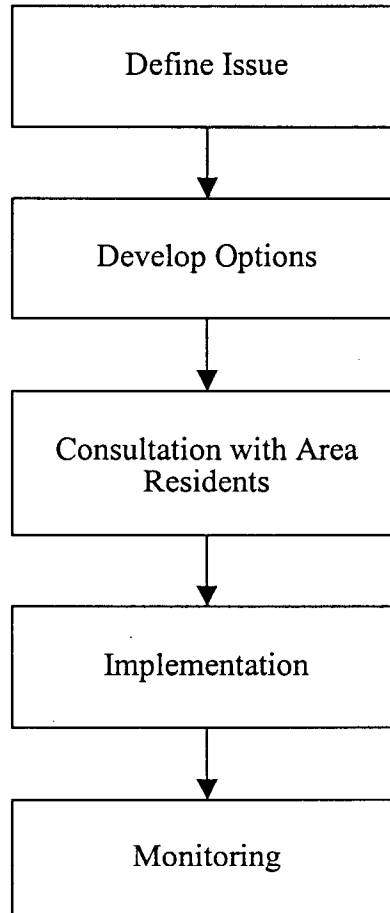
Joan Caravan
Transportation Planner

JC:lce

**Existing Process for
Implementing All
Traffic Calming
Measures**



**Proposed Process for
Implementing Minor*
Traffic Calming
Measures**



*Minor Measures include projects that:

- have the support of majority of area residents;
- no changes to arterial or collector streets; and
- implemented on local streets or lanes.



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Adopted by Council: ☉

Policy ☉

File Ref: ☉

Approval Process for the Implementation of Traffic Calming Related Measures

Policy ☉:

It is Council policy that:

1. The Director of Transportation may implement traffic calming measures, without reference to Council, where the proposed project meets all of the following conditions:
 - (a) has the support of the majority of residents affected by the project;
 - (b) does not involve physical changes to the travelled portion of arterial or collector streets (e.g., installation of signage or a paved walkway adjacent to the roadway); and
 - (c) will be implemented on a local street or laneway (regardless of whether or not the project involves physical changes to the lane).

2. Where all of the above conditions are not met, or where any of the following conditions apply, Council approval for the implementation of traffic calming measures must be obtained if such project:
 - (a) involves physical changes to the travelled portion of arterial or collector streets (e.g., installation of a traffic circle, raised median, curb extensions);
 - (b) has significant estimated construction costs relative to similar projects;
 - (c) is controversial within the neighborhood affected; or
 - (d) requires additional funding beyond the program budget for the current year.