

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services
Date	Monday, July 20, 2020
Subject	Community Road Safety Strategy

Recommendation

1. That the Community Road Safety Strategy, included as Attachment 1, to the Infrastructure, Development & Enterprise Services Report (2020-80), dated July 20, 2020 be approved and in effect as of August 4, 2020.
 2. That the Traffic Calming Policy, included as Attachment 2, to the Infrastructure, Development & Enterprise Services Report (2020-80), dated July 20, 2020 be approved and in effect as of August 4, 2020.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval of the proposed Community Road Safety Strategy (CRSS) and the new Traffic Calming Policy.

Key Findings

The CRSS is a high-level road safety plan that outlines areas in Guelph where road safety measures will be implemented. These measures include educational campaigns, enforcement strategies, and engineering/infrastructure changes. The CRSS was developed through public engagement and in collaboration with many internal stakeholders. Community feedback gathered through online and in-person engagement was used to determine key areas and recommended strategies.

A total of 24 strategies that fall under 10 road safety categories are outlined in the CRSS. Educational strategies such as awareness campaigns on a variety of topics including impaired, distracted, and aggressive driving have been outlined through collaboration with the Guelph Road Safety Coalition.

Many engineering road safety solutions are addressed through the traffic calming policy. As part of the CRSS, the Neighbourhood Traffic Management Policy has been updated and renamed as the Traffic Calming Policy (TCP). The TCP outlines procedures for initiating, reviewing, implementing, and evaluating traffic calming plans in residential neighbourhoods to help address concerns about speeding and high vehicle volumes.

The CRSS recommends strategies to address the ten key road safety topics and aligns with Vision Zero principles currently under consideration through the Transportation Master Plan.

Financial Implications

The CRSS is funded through the tax-supported Capital budget and has \$900,000 of existing capital funding (TF0026) to begin implementing road safety initiatives. Future capital budgets identify annual additional funding of up to \$376,000 to continue implementing road safety measures. Depending on the types of devices installed, there may be annual operating impacts of approximately \$23,000 beginning in 2021.

Background

Through report [IDE-2019-13](#) Red Light Camera Program Review, Council directed staff “to explore a Community Road Safety Strategy (CRSS) that includes mitigation measures to reduce the likelihood of frequent traffic infractions as well as red light violations and that funding support for this strategy be referred to in the 2019 budget process.”

Many Guelph neighbourhoods face traffic and speeding issues. Transportation engineering staff receive approximately 1-2 road safety related concerns daily. Many of these concerns focus on speeding in local neighbourhoods. Historically, community members could request traffic calming measures such as speed cushions, on their road through the [Neighbourhood Traffic Management Policy](#), which was Council approved in 2006. The CRSS has provided an opportunity to review and replace the former policy with the proposed Traffic Calming Policy.

Report

Road safety impacts all members of the Guelph community, regardless of their age, ability, or mode of transportation. A safe road network benefits all users. The goal of the CRSS is to provide strategies that will improve road safety to benefit all users, whether you are walking, cycling, riding transit, using a mobility device or driving.

Road safety was a top concern raised during the City’s Community Plan engagement activities. Additionally, road safety was consistently identified by Council as a priority and is identified in the [Strategic Plan: Guelph](#). The CRSS will help tackle this priority by developing a city-wide road safety strategy.

A variety of road users (e.g. pedestrians, seniors, people with disabilities, cyclists, drivers, children, etc.) have different needs and expectations. The City needs to provide balanced solutions to maximize everyone’s safety. Enforcement can be a solution but is also a challenge, Guelph Police and Bylaw staff cannot always be everywhere. Therefore, the City needs to look at education and engineering as additional solutions.

The implementation and effectiveness of each recommended strategy under the CRSS will rely on evidence informed decision making, equity, and continuous evaluation.

Development of the Community Road Safety Strategy

The CRSS was developed by:

- Reviewing best practices in other municipalities
- Engaging stakeholders to update the traffic calming policy
- Engaging the community to determine emphasis areas and strategies

The following summarizes each section of the report while detailed explanations are provided in Attachment 1.

Section 1: Review of programs, policies, and literature

The strategies outlined in the CRSS were developed through a best practices review. Staff consulted other municipalities with similar road safety programs to determine which strategies were appropriate for Guelph. Additionally, staff reviewed published literature on the effectiveness of road safety measures (e.g. speed limit reductions) to ensure that each strategy has been rigorously evaluated.

Section 2: Update Traffic Calming Policy

The Traffic Calming policy (previously referred to as the Neighbourhood Traffic Management Review) was last updated in 2006. As part of the CRSS, the Traffic Calming policy was updated. The TCP uses the existing Neighbourhood Traffic Management Policy as its basis. The policy outlines procedures for initiating, reviewing, implementing, and evaluating traffic calming plans in residential neighbourhoods to address concerns about speeding and high vehicle volumes (see Attachment 2). Stakeholders including Accessibility Services, Emergency Services, Operations, Police, Public Health, Sustainable Transportation, Transit, and Solid Waste provided feedback on the updated policy through in-person workshops. Strategies that belong in the CRSS were also identified through these consultations.

Safety concerns on arterial roadways or roadways that do not meet traffic calming thresholds will be addressed on a case-by-case basis under the CRSS. The TCP is one component of the CRSS and roads that do not qualify for traffic calming measures through this policy may be eligible for other safety measures such as speed limit reductions, radar display boards, and other programs.

Section 3: Development of Emphasis Areas

Community engagement events were held both in person and online in February and March 2020 to help inform the CRSS. Participants were asked to rank their top three road safety priority areas and to provide examples of strategies they would like to see implemented in Guelph. Additionally, service requests received by the Transportation Engineering department that mainly address speeding, pedestrian and school safety were also reviewed. A detailed breakdown of the community engagement results can be found under Attachment 1.

Section 4: Development of Strategies and Countermeasures

A total of 24 strategies that fall under 10 road safety categories are outlined in the CRSS. Educational strategies such as awareness campaigns on a variety of topics including impaired, distracted, and aggressive driving have been outlined through

collaboration with the Guelph Road Safety Coalition. Many engineering road safety solutions are addressed through the traffic calming policy in Attachment 2. A more detailed description of each road safety strategy is provided Attachment 1.

Section 5: Implementation and Evaluation

There are two ways in which a strategy identified through the CRSS may be implemented:

1. Resident initiated traffic calming requests that are deemed ineligible in accordance with the Traffic Calming policy will be reviewed under the CRSS. These locations will be prioritized based on the same rankings identified in the Traffic Calming policy Attachment 2.1.
2. City staff will perform annual network screening to proactively identify locations that are eligible for CRSS measures. More information on network screening is provided in Attachment 1 Section 5.1.1 Data Driven Solutions.

To determine if the strategies outlined in the CRSS are having their intended effects of improving road safety, several indicators will be measured over time. These may include operating speeds, changes in volume for all road users, severe and fatal injury collisions, change in perceptions of road safety, etc. Several years of data collection is required after the strategy has been implemented to accurately and statistically determine if a change has occurred. Staff will provide annual collision reports that will also outline evaluation metrics once appropriate data is available.

Alignment with 'Vision Zero' approach

Vision Zero is a traffic safety initiative that is based on the philosophy that no loss of life is acceptable on our roadways. In a Vision Zero community, the main belief is that people may make mistakes and therefore the road system (i.e. infrastructure) must be optimally designed to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries. This requires a focus on safe drivers, safe vehicles, safe roads and the right speed for each type of road.

Many of the safe systems principles and preferred strategies to address road safety contained within the CRSS are in line with Vision Zero principles, although the plan does not formally adopt a Vision Zero approach. CRSS principals and strategies that align with Vision Zero include:

- Enhancing the safety of vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists)
- Leveraging innovative technologies such as red-light cameras
- Improving road infrastructure for all road users
- Positioning road safety as a top priority in policies
- Raising public awareness about the importance of road safety
- Focusing on a data-driven approach to road safety
- Implementing and evaluating proven countermeasures.

The City will continue to monitor best practices and may explore a formal Vision Zero program in a future strategy if the Transportation Master Plan adopts a similar approach.

Financial Implications

The launch of the Community Road Safety Strategy is funded through the tax-supported Capital budget.

Consultations

Traffic calming policy feedback: Stakeholders including Accessibility Services, Emergency Services, Operations, Police, Public Health, Sustainable Transportation, Transit, and Waste provided feedback on the updated Traffic Calming policy through a set of in-person workshops. Strategies that belong in the CRSS were also identified through these consultations.

CRSS feedback: The City's Engineering and Transportation Services department engaged with the community through several in person and online engagement events that took place between February 18th and March 23rd 2020. To reach a more diverse demographic, in person engagement sessions were offered to the public at City Hall, the University of Guelph, Immigrant Services, and the Evergreen Senior's Centre. Over 500 responses were received that helped inform both the road safety priority areas and the strategies that were recommended.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Navigating our future

The Community Road Safety Strategy aligns with the city's Navigating Our Future strategic priority by improving the safety, efficiency and connectivity of the transportation system. By updating the Traffic Calming Policy and CRSS and improving safety on the road, more people may choose other active modes of transportation including walking and wheeling.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Community Road Safety Strategy (CRSS)

Attachment-2 Traffic Calming Policy Update

Attachment-3 Community Road Safety Strategy Presentation

Departmental Approval

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