

Correspondence – General Community Road Safety Strategy – 2020-80

From: Darren Shock

Subject: Community Road Safety Strategy Comments - June 20, 2020

Good morning,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the Community Road Safety Strategy (CRSS) being considered by Guelph City Council on July 20, 2020. Overall, I think this is great work. If the measures outlined get implemented, I believe many of them will improve road safety in the city.

I have organized my comments as more general, and then those more specific to the new Traffic Calming Policy (TCP). More generally:

-Background, p. 6. – Why are we not pursuing a policy of Vision Zero in the CRSS? I recognize that the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) may outline a Vision Zero approach or policy, but to not adopt a policy objective of zero loss of life in any transportation policy/strategy adopted seems irresponsible. If we are comfortable taking that approach right now, then I hope to see the TMP make this a formal policy, and the CRSS follow suit shortly after.

-Section 4.2.5 “Please slow down signs” and 4.2.7 “Radar Display Boards” – Please save the money on signs and re-allocate it to infrastructure/automated speed enforcement/red light cameras. As Strong Towns says, “If you need a sign to tell people to slow down, you designed the street wrong.”

-Section 4.4 – Winter Clearance – If it is out of scope here, I hope the TMP addresses improving on the minimum standards. Right now, we do the absolute minimum in the winter, and it does not work for anyone – but particularly pedestrians and cyclists. If we are serious about improving safety and shifting mode share, we need to be doing more than the minimum maintenance standards in the winter.

On the new TCP, it is good to see so many improvements over the Neighbourhood Traffic Management Policy (NTMP). Before commenting, I would like to offer some history of my frustration with the NTMP.

I initiated a study of my street under the NTMP in 2017. The data collected showed a street operating well above its intended 900 ADT movements (1,555 vehicles), and in excess of its speed limit of 50 km/h (61 km/h 85th percentile speed). However, when the resident survey was distributed, we did not meet the threshold of 60% “in support of the request in order to initiate a formal traffic review.”

It is not that the respondents were not in favour of a formal review. Of the 10 respondents to the 22 surveys distributed, all 10 were in favour. I recognize that I could have lobbied my neighbours more, but with a street we have objectively

proven operates above it's intended/safe capacity, why is that my job? The policy to terminate the process at this point is a major policy failure. Meanwhile, I watch people continue to speed down my street every day.

I started to wonder if it was just my street, or the policy. I asked staff, and they were kind enough to summarize some data for me: from June 2016 to January 2020 (when I received the data), the City conducted 212 data collection exercises using automated traffic recorders (ATRs). Of that, 10 streets were determined to be operating above their intended ADT movements, and at 85th percentile speeds above 55 km/h (or 60 km/h, if a collector). They moved into the next stage of the process (first resident survey). Only one was able to move on to the second stage, but moved no further based on not meeting targeted approval rates in the second resident survey.

Almost five years, 212 studies, 10 NTM reviews, and no improvements through the NTMP. Where I received survey data (9 of the 10), no less than 75% of survey respondents were in favour of moving forward. In two cases (my street included), all respondents were in favour of moving forward. Since response rates were below 60%, each exercise was terminated despite identifying unsafe conditions.

Again, I believe this represents a major policy failure. How can we allow issues that we have objectively identified to persist, just because not enough residents answered a survey? I understand the need to prioritize initiatives given budget constraints, but there is also a need for the City to make sure that the transportation system operates as intended. Many streets operate well above their intended capacities/speeds.

I think the new TCP is a great potential improvement, with one caveat. I would like to make sure that movement towards traffic calming in a neighbourhood is not dependent on response rates to an engagement survey, as the NTMP was. It does not appear to be, but I am unclear on what "Supported" means in the flow chart attached as Attachment 2.3. Yes, gather comments from local residents, but do not make the decision on whether or not traffic calming moves forward based on approval or response rates from residents.

One final request. Please provide residents with as much information as possible on why the request or assessment is leading to those recommended improvements or changes, if any. Following evaluation, let residents know how the project has performed. Be as specific as possible, outlining exactly what the challenges or issues were to internal stakeholders, if any, what the objectives of the improvements are, and how the project has performed against those objectives.

In closing, I believe the CRSS has the potential to improve road safety, if implemented, and am pleased with the majority of the strategy presented by staff. In particular, I think the new TCP makes considerable improvements over the existing NTMP, which is largely unknown, and has been underperforming against its stated objectives over the last few years. If adopted, I will be submitting a request for my street as soon as possible.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. I apologize for the length of the email, but I believe road safety is an important issue and area where we have been failing our citizens over the last 10-15 years, as the city has grown.

Thank you.
Darren Shock

From: Eve Mazereeuw
Subject: New proposals for slowing car traffic in Guelph

Dear Sir/ Madam, as a regular bicyclist, I support council's proposed measures to slow traffic in Guelph. I'm in favour of all attempts to make Guelph safer for cyclists and pedestrians.

Thanks

From: Joel Best
Subject: Comments on the Community Road Safety Strategy and Traffic Calming Policy

I would like to submit these comments regarding the proposed CRSS and TCP that are coming to Council next week:

The community engagement seems insufficient: Figure 3 (page 211 of the package) of the CRSS shows that the community engagement only garnered 310 responses or 0.2% of Guelph's population. It's so small it could be argued it should not have been included. To me, this indicates a real problem with the engagement process. I realize engaging citizens on municipal issues is tough, but this topic is something that impacts most taxpayers and I think it'd be hard to find someone who didn't care about how fast people drive on their street. My gut tells me billboard on Gordon that read something like "What are your thoughts on speed cameras? Tell us at Guelph.ca/survey" would've garnered more responses in a single day. Perhaps I'm misunderstanding how the data is being presented but this is a big red flag for me.

Future Development Impact isn't accounted for in TCP Review Process: The traffic calming review process does not seem to account for future development when evaluating traffic volumes. With the number of large developments ongoing or planned for the city, it's an issue that will impact a large number of homeowners. The review process should factor in anticipated volume in addition to measured volume when assessing and prioritizing any traffic calming measures.

55km/h is not an appropriate threshold for residential neighbourhoods: The TCP review criteria for traffic calming is that the 85th percentile of traffic needs to be going 5km/h over the speed limit which would be 55km/h in most neighbourhoods. I think this is way too high a bar – if 85% of cars are doing more than 55km/h on a residential road there is a major problem. Until we lower speed limits, the TCP review process is completely useless for residential streets since almost none will

qualify. Either speed limits need to be reduced substantially or the TCP criteria needs to be changed. Unless I missed it, it doesn't seem there is a recommendation to lower the speed limit on all residential roads, it only looks to "determine if any roads can be reduced to lower speed limits." It's fairly clear from research that lowering speed limits city-wide will work, and 50km/h is not appropriate for any residential street that's not an artery.

Thank you,
Joel Best

To the attention of Mr. Mayor, Members of City Council and City Staff,
via: clerks@guelph.ca

My name is Richelle Forsey, I am a member of the Guelph Coalition for Active Transportation, and I passionate about making Guelph an even safer, more inviting city for everyone to be active in, whether they are walking, jogging, or riding their bike.

I am writing in support of the recommendations and strategies made in the *Community Road Safety Strategy (CRSS)*, and urge council to support them. Specifically, I am excited about: slow streets (part 4.2.5), I live in the North end of Guelph, in the neighborhood between Woodlawn and Speedvale, Edinburgh and Woolwich – and this is a neighborhood aching for traffic calming measures – it's used as a mini highway to get from one major road to another, and is dangerous to exit in all four directions. Every day I pass the makeshift memorial for Len Humphries, the pedestrian died as a result of trying to cross Speedvale Ave at Kathleen St in 2017.

I love the idea of advanced walking signals for pedestrians (part 4.2.1) - there isn't enough time for an able-bodied person to cross any of the street in the city. I am also excited about the recommendation for an education program to support cycling safety (part 4.2.4).

I hope that Guelph's City Council is excited as I am about the CRSS proposed strategies and will approve them.

Thanks in advance for your time.
Richelle Forsey

Hi,

I'm not sure in what context this might be read, but I'd like to submit the following comments for consideration alongside discussion of the Community Road Safety Strategy and Traffic Calming Policy:

I hope that the changes implemented are bold. I am an experienced 4-season cyclist and make approximately 80% of my trips in-town by bicycle. I think a lot

more people would do the same if they weren't so terrified of being killed by a motorist. Most drivers feel entitled to drive 10 or 20km/h over the limit no matter where they are. I try to do most of my riding on quiet, residential streets like Arthur St N, Grange, etc because although there are no bike lanes, there is less traffic and thus fewer opportunities to have a dangerous interaction with a distracted or angry driver. Nonetheless, at least weekly I have some kind of altercation: an aborted "must-get-in-front" pass that turns into a squeeze as we both approach and decelerate to a stop sign; an intentional squeeze to the shoulder as a driver passes me despite oncoming traffic; impatient honking when I take the primary position in a narrow lane to prepare for a left turn.

It is totally unacceptable that every day I see people screaming past my house on Jane St, just one block long, going 50km/h. Driving brings out truly sociopathic behaviour in people and our street design exacerbates it. I would like to see 30km/h speed limits in all residential areas, not just school zones. But what I'm getting at is that rules and public education and awareness campaigns for drivers are not enough. More importantly, I would like to see street design that requires these less-lethal speeds. Narrower lanes, bollards that force cars to take turns slowly, chicanes and medians, one-way streets to discourage cutting through neighborhoods, all of it. All of it.

And we should be building segregated active transportation lanes everywhere else, even if we have to remove motor vehicle lanes to do so (I'm looking at you, Speedvale, Eramosa, Gordon/Norfolk/Woolwich...)

Motor vehicles are an enormous detriment to our society and an obstacle to building healthy communities. We need to actively build alternatives and create a city where people don't need cars. It is that fundamental. We need to build it first, so that people make the change, because all they see now is wide boulevards built to drag race and they don't imagine getting around any other way. In the 1970s, Amsterdam was a car-centric, unwalkable city. They chose to become what they are today.

Guelph can be this city too if we have the fortitude and courage to make the change. The choice is easy if we simply acknowledge that a society build around cars cannot last, and that our community's safety must always take priority over the convenience of the stubborn motorists still living in the past.

Thanks,
Matthew M.

From: mike darmon
Subject: correspondence re Community Road Safety Strategy CRSS

Dear Clerks
please include my comments for the Council meeting on July 20 item 7.2
Dear Mayor Guthrie ,Councillors and Staff

Please accept my congratulations and overall satisfaction of the CRSS to city staff for the excellent report

If all the recommendations are implemented our City will be a much safer, enjoyable and equitable place to use all forms of transportation

Arguably one of the most important strategies in the CRSS is a review of traffic speed. Apart from the data in the report showing dramatic collision reduction when speeds are reduced to 30km, as an advocate for Active Transportation I would like to you to consider facts from the World Health Organization (WHO) on severity of injury to pedestrians and cyclists.

"For example, pedestrians have been shown to have a 90% chance of survival when struck by a car travelling at 30km/h or below, but less than 50% chance of surviving an impact at 45km /h."

Please consider this fact if opportunity arises where you are asked to consider adoption of 30km for all streets in Guelph except main arterials.

I have also delegated very recently on consideration for Slow Streets in neighbourhoods and hope to see these implemented in a pilot project. The review of traffic calming is also a welcome addition to many neighbourhoods frustrated with safety issues with vehicles.

In conclusion if all the strategies in the CRSS are approved and implemented our City of Guelph will be an extremely attractive place to live, work and play and continue to be rated one of the best places to live in Canada.

Thanks
Mike Darmon
