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Item No. 12.1.2
Transportation Standing Committee
September 28, 2017

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: Original signed by
Bruce Zvaniga, P.Eng., Director Transportation & Public Works

DATE: August 24, 2017

SUBJECT: Qualifying Criteria for Traffic Calming Measures

ORIGIN

At the June 13, 2017 meeting of Regional Council, the following motion was put and passed:

MOVED by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Nicoll

That Halifax Regional Council: 1. Request a staff report, with recommendations to the Transportation Standing Committee, that reviews the qualifying criteria for a resident vote regarding traffic calming measures on residential streets; and 2. That the streets already petitioned be reviewed under the potentially new formula should it be adopted.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Part I, Section 21, "Standing, Special and Advisory Committees"; and Part XII, Section 322 (1), "Street Related Powers" of the HRM Charter.

Section 5 of the Transportation Standing Committee's Terms of Reference states the Committee shall provide policy direction related to neighbourhood transportation initiatives for traffic calming and mitigation.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council direct the CAO to return to Council for approval of the necessary amendments to Administrative Order #2015-004-OP, Respecting Traffic Calming to effect the following:

1. to require the sum of fifty percent of the total number of ballots received plus one ballot for a majority; and
2. to direct that a new poll be undertaken under the revised Administrative Order for those requests that were previously polled and did not achieve a majority as originally defined.

BACKGROUND

Since the Traffic Calming Administrative Order (AO) #2015-004-OP was adopted, 218 requests for traffic calming assessments have been received. Table 1 provides a summary of the status if these requests.

Table 1: Status of Traffic Calming Requests

Requests Received	218
Duplicate Requests	18
Initial Screens Completed	200
Failed to pass initial screen due to street classification, transit route and emergency response routes	29
Streets moved to Initial Assessment	171
Did not pass initial assessment, the process is complete.	63
Still in Progress	108
Initial assessments pending at time of report (data collection is required)	33
Passed initial assessment, secondary assessment pending.	20
Complete secondary assessments.	44
Traffic calming measures identified and streets polled.	11

Streets that passed the initial screening were subjected to initial and secondary assessments. The secondary assessment included the collection of speed and volume data for a minimum of seven consecutive days (unless recent data was already available). Data collection began in May 2016 and is ongoing.

Following the initial and secondary assessments, the requests were ranked based on the criteria outlined in the AO to assist in prioritizing potential implementation order. The rating takes into consideration the speed and volume data collected, collision data, road alignment, curb and sidewalk infrastructure, nearby pedestrian facilities, and potential for integration with other proposed capital projects (i.e. paving projects).

Resident polling was conducted for the highest ranked streets from January to April 2017. Residents were polled through a mail-out ballot. Eleven streets have been polled to date. Three of the eleven polled streets obtained a successful ballot.

The results of the resident polling were assessed based on the criteria described in the AO. If the number of ballots returned in favour of implementing traffic calming measures was equal or greater than a majority, the ballot was successful. Majority is defined in the AO as *the sum of fifty percent of the total number of ballots issued plus one ballot.*

A detailed breakdown of the resident polling completed is shown in the following Table No. 2.

Table No. 2: Traffic Calming Polling Results, January to April 2017

District	Location	Limit From	Limit To	Ballots Issued	Ballots Returned		Response Needed for Majority	Results	
					#	%		Yes	No
Successful Polls									
13	Terradore Ln	Kingswood Dr	Blue Mountain Dr	38	28	74%	20	28	0
14	Bambrick Rd	All		20	13	65%	11	11	2
4	Hampton Green	Caldwell Rd	Cumberland Dr	73	46	63%	38	42	4
Failed Polls									
14	Viscount Run	Gatehouse Run	Bryanston Rd	33	21	64%	18	16	5
14	Lakecrest Dr	Fenerty Rd	Rhodora Dr	88	47	53%	45	34	13
14	Laurel Ridge Dr	Pinehurst Way	Crooked Stick Passage	29	15	52%	16	10	5
14	Lost Creek Dr	Kinsac Rd	Laurel Ridge Dr	26	13	50%	14	5	8
3	Regal Rd	Dorothea Dr	Collins Grove Rd	106	53	50%	54	50	3
13	Glen Arbour Way	Hammonds Plains	Beaver Lake Dr	83	41	49%	43	27	14
13	Norman Blvd	Pockwock Rd	White Hills Run	81	37	46%	42	27	10
14	Crooked Stick Pass	Kinsac Rd	Laurel Ridge Dr	18	7	39%	10	7	0

DISCUSSION

There are several options Halifax Regional Council may consider as alternative criteria for a successful resident poll:

Majority of Ballots Returned

Changing the qualifying criteria to count only those ballots returned to the Municipality on or before a specific date is a method used in a number of other instances, including S-400, the Street Improvement By-Law, and 2017-007-ADM, the Local Improvement Policy. In this Administrative Order, there would be a requirement for fifty percent of the total ballots received by a specific date, plus one ballot in order to proceed. The potential risk to this method is that a small number of residents could speak for the entire street.

For example: If 100 ballots are issued, 15 are returned and 9 are 'yes' a successful ballot would be achieved. Those 9 'yes' votes speak for 100 residents on that street.

If the majority of ballots returned had been in place to evaluate the previously polled streets, ten of the eleven polled streets would have been successful. Lost Creek Drive would fail because the majority of ballots were opposed to traffic calming.

Majority of Ballots Returned with Minimum Response Rate

Requiring a minimum response rate would lessen the risk of a small number of votes speaking for the entire street. If the minimum response rate was not achieved the ballot would be considered unsuccessful.

The response rates achieved during the 2017 polling ranged from 39% to 74%.

If a minimum response rate of 40% is applied to the polls completed, ten out of eleven streets would have achieved the minimum response rate needed, and nine would be successful. Lost Creek Drive would fail because the majority of ballots were opposed to traffic calming.

If a minimum response rate of 50% is applied to the polls completed, eight out of eleven streets would have achieved the minimum response rate needed, and seven would be successful. Glen Arbour Way, Norman Blvd and Crooked Stick Pass would also fail in addition to Lost Creek Drive.

No Polling

Staff could use the criteria outlined in the AO to conduct assessments of residential streets as requests are received. If staff determines that traffic calming is appropriate, a method would be chosen and the project would be prioritized, designed and installed. Since residents would not be polled, staff would inform the residents of the project at some point during the process.

The risk of removing polling from the process is that the level of community engagement would be lower. Residents who are directly impacted by the traffic calming measures would not have the same opportunity to agree if measures are implemented.

If no polling were conducted, all eleven streets passing the initial screening would have traffic calming implemented, including Lost Creek Drive where the majority of ballots did not support traffic calming.

Retroactivity

Those streets that have already been polled cannot be re-evaluated against a revised definition of majority without a new poll being undertaken. Staff would recommend that those streets currently in the process that have not been polled continue through the process to be evaluated under the new definition, and that those streets that were already polled are re-polled under the new definition.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Budget requirements associated with the implementation of traffic calming measures will vary depending on several factors that can only be identified through the assessment of each street. Some factors include the size of the project, the type of traffic calming measure(s) selected, and existing infrastructure/conditions on the project street. Approximately one full time equivalent (FTE) staff person is required to complete the assessment, polling and countermeasure selection for every 50 requests received.

Speed humps have been identified as the appropriate measure for the three sites where the balloting was successful. The construction tender for installation will be issued for construction during the 2017 construction season. The estimated cost of installing traffic calming measures on those three streets is \$56,000.

Should Council approve the staff recommendation, the estimated cost of installing traffic calming devices on the seven streets that failed on the previous criteria is \$111,000. If approved, this work would be included in the 2018 construction season subject to available funding and project coordination with other works in the area.

The cost of traffic calming is funded by the bundled capital project CTU01086 Traffic Improvements. Project CTU01086 has currently allocated budget of \$100,000 for 2017/18 and projected \$100,000 for 2018/19 for traffic calming.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this Report. The risks considered rate Low.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was conducted through ongoing discussions with residents about the traffic calming policy, and through the feedback received while conducting polling in 2017. These discussions have identified the need to review the qualifying criteria in the Administrative Order.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ALTERNATIVES

Transportation Standing Committee could recommend the Regional Council direct that staff draft amendments for Council's consideration as follows:

1. Majority of Ballots Returned with Minimum Response Rate: The definition of majority could be modified to mean the sum of fifty percent of the total number of ballots received plus one ballot, and a requirement for a minimum response rate of a certain percentage of ballots issued; or
2. No Polling: The requirement for resident polling could be removed from the AO.

Transportation Standing Committee could recommend no change to the qualifying criteria in the Administration Order.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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