

DATE: August 5, 2020

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Dave Dyer, General Manager of Infrastructure and Public Works

SUBJECT: Pedestrian Crossing Strategy

ATTACHMENT(S): Pedestrian Crossing Strategy

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION, the Pedestrian Crossing Strategy as attached to the report dated August 5, 2020, from the General Manager of Infrastructure and Public Works, titled "Pedestrian Crossing Strategy".

PURPOSE:

The Pedestrian Crossing Strategy provides Council with information about the new methodology that improves overall transparency, effectiveness, and planning of pedestrian crosswalks.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

As outlined in the City of Prince George Strategic Priorities, the City's goal is to facilitate healthy and active living, which is accessible and enjoyable for everyone regardless of age or ability. The City also wants to enhance and integrate safe and sustainable transportation options, and create community connectivity with infrastructure that encourages active transportation.

BACKGROUND:

Four main issues have precipitated a need for improved, transparent pedestrian crossing management in the City of Prince George:

1. The increased public requests for crosswalk improvements;
2. Updated National Standards for crosswalk design considerations;
3. The public's desire for a greater understanding and awareness of crosswalk design considerations; and
4. The absence of a repeatable process for prioritizing pedestrian crossing improvements.

The 2018 Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Guide is the primary reference for municipal governments planning, assessing and designing pedestrian crossings. The TAC Guide provides a framework to evaluate crosswalk installation suitability. It provides recommendations on treatment levels based on site characteristics and pedestrian and transportation safety.

The 2018 update of the TAC Guide has initiated the City's pedestrian crossings review to ensure they meet existing national standards. Previously, the City used the 1994 Pedestrian Crossing Control Manual for British Columbia and the 1998 TAC Guide. The methodology of the 2018 TAC Guide focuses more on safe pedestrian movements and less on motor vehicle delays. In general, the 2018 TAC Guide

puts less emphasis on pedestrian volumes, and more importance on the crossing conditions pedestrians will need to navigate.

City staff have developed a comprehensive and transparent prioritization tool that builds on the TAC Guide. It helps prioritize and communicate the most appropriate crosswalk candidates to ensure affordable and effective pedestrian crossing improvements.

DISCUSSION:

There has been a steady increase in the number of crosswalk requests received. In 2019, the City received 54 requests for improved or new pedestrian crossings.

At this time, 202 crosswalks are being evaluated using the new Guide, while considering community feedback and land use. There are 169 existing marked crosswalks in Prince George, excluding traffic signals and Provincial highway (Hwy 16 and Hwy 97) crosswalks, and 33 requested new crosswalks.

Out of the 202 crosswalks being evaluated, 43 crossings are recommended for an upgrade or installation, with 26 of these being existing crosswalks and 17 new crosswalks.

The pedestrian crossings located at the Ospika Blvd & Davis Rd and Ospika Blvd & 1st Ave intersections are high priority locations identified for improvement. Under the existing Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Improvements Program in the City's Capital Plan, work will proceed with upgrades at these locations in 2020.

Funding under the existing program is not sufficient to meet, within a reasonable timeline, the current demand for new crosswalks and to upgrade deficiencies at existing crossings to satisfy the new TAC Guide.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The City's current Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Improvements Program is budgeted at \$150,000 annually. To accommodate the demand for new crosswalks and the upgrade of existing crosswalks to meet TAC standards, staff will submit an enhanced pedestrian crossing capital budget request for Council's consideration during the 2021-2025 Financial Plan deliberations.

A budget of approximately \$5,000,000 (2020 dollars) is required to complete the 43 pedestrian crossings identified in the strategy - an annual budget of \$500,000 (2020 dollars) per year for a ten-year program.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The implementation of the Pedestrian Crossing Strategy will provide the City of Prince George with a consistent approach to evaluate and plan pedestrian crossing improvements, allowing for transparent annual pedestrian crossing management planning. This evaluation process will lead to an improved pedestrian network within the City of Prince George, creating community connectivity with infrastructure that encourages active transportation and improves pedestrian safety.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Dave Dyer, General Manager of Infrastructure and Public Works

PREPARED BY: Chris Vliegthart, Transportation Supervisor

APPROVED:

Kathleen Soltis, City Manager

Meeting Date: August 17, 2020