



City of Port Moody

Report/Recommendation to Council

Date: June 24, 2020
Submitted by: Engineering and Operations Department – Infrastructure Engineering Services Division
Subject: Potential COVID-19 Related Temporary Slow Zone and Road Reallocation Projects

Purpose

To present potential COVID-19 related temporary slow zone and road reallocation projects to Council for consideration and direction.

Recommended Resolution(s)

THAT the temporary slow zones on St. George Street between Buller Street and Albert Street be implemented until the end of summer 2021 unless conditions and monitoring indicate that temporary changes are no longer providing benefit as recommended in the report dated June 24, 2020 from the Engineering and Operations Department – Infrastructure Engineering Services Division regarding Potential COVID-19 Related Temporary Slow Zone and Road Reallocation Projects;

AND THAT staff continue to monitor traffic and active transportation activity in case it warrants further consideration of road reallocation projects or additional slow zones;

AND THAT the up to \$9,000 required to implement the temporary slow zones and related communication plans be forwarded to the Finance Committee to identify a funding source.

Background

At the May 20, 2020 Transportation Committee meeting, the Committee received a presentation from the General Manager of Engineering and Operations regarding the modifications to City operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee passed the following resolution:

TC20/010

THAT the City consider implementing temporary slow zones and reallocating parking or other road spaces in key locations to prioritize pedestrian and cyclists where feasible.

On June 23, 2020, Council reviewed a report from the Transportation Committee summarizing the Committee's recommendation (**Attachment 1**) and approved the following motion:

RC20/261

THAT the report dated May 22, 2020 from the Transportation Committee regarding Slow Streets be referred to staff for action.

This report provides a summary of data supporting the implementation of slow zones and road reallocation projects on a temporary basis and identifies several potential locations and cost estimates for these initiatives.

Discussion

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City's Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) was activated on March 13, 2020. A Provincial State of Emergency was declared on March 18, 2020. As local response to the COVID-19 Pandemic progressed, the City, through its EOC and/or Council direction, implemented several initial transportation related changes to respond to priority issues to support physical distancing and to help reduce the potential spread of COVID-19. These temporary changes included:

- Closed parking lots at Rocky Point, Old Orchard, and North Shore Community Park;
- Established pick-up/drop-off and accessible parking areas at Rocky Point to support businesses and limited park use;
- Closed Bedwell Bay on-street parking;
- Converted Rocky Point Park boat launch to a reservation-only system, with limited daily reservations, restricted to two active boat launch lanes;
- One-way trail loops established for physical distancing at Rocky Point Pier, on the Shoreline Trail, and at Bert Flinn Park; and
- Installed social distancing signage in high traffic areas.

Traffic conditions and the way City transportation infrastructure is being used has changed during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Staff observations, which are consistent with reports heard from regional and international sources, include:

- Traffic volumes on St. Johns dropped to approx. 50-60% of "normal" in late March/early April. By mid-May, afternoon peak period volumes increased to about 75% and returned to pre-Covid-19 volumes by mid-June. Interestingly, morning peak hour traffic volumes remain low. A summary of traffic data collected at St. Johns Street and Moody Street is included as **Attachment 2**;
- Low transit use throughout the region; and
- Higher use of recreational and active transportation infrastructure.

As the Province is now in Phase 3 of BC's Restart Plan and local businesses are reopening, staff anticipate not only the return of pedestrian, cyclists, and vehicles, but also an increase from the historic amount of activity on streets, paths, and sidewalks. Further, businesses will be opening with new restrictions in place, which may require queuing on sidewalks, requests for outdoor patio spaces, and other outdoor activities, which will place further demands on the street, pedestrian, and cycling facilities.

Staff, via the Emergency Operations Centre, have implemented several transportation and other road related changes that leverage changes in transportation activity to help support business restarting and reduce the spread of COVID-19. These more recent improvements include:

- Implementation of a slow zone on Alderside Road in response to public concerns and staff monitoring, which confirmed very high pedestrian and cyclist use of the road during these times;
- Automatic pedestrian pushbuttons between 7am and 9pm at 17 signalized intersections in Port Moody to eliminate the need to physically press the crosswalk buttons in order to activate the crosswalk symbol; and
- Development of the COVID-19 Temporary Assistance Program for Businesses with a focus on options for temporarily expanding the use of outdoor space, which may include parking areas or underutilized portions of roads.

Moving forward, there may be further opportunities to implement temporary transportation changes to support public health and adaptation to what may be a “new normal” for many months. Based on the Transportation Committee’s May 20, 2020 recommendation, staff have identified the following potential locations for potential slow zones and road reallocation projects (**Attachment 3**):

Slow Zones:

Slow Zones are streets that are closed to allow local traffic only, or closed entirely to vehicle traffic if possible, to prioritize walking, cycling, and other active or neighbourhood uses. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, this can allow for access to outdoor space that is in high demand and provide more room for physical distancing. Ideally, these can be implemented in a simple and low cost manner by erecting a small number of signs and traffic barricades.

Staff recommend the following slow zone locations for implementation in the coming months:

Location	Purpose/Focus	Estimated Cost
St George Street (Buller to Moody)	Reduce traffic volumes and speed along St George Street to support the designated Neighbourhood Bikeway. Temporary measures focus on local traffic only notifications, closures to through traffic and signage to raise awareness of the shared roadway designation.	\$2,700
St George Street (Grant to Kyle)		\$2,100
St George Street (Elgin to Albert)		\$2,200

Road Reallocation Projects:

The goal of road reallocation projects is to convert areas of roads that are no longer necessary due to reduced traffic volumes, lower parking demand, or lower priority for vehicular traffic, to support increased physical distancing, active transportation, or business or community use that otherwise would be limited physical distancing requirements within more confined spaces. Unlike slow zones, road reallocation projects may require more in depth design and higher installation and ongoing maintenance costs. Two potential road reallocation locations have been identified along the existing active transportation network in the table below; however, both locations would require reduction in on-street parking, and the existing active network facilities, although busy, can still provide the appropriate levels of social distancing with user cooperation.

Staff have identified the following road reallocation projects and recommend continued monitoring over the summer of 2020 to confirm if implementation is required as pedestrian and bicycle volumes increase:

Location	Purpose/Focus	Estimated Cost
Ungless Way (Guilford to Hospital Access)	Eliminate 15 parking stalls to replace the shared bike facility between Guilford Way with a dedicated bike lane. This would create a stronger bicycle connection between the MUP on Guilford and Shoreline Trail facilities. Staff have periodically monitored the parking and have noted that usage varies throughout the day between 15-80% capacity.	\$8,300
Murray Street Merge Lane	Eliminate 40 parking stalls to widen the existing MUP creating a separated bike and pedestrian zone between the CPRail crossing and entrance into the Shoreline Trail where the Murray Bike Path and Shoreline Trail split. This would allow additional capacity along the shoreline trail during the peak periods but reduce available parking for the park.	\$18,500

Currently, there is uncertainty as to when the Province and City may begin to return to the previously normal activity and way of life. If implemented, the above initiatives would be monitored for effectiveness. Provided these temporary initiatives are successful, staff recommend a tentative target completion date of end of summer 2021.

Other Option(s)

1. THAT the temporary slow zones on [SPECIFY LOCATIONS] and road reallocation projects on [SPECIFY LOCATIONS] be implemented until the end of summer 2021 unless conditions and monitoring indicate that temporary changes are no longer providing benefit as recommended in the report dated June 24, 2020 from the Engineering and Operations Department – Infrastructure Engineering Services Division regarding Potential COVID-19 Related Temporary Slow Zone and Road Reallocation Projects;

AND THAT the \$[COST] required to implement the temporary slow zones and road reallocations and communication plans be forwarded to the Finance Committee to identify a funding source.

2. THAT the report dated June 24, 2020 from the Engineering and Operations Department – Infrastructure Engineering Services Division regarding Potential COVID-19 Related Temporary Slow Zone and Road Reallocation Projects be received for information.

Financial Implications

Infrastructure costs for the installation of temporary measures will require the modification of five intersections with temporary concrete or plastic barriers and a signage plan with an estimated cost of \$7,000.

Prior to implementation of the traffic pattern change, a communication plan will be required to advise both the local residents as well as non-local traffic of the traffic pattern change. It is anticipated that the communication cost will be under \$2,000.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

A communication plan will be developed to inform residents, emergency services, and non-local traffic about any changes to the road infrastructure and traffic patterns on St George Street.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

Supporting the requests for the implementation of Slow Streets in Port Moody aligns with the 2019-2022 Council Strategic Plan Objective of providing people with a variety of options to move through and around Port Moody safely and efficiently.

Attachment(s)

1. Transportation Committee Report – Slow Streets.
2. Summary of COVID-19 Pandemic Traffic Volumes Collected at St. Johns Street/Moody Street Intersection.
3. Map showing location of Potential Slow Zone and Road Reallocation Projects.

Report Author

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Potential COVID-19 Related Temporary Slow Zone and Road Reallocation Projects.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 - Transportation Committee Report - Slow Streets.pdf - Attachment 2 - Summary of COVID-19 Pandemic Traffic Volumes Collected at St. Johns Street/Moody Street Intersection.pdf - Attachment 3 - Map showing location of Potential Slow Zone and Road Reallocation Projects.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jul 13, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Jul 9, 2020 - 12:34 PM

Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Jul 12, 2020 - 4:16 PM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Jul 12, 2020 - 6:43 PM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Jul 13, 2020 - 11:31 AM