



Report to Council

From the Office of Councillor Hunter Madsen

Date: September 22, 2020

Subject: Recommendation to Gather Business Input Regarding Proposed Traffic-Calming Pilot Test on Spring Street

Purpose

To seek Council approval to direct staff to gather input from commercial businesses in Moody Centre whose customer access could possibly be affected adversely, and report back to Council with its findings, before moving forward with the traffic-calming pilot test for Spring Street.

Recommendation

THAT staff be directed to gather input from nearby commercial businesses in Moody Centre whose customer access to their businesses could possibly be affected adversely, and report back to Council with its findings and recommendations for Council consideration, before moving forward with implementation of the traffic-calming pilot test proposed for Spring Street previously approved by Council, as recommended in the report dated September 22, 2020 from Councillor Hunter Madsen, regarding Recommendation to Gather Business Input Regarding Proposed Traffic-Calming Pilot Test on Spring Street.

Background

On 23 June 2020, Council approved a traffic-calming proposal for Spring Street (**Attachment 1**). On September 17, 2020, the Transportation Committee reviewed an updated version of that proposal and supported the roll-out of a pilot test as a potentially effective way to reduce dangerous, so-called “rat-running” behavior by drivers seeking to traverse the area more quickly during rush hours.

Staff now plans to start implementing this plan during the week of September 28:

Spring Street – pilot implementation of permanent traffic pattern change:

*The Traffic pattern changes on Spring Street (**Attachment 4**) include restrictions to westbound vehicles accessing Spring Street at Douglas, Elgin and Kyle streets and eastbound vehicles accessing at Grant and Murray. These changes will be implemented using standard road signs such as “No Left Turns” and “Do Not Enter” as well as water filled barriers. The barriers will be strategically placed to prohibit vehicle access onto Spring Street but permit vehicles to exit as well as full access to pedestrians and bicycles. Local traffic will be required to access properties in a single direction but may exit properties in either direction. The location of barriers will be*

monitored and adjusted as necessary, as properties are redevelop further consideration will be given to enhancing the restrictions to support the Spring Street Promenade prioritization of bicycles and pedestrians.

Discussion

Council has recently received emails from a handful of businesses operating in or near the Spring Street corridor, which voice concerns that the proposed re-routing of rush-hour traffic away from Spring Street may have unintended, adverse impacts on customer access to their business and/or parking convenience (**Attachments 5, 6, 7**).

Any such feedback is cause for caution, considering that our local retail businesses in Moody Centre, as elsewhere, are already struggling economically due to the highly disruptive business impacts of the current pandemic. Surely the City would not wish to inadvertently introduce at this time any further commercial challenges that would seem likely to seriously impede local businesses. What's more, the process of introducing the pilot plan details and rationale to concerned local businesses, and answering their specific questions, may help to convince nearby proprietors that the proposed re-routing is likely to produce either a neutral or a positive business impact for them.

With this in mind, the report recommends that staff temporarily slow implementation of the Spring Street pilot effort in order to touch base, first, with concerned businesses and gather input that staff will report back to Council, along with any mitigations that staff might suggest, for consideration before the City proceeds with the pilot test.

Other Options

Council could

- A. halt the proposed pilot test, or
- B. direct staff to proceed with implementation as planned, without consulting local businesses, or
- C. direct staff to proceed with implementation on its current timeline, while it simultaneously conducts briefings with local businesses and reports back promptly to Council with any findings and mitigations.

Financial Implications

None known, although staff must confirm that a delay in implementation timelines will not raise implementation costs over what Council has approved.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

Staff may consider various modes of outreach to concerned local businesses, possibly including individual outreach and/or an open house event to be determined.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

The proposed Spring St pilot plan is supported by both the OCP, which includes a vision for a Spring Street promenade, and the Master Transportation Plan, which prioritizes improvement to the pedestrian and bicycle environment on this street.

Council's Strategic Priority #3, Community Evolution, sets an Objective to "Provide people with a variety of options to move through and around Port Moody safely and efficiently," and approves the following Action to help accomplish this: "Reduce the impacts of through-traffic."

Attachments

1. Spring Street Traffic Pattern Change - May 1, 2020
2. Spring Street Liveable Update
3. 5.2 COVID-19 Traffic Volume - Moody at St. Johns - 2020-09-14
4. 5.2b 2020 Spring St Traffic Calming Map - Final
5. Email from Burrard Public House regarding Spring Street Changes
6. Email from Ross Edwards regarding Spring Street Changes
7. Email from Gaetan Royer regarding Spring Street Changes
8. Email from David Ritcey regarding Slow Zones