
REPORT NUMBER	004-2025-Infrastructure & Operations-Engineering	
DATE PREPARED	September 11, 2024	FILE
MEETING DATE	April 7, 2025	
SUBJECT	Complete Streets and Traffic Calming Policies	

RECOMMENDATION

WITH RESPECT to Report 004-2025-Infrastructure & Operations -Engineering, we recommend that the proposed Complete Streets Policy as outlined in Attachment A and Traffic Calming Policy as outlined in Attachment B to this Report be approved and the policies be included within the Corporate Policy Manual;

AND THAT any necessary by-laws be presented to City Council for ratification.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This Report directly supports the 'Safety and Well-being' goal of the 2023-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan by providing safe and accessible road designs.

It also aligns with the 'Growth' pillar by creating safer environments for walking and cycling, leading to more vibrant and walkable neighbourhoods. Additionally, it encourages street designs that best support the road users in the area, making areas more attractive for residential and commercial development.

This Report also supports the 'Sustainability' pillar of the plan by promoting environmentally friendly designs, such as green infrastructure, and encouraging alternative transportation modes like walking and cycling.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP), two new policies are being proposed to enhance transportation planning in the City: the Complete Streets Policy and the Traffic Calming Policy. These policies aim to create a safer and more accessible transportation network for all road users.

The **Complete Streets Policy**, Attachment A, establishes a design standard for creating streets that are safe and comfortable for all road users. Complete streets are designed for all users of various ages and abilities including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and transit riders. The policy promotes the development of connected networks that link neighbourhoods and encourage walking and cycling. It also reinforces the City's commitment to applying Complete Streets principles to all new road construction and road reconstruction projects.

The **Traffic Calming Policy**, Attachment B, formalizes a consistent and transparent approach to handling traffic calming requests, moving away from the previous complaint-driven process. The policy references the internal Traffic Calming Procedure (Attachment C) which outlines a clear process for requesting, reviewing, and implementing traffic calming measures which will help to focus Administration's time and resources on priority issues.

Traffic calming uses various strategies to reduce vehicle speeds and discourage cut through traffic, creating safer conditions for all road users, especially pedestrians and cyclists. These measures may include physical street design elements or educational techniques.

Adopting these Policies will not have immediate budget implications. However, implementing them may involve significant infrastructure changes, including road re-designs, additional street furnishings, and ongoing maintenance. As a result, these initiatives will require strategic budget planning and project prioritization to align with the City's capital budget and Asset Management Plans.

DISCUSSION

Complete Streets

The TMP recommends that the City adopt and implement a Complete Streets Policy for transportation related projects. The intention of this policy is to provide City streets designed to create a network of safe and comfortable streets for the targeted right-of-way users for each class of road.

Complete Streets are roadways that are carefully and thoughtfully planned, designed, constructed, and maintained to account for the safety and comfort of the users, including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets do not necessarily have everything for every user on all streets, but have elements based on the target users of the class of road. For example, streets identified as Pedestrian Greenways will look to prioritize active transportation on the street, while an arterial design will focus on moving traffic efficiently while providing safe pedestrian space, but not necessarily an improved public realm.

The proposed Complete Streets Policy is intended to be integrated into every City department so that all new roads and reconstructed roads are planned and designed

with a Complete Street lens. Designs will follow the latest approved design standards, best practices, and guidelines.

Some examples of Complete Street elements include, but are not limited to, new or wider sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, accessibility improvements, street trees, street furniture, cycling facilities, transit amenities, vehicular travel lanes, vehicular parking, bicycle parking, traffic calming measures, and accessories such as benches.

The City has been following these principles and building Complete Streets in reconstruction projects over the past several years. Examples of this include Algoma Street, Balmoral Street, Court Street, and Red River Road. While these streets were designed with a Complete Streets perspective, adopting this policy will make the City's commitment clear as it moves forward.

Traffic Calming

Another cornerstone action of the TMP is the adoption and implementation of a Traffic Calming policy. This new policy would provide a consistent and transparent approach to addressing traffic calming requests as well as a more efficient and effective process for Administration.

Traffic calming involves the use of traffic management measures to reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety for all the road users, especially pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic calming can take the form of the physical street design elements or educational techniques that encourage the drivers to alter their behaviour with the goal of improving conditions for other road users.

In the past, traffic calming requests were reviewed, and measures installed on a case-by-case basis, without a formalized process. This resulted in inconsistent and complaint-based implementation as well as significant time spent by staff to review all complaints received.

By adopting the proposed Traffic Calming policy, a new formalized process will be established. Under this new process, a request for traffic calming can be initiated in one of four ways;

1. Upon receipt of a petition signed by at least two-thirds of the affected residents. Petitions for traffic calming will be received by the Engineering Division outside of the Petitions Policy 03-03-13. Where necessary and appropriate, Administration will work together to best inform City Council about matters affecting residents in the City of Thunder Bay;
2. City Council direction;
3. A request by the City's Traffic Safety Committee; or
4. A recommendation by relevant City Staff.

Once the traffic calming process is initiated, Administration will undertake a preliminary assessment of the road's safety and operational criteria. If traffic calming measures are deemed feasible and fall within warrants, a technical review will be conducted to determine the nature of the traffic concern, potential solutions, and if required, produce a design package of the recommended measure.

If traffic calming measures are deemed appropriate, a survey of affected area residents would be initiated to seek concurrence with the proposed changes, and second, approval from City Council. Concurrence of residents is not necessarily required to move forward with implementation if Administration deems there to be a sufficient safety concern that needs to be addressed. If approved by City Council, the traffic calming measures will be prioritized based on the City's capital budget and asset management plans.

These policies were prepared in consultation with staff from City Engineering, Thunder Bay Police Service, Mobility, Planning, Transit, and Roads. Additionally, Engineering consulted with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Traffic Safety Committee to refine the content.

LINK TO EARTHCARE SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

This Report aligns with the 2014-2020 EarthCare Sustainability Plan, which outlines the steps Thunder Bay must take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and become a more resilient, sustainable community. The Complete Streets Policy and Traffic Calming Policy support several objectives and actions from the Sustainability Plan, particularly those aimed at promoting a sustainable environment, active transportation, and naturalizing the environment.

Key objectives that are supported by these policies include establishing networks that provide linkages between neighbourhoods that promote walking and cycling, strategically using public and private infrastructure to create seamless, and barrier free options for cycling, walking and transit use, and positioning Thunder Bay as a leader in sustainable transportation policies.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

There are no immediate budget impacts for adopting the Complete Streets and Traffic Calming Policies. However, implementing the Complete Streets and Traffic Calming policies will require careful budget planning and prioritization of projects to align with the City's capital budget and Asset Management Plans. These initiatives may involve significant infrastructure changes, including road re-designs and additional amenities, and as such they will be subject to available funding and resource allocation.

Capital and operating implications of these policies will be presented during future budget processes for Council's consideration.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the Proposed Complete Streets Policy and Traffic Calming Policy for the City of Thunder Bay be approved and the policies be included in the Corporate Policy Manual.

BACKGROUND

At the Committee of the Whole Meeting on October 7, 2019, under Report R 116/2019 (Infrastructure and Operations), City Council approved the Transportation Master Plan in principle. This plan outlines the future direction and investment in the City's transportation network. It includes recommendations for the City to adopt a Complete Streets Policy and a Traffic Calming Policy.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

Attachment A – Complete Streets Policy (Draft)
Attachment B – Traffic Calming Policy (Draft)
Attachment C – Traffic Calming Procedure

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REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY

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March 27, 2025