

Transportation Report to
SPC on Transportation and Transit
2018 October 04

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
TT2018-0979

Transportation Corridor Study Policy Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Transportation Corridor Study Policy (Policy) was approved by Council in 2014 and provided direction to Administration on the engagement of stakeholders during transportation corridor studies. The aim of the Policy was to ensure appropriate levels of engagement were undertaken to allow citizens and stakeholders to participate in the project, to understand the project process and recommendations, and to better reflect citizen desires for the minimization of community impacts.

A review has been undertaken of projects completed since the Policy approval to determine the effectiveness of the Policy implementation. The review was based on the examination of ten case studies and an assessment of their alignment with the Policy, to determine whether any policy amendments were required.

Overall, the case studies showed moderate to strong alignment with the main Policy points. They highlighted lessons learned and successes which can be used to guide future projects. The effectiveness of the Policy has been demonstrated through increased stakeholder acceptance of project recommendations and satisfaction with engagement processes. As such, no amendments to the Policy are recommended.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That the SPC on Transportation & Transit receive the Transportation Corridor Study Policy Review Report for information.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2014 July 28, Council approved the Transportation Corridor Study Policy (TT2014-0400). Approval of the Policy included the following recommendation:

4. Direct Administration to report to the SPC on Transportation and Transit no later than the end of Q2 2016 on the implementation of the Policy based on the experience with the Crowchild Trail Corridor Study and other Transportation corridor studies initiated after approval of the Policy.

On 2016 July 04, Council approved the deferral of the update report on the implementation of the Transportation Corridor Study Policy and directed Administration to report back to the SPC on Transportation and Transit no later than Q4 2017.

On 2017 December 18, Council approved the deferral of the update report on the implementation of the Transportation Corridor Study Policy and directed Administration to report back to the SPC on Transportation and Transit no later than Q3 2018.

BACKGROUND

The City conducts a number of different types of planning studies intended to identify our long-, medium-, and short-term transportation infrastructure needs. At the highest level is the Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP) which sets out the objectives to which all studies must align. Corridor studies are then conducted on specific transportation routes within the city network.

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A transportation corridor study is a long-term transportation system analysis which examines the current and future transportation planning needs. These studies are typically completed 10 to 30 years in advance of construction to determine the general elements of the corridor, the required right-of-way and associated land impacts.

Although long-term in nature, corridor studies impact both current and future citizens. In 2012, Council directed Administration to develop a Corridor Study Policy which would address how citizens were engaged throughout corridor studies and would require that those studies, in addition to the traditional engineering objectives, identify community improvements, focus on the minimization of negative community impacts, and preserve community integrity.

The Transportation Corridor Study Policy was approved by Council in 2014 following significant public engagement and has been implemented on all corridor studies undertaken since then. This report provides a review of the implementation of the Transportation Corridor Study Policy since its approval.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this review was to examine how the Policy has been implemented since its approval and identify if any amendments were required. In order to complete this review, ten projects were examined which have been undertaken since the policy was implemented. As well, project team members including project managers, communication leads and engagement specialists provided feedback and input on the study processes and outcomes. Lastly, where available, reports from external consultants were used to measure outcomes and provide project details.

The case studies (Attachment 2) were:

- McKnight Boulevard Transportation Study (Deerfoot Trail to Barlow Trail)
- 16 Avenue NE Corridor Study (Deerfoot Trail to Barlow Trail)
- Crowchild Trail Corridor Study (17 Avenue S to 24 Avenue N)
- 17 Avenue SE Corridor Study (Stoney Trail to East City Limits)
- 50 Avenue SW Corridor Study (Crowchild Trail to 14A Street)
- Shaganappi Trail South Study
- Glenmore Trail East Study
- Deerfoot Trail Study
- Shaganappi Trail North Study
- Sarcee Trail / Richmond Road Interchange Study

The ten case studies comprised a variety of road types, adjacent land use typologies and technical scope. Each project was assessed to determine alignment with key Policy points and to identify successes and lessons learned. The six key policy points examined were:

- Use a multi-faceted communications approach
- Use the appropriate level of engagement based on classification of corridor, impact to surrounding community and engage! policy
- Develop clear definitions of desired outcomes and trade-offs for all modes
- Identify existing and potential issues with stakeholders

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- Develop concepts that preserve the integrity of adjacent communities, identify community improvements, minimize negative impacts, include a 'do nothing' concept, include staging/prioritization for interim and ultimate solutions
- Communicate timelines/triggers for each concept

Overall, the projects all showed moderate to strong alignment with the Policy points. In particular, a fluid and responsive engagement program was very well received by stakeholders on all projects, as was the inclusion of short-term options intended to address issues raised by stakeholders at the project outset.

The Transportation Corridor Study Policy has changed the way The City approaches corridor studies in two ways:

1. The defined scope of the technical work undertaken has been consistently broadened to include short-term improvements that provide near-immediate benefit, and the inclusion of 'do nothing' options that provide a basis for understanding the benefit of transportation infrastructure investments.
2. The Transportation Corridor Study Policy allows for better scoping of the amount, type and timing of engagement that will be required for the success of the project, but has also provided a commitment for fluidity during the project, and responsiveness to stakeholder needs.

The primary objective of the Transportation Corridor Study Policy was to outline The City's commitment to stakeholders and the public regarding the engagement process to be followed during corridor studies and to provide consistency in the type of information and analysis that would be undertaken and shared.

The review conducted indicates that the Transportation Corridor Study Policy, as approved in 2014, achieves its objectives and no amendments are necessary.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Project managers, engagement and communication specialists, and technical leads on projects undertaken by Transportation Planning since 2014 provided input on the implementation of the Transportation Corridor Study Policy. Their insights regarding successes, lessons learned and alignment of engagement strategies with the Policy were instrumental in the creation of the case studies which formed the basis of the review. The case studies themselves reflect the broad engagement of citizens, special interest groups, and key stakeholders on transportation projects, as directed by the Transportation Corridor Study Policy and The City's engage! Policy. Feedback obtained on individual projects indicate a high level of overall satisfaction with the engagement process and opportunities for participation.

Strategic Alignment

This review examines how the Transportation Corridor Study Policy has been implemented since its approval. In addition, both the Transportation Corridor Study Policy and the transportation corridor studies examined align with the engage! Policy.

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Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

This report was reviewed for alignment with The City of Calgary's Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Policy Framework. The following implications were identified:

Social

The implementation of the Transportation Corridor Study Policy on corridor studies over the past 4 years has demonstrated an increased understanding of stakeholder/citizen needs and has provided opportunities to facilitate community building. Concepts are more robustly evaluated against community priorities and support the preservation of community integrity.

Environmental

The Transportation Corridor Study Policy includes guidance on the minimization of negative impacts to open spaces and encourages the provision of active modes facilities.

Economic

The Transportation Corridor Study Policy requires, where appropriate, the inclusion of a 'do nothing' concept and the development and evaluation of short-term recommendations to address current issues. These guidelines assist with the optimization of existing infrastructure and allow for a more robust assessment of investment priorities.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

There are no impacts to the current or future operating budgets.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

As identified in Attachment 1, engagement costs on projects have increased from approximately 10% of the total consultant budget to between 20% and 30% of the total consultant budget. These additional costs are being managed through existing program funding. Administration will continue to do further evaluation of these costs and identify efficiencies while still conducting meaningful engagement.

Risk Assessment

A potential risk of continued implementation of the Transportation Corridor Study Policy is the management of citizen expectations surrounding implementation and funding of short-term recommendations. To mitigate this risk, project teams provide communication throughout the lifecycle of a project to assist citizens in understanding The City's evaluation and prioritization processes for infrastructure investment.

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REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S): The Transportation Corridor Study Policy review determined that the implementation of the Policy on ten corridor studies undertaken since the Policy's development has been effective. No changes to the Policy are required to continue its applicable use.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1 – Transportation Corridor Study Policy Review Report
2. Attachment 2 – Appendix A: Case Studies