COUNCIL REPORT

M&C No.	2018-232
Report Date	November 21, 2018
Meeting Date	December 03, 2018
Service Area	Transportation and Environment Services

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of Common Council

SUBJECT: MoveSJ Phase 2

OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION

This matter is to be discussed in open session of Common Council.

AUTHORIZATION

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
Katherine Shannon ***Tim O'Reilly*** ***Mark Reade***	***Michael Hugenholtz***	***Neil Jacobsen***

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended at Common Council adopt the Pedestrian, Parking, Transit, Goods Movement and Travel Demand Model Strategies presented in Phase 2 of the Transportation Strategic Plan MoveSJ.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report to is to recommend adoption of the strategies presented in Phase 2 of the Transportation Strategic Plan MoveSJ.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

RESOLVED that as recommended by the City Manager in the submitted report M&C 2017-95: City of Saint John Transportation Strategic Plan Phase 2 Consulting and Engineering Services – Follow up, Common Council authorizes the following:

1) Common Council award engineering and consulting services for Transportation and Strategic Plan Phase 2 to IBI Group at a cost of 200,100.00 plus applicable taxes; and

2) That the Mayor and Common Clerk be authorized to execute the Consulting Engineering Agreement.

REPORT

The Transportation Strategic Plan's (MoveSJ) goal is to develop and maintain a comprehensive Plan for the City which advances the development of a multi-modal transportation system for the community as per Policy TM-1 of the Municipal Plan (PlanSJ).

MoveSJ has been divided into three phases. Phase one was finalized in 2017 and provided the foundation for phases two and three.

Phase two of the plan developed strategies for Pedestrian Traffic, Parking, Transit, Goods Movement and a Travel Demand Model. Phase three of the plan will focus on a standard Roadway Classification System, Cycling Strategy, Road Safety Strategy, Modern Roundabouts and a Comprehensive System Improvement Plan for an advanced mutli-modal transportation system.

The MoveSJ project team has worked diligently to update Common Council of the draft strategies as they were completed. On May 7, 2018 staff presented the draft Pedestrian Strategy to Common Council. On May 22, 2018 the draft Transit, Parking and Goods Movement Strategies were presented to Common Council and the Transportation Demand Model was presented to the Growth Committee on October 2, 2018.

The project team also held an open house for the public on June 7, 2018 to allow citizens to review the draft strategies and provide their feedback on the draft strategies. In addition to an open house a number of stakeholder meetings with the industry related to goods movement were held.

Open House Consultation Sessions

An open house was held on June 7th to present the draft strategies to the public and receive feedback. There were two sessions held in Brunswick Square from 12:00pm to 2:00pm and from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. Approximately 50 to 60 people attended the open house with 32 leaving comments on the presented strategies (see Public Consultation Report).

The feedback and written comments from the open house were considered and incorporated if applicable to adjusting the draft strategies.

Transportation Demand Model

The consultant has completed a calibrated Travel Demand Model of the City's current roadway network and associated traffic volumes. Key inputs to the model were the Household Travel Survey completed in Phase 1 of Move SJ and the 2016 Census data with the model providing an estimate of traffic demand on the roadway network based on where people live, work, shop and go to school.

A model can be used to assess city-wide transportation questions such as:

- the impacts of population and employment growth from new residential or commercial / industrial developments;
- the impacts of transportation system improvements such as conversions between two-way and one-way streets and roadway diets;
- assessing the potential for transit as a means of alleviating congestion;
- the impacts of building new roads or widening existing roads, and
- the impacts of closures or reduced lanes resulting from detours or road diets.

In Phase 3 of MoveSJ, the transportation demand model will be a key tool in the development of the Comprehensive System Improvement Plan to guide investment in the City's transportation network over the next 25 years.

An overview of the model and its development was presented to the Growth Committee on October 2, 2018 as a component of the City's infrastructure modelling initatives to support future growth.

Modifications to Goods Movement Strategy

Common Council was presented with the draft Goods Movement Strategy in May 2018. In addition to the general public consultation event that occurred in June 2018, City staff has consulted specifically with representatives of industry and the Saint John Chamber of Commerce. Offers were also made to consult with Uptown Saint John and their membership.

The consultation with industry was extensive with multiple group meetings on June 8, June 27, August 14, and October 17 with several additional discussions and e-mail exchanges. Representatives of the Provincial Department of Transportation & Infrastructure (DTI) participated in some of these discussions.

Overweight/Oversize Load Permit process

Of the draft policy directions of the Goods Movement Strategy, industry had most feedback concerning the Overweight/Oversize Load Permit process. Industry was particularly concerned with the proposal of capping the Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) on all City streets at 42,500 kg, above-which an Overweight Permit was required. City staff had originally selected this limit to match the lowest limit the Province places on its Provincial Highway system. The objectives of the Overweight/Oversize Load Permit process were to:

- Ensure appropriate approvals and preparations are in place to allow trucks with large or heavy loads to travel on City streets without

excessive damage to City infrastructure or significant impacts to traffic flow
- Ensure City costs incurred to administer the permit process and respond to excessive impact on roadway deterioration are recovered through a "user fee" mechanism
- Rely less on the City's generic truck route system
- Allow an alternative and more streamlined approach to approving variances to the City's Weight Restrictions by-law

Some of the specific points and concerns cited during these consultations included:

- GVW has more impact on bridges and structures, whereas axle loading has more impact on roadways
- The low limit would likely not align with limits on adjacent Provincial Highways that form part of a truck's route to several large industrial sites within the City
- A low limit would generate more paperwork associated with more permits that both the City and industry would need to process
- More trucks may need to travel on City streets to meet lower limit and transport the same quantity of goods
- An overburden of process and cost would negatively affect efficiency and competitiveness of industry

City staff completed further research and review of the City's corporate initiatives to appropriately address this feedback from industry. A revised approach was then developed by City staff and presented to industry. The revised approach was more favorably received by industry. City staff are confident the industry present at these consultations appreciate the fact status quo is not an option. Key considerations of the revised approach are detailed below.

Research does confirm the point load weight transferred from a truck's axle does have more of an impact on a roadway than its overall gross weight and distributing a truck's gross weight over more axles can reduce impact on a roadway. DTI confirmed the GVW they set for various highways in the Province is based more on the limits of bridges and structures along a particular highway than the highway itself.

City staff proposes to address this by considering axle loading limits in our Overweight/Oversize Load Permit process in addition to GVW limits by referencing the Provincial Motor Vehicle Act's Regulation 2001-67 (Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Regulations) the associated Short Term policy.

Research also confirms the impact of truck traffic on roadway maintenance costs are significant compared to a car. The relationship between axle loading and

pavement deterioration is in fact exponential. Although the exact scale of impact is attributable to many factors, for the sake of providing context and citing available research, a truck with an axle weight of 8165 kg (18,000 pounds) can cause the same damage to a roadway as approximately 6500 cars. It is clear that industrial, heavy commercial, and resource-based businesses with heavy truck traffic has a disproportionately greater impact on road maintenance costs compared to automobiles at residential properties.

As such, City staff has (1) revised the associated recommended Goods Movement Strategy Short Term policy by increasing the GVW limit from 42,500 kg to 62,500 kg to match the limit of the adjacent Highway 1, and (2) revised the Medium Term policy to allow this limit to be revisited at a later date. Some flexibility in the ability to amend a City street's GVW limit in response to limitations of Provincial infrastructure along a particular route must be maintained short and long term. In addition, the current authority that the City has within its Weight Restrictions By-Law to limit weights during the Spring period or in response to excessive deterioration of City infrastructure is proposed to remain in place with the exception of the revised mechanism to vary Spring weight limits on a case-by-case basis.

While a "user fee" model involving an Overweight/Oversize Load Permit process is a consideration as a mechanism to more fairly align roadway investment costs with different property types (including heavy industrial operations), the City also continues to work with the Province of New Brunswick around a range of longer-term municipal sustainability opportunities and models.

Managing Large Truck Deliveries in the South Central Peninsula

Of the remaining Goods Movement draft policies, options presented to better manage truck deliveries in the South Central Peninsula are the only remaining policies where a choice of direction is required before endorsing the Strategy as "final".

The three draft policy options presented are summarized as follows:

1. Prohibit long trucks in the SCP, except those accessing the Port,
2. Limit long loading zones approved in future Traffic By-Law amendments, or
3. Limit time of day deliveries by long trucks to off-peak times.

Essentially, the objective of the various options are to limit travel of long trucks within the SCP to reduce interactions with pedestrians and cyclists, allow more "Complete Street" and Traffic Calming design options to be explored, and generally improve quality of life in an area of the City that is key to our Growth Strategy.

City staff recommends option 3 be explored but also be diligent in permitting longer loading zones on a case-by-case basis. City staff received feedback that options 1 and 2 would substantially increase delivery costs as in many cases goods would need to be transferred from a longer truck to a shorter one before final delivery can be made. Limiting too many longer loading zones may encourage illegal parking.

Toward the Main Objective

Together, the current and recommended policy to manage truck traffic in our very industrial city finds an improved balance between supporting business and quality of life of our residents.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This report aligns with Councils Priority for Sustainable Infrastructure by developing a comprehensive Transportation Strategic Plan for the City which advances the development of a multi-modal transportation system.

SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

Phase 2 of MoveSJ, contributes to identifying a plan for how people and goods will move throughout the City. It will help guide the transportation infrastructure investments for the next 25 years.

INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The various Service areas involved in the project including Growth and Community Development, Saint John Transit and Parking and Transportation and Environment Services collaborated on this report.

As outlined above, Public Consultation regarding the component strategies of Phase 2 and targeted industry consultation related to the Goods Movement Strategy was a component of Phase 2.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Pedestrian Strategy
Draft Parking Strategy
Draft Transit Strategy
Draft Goods Movement Strategy
Draft Transportation Demand Model Report
Public Consultation Report
Letter from OSCO Construction Group