



**Council Report
For the Meeting of October 22, 2020**

To: Council **Date:** October 16, 2020
From: Philip Bellefontaine, Director, Engineering and Public Works
Subject: Traffic Calming on 800 Block Maddison Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive this report for information and include as reference material in support of the Opportunity for Public Comment associated with Development Variance Permit Application No. 00248 for 801 Bank Street on October 22, 2020.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Improving road safety and managing vehicle traffic within school zones are important priorities for the City. The City's Sustainable Mobility Strategy, Go Victoria, identifies several strategies to support these priorities including adapting streetscape designs, managing curb space to support different road user needs, and investing in infrastructure to support increased walking, rolling, and cycling.

Over the past decade, the City has worked with school authorities and road safety partners such as ICBC and Victoria Police to invest in changes to the built environment, deliver road user education, collect and evaluate data, and enforce city bylaws and rules under the Motor Vehicle Act. The City contributes to active and safe routes to school programs facilitated through the Capital Regional District (CRD) and more recently has made several improvements to school zones with enhanced on-street signage and paint markings through the Traffic Calming Program.

Glenlyon Norfolk School (GNS), like every other school in the municipality, is a trip generator. While vehicle volumes and speeds are not currently exceeding local street thresholds, there is an opportunity for continued traffic calming interventions to reduce roadway congestion in the area and support active transportation.

In addition to planned interventions on Maddison Avenue in 2021 associated with the Richardson Street bikeway project, designs have been developed for a traffic-calming and place-making initiative in the 800 block which would further support the goals of a safe and welcoming greenway. These changes can be initiated in the first quarter of 2021.

Any future re-development of the school site will be required to take into account broader access, parking supply, and loading needs with a focus on sustainable mobility and neighbourhood traffic impact management.

BACKGROUND

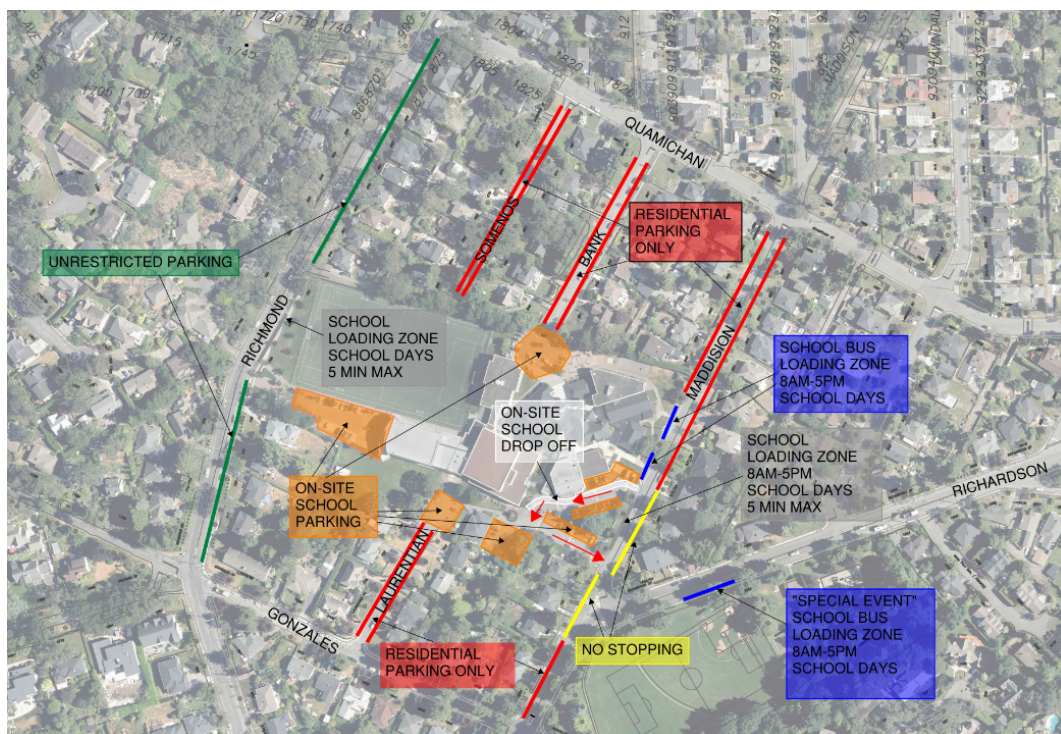
On September 17, 2020 Council passed a motion to give notice and allow opportunity for public comment related to the issuance of Development Variance Permit Application No. 00248 for 801 Bank Street (Glenlyon Norfolk School). As a part of this motion, Council also directed staff to report back options for implementing traffic calming in the vicinity of the school.

This report focuses on traffic calming opportunities and can be included as reference material to support the Opportunity for Public Comment associated with the above listed application on October 22, 2020.

ISSUES AND ANALYSIS

All schools in the City of Victoria are considered trip generators. The 2017 CRD Origin and Destination Study indicates that there are approximately 7,300 morning peak period trips to, from and within the municipality related to K – 12 school travel (27% of total morning trips). While there is a growing mode share of youth who walk, cycle, and take public transit to school, approximately half of school related trips in the Capital Region are made in a private automobile. Mode share varies in individual schools. Schools that serve regional catchments, such as Glenlyon Norfolk, and those with daycare facilities or community centres may have higher mode share of private automobile use.

GNS has approximately 450 students at its Bank Street campus. The surrounding road network supports multi-modal movement as well as local access for residents. Richmond Avenue is designated as a secondary collector street with higher vehicle volumes and the remainder of roads are classified as local streets with lower-density residential land use.



Maddison Street is designated as a “people priority greenway” and forms an important north / south route for pedestrians, cyclists and other users in the City’s Greenways network. The route also

provides a neighbourhood connection between priority east-west All Ages and Abilities (AAA) corridors. There is an existing concrete sidewalk on the west side of the street and curb use is fully restricted on the east side for residential parking only or is marked with yellow curb. The off-site parking lot accessed from the 800 block of Maddison is intended to facilitate visitor parking as well as student drop off.

While residents on Maddison Street have expressed concerns about vehicle activity and road safety, concentrated periods of traffic congestion are not unique to this street or this school. Data collected in October 2020 confirms roadway congestion on the 800 block is directly associated with school start and end times. An estimated 59% of AM morning peak volumes and 42% of afternoon peak volumes are associated with school related travel. The overall volumes and speeds on Maddison, however, are still well within local road targets (a total of 715 vehicles per day with an 85th percentile speed of 33.5km/hr). The duration of congested periods is limited to 35 minutes twice a day on weekdays. There have been no reported motor vehicle incidents on Maddison Street or on other local streets in the vicinity of the school.

Traffic Management Practices:

Adjacent residents have communicated concerns regarding on-street vehicle congestion and parking to the school administration over several years. During a recent visit, City staff observed instances of private vehicles illegally stopping on yellow curb or parking in residential areas. This activity causes frustration among residents and other road users and can potentially limit visibility at driveways and intersections.

Managing traffic impacts has become an increased focus area for school administration. Over the past few months the school has:

- Shared information about parking and loading restrictions including alternate locations that support “drop and walk”. New school rules have also been put in place to limit student drop offs to only those in Grade 6 – 8 on Maddison Street.
- Stationed school staff at the bus zone on Maddison Street during morning and afternoon pick up times to support compliance.

In October 2020 administration also committed to reviewing its service agreement with St. Michael’s University School and their operating provider to consider alternate routes and loading areas, including the existing “special event” school bus zone on Richardson Street and/or loading off of Richmond Avenue. Moving bus loading to other locations could help address some of the neighbourhood road safety concerns.

Traffic Calming Initiatives:

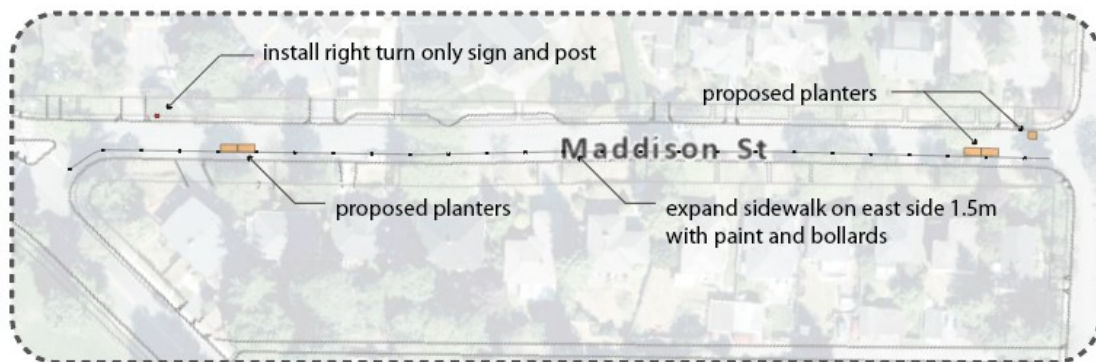
Throughout 2020 City staff engaged directly with residents on potential greenways enhancements and traffic calming in the neighbourhood. The approved Richardson Street AAA designs includes two features that will support Maddison Street as a greenway and reduce non-local traffic. These include:

- A new pedestrian crossing at Quamichan Street at Maddison Street along with a northbound road closure to limit traffic on to the 900 block; and
- A directional diverter at the southern end of the 800 block to eliminate west-bound movements on to Richardson Street.

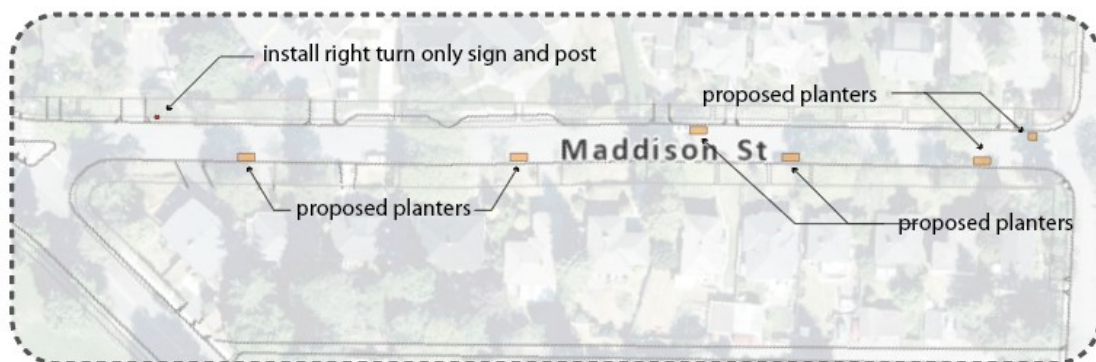
As a part of its Traffic Calming Program, the City installed enhanced signage and road markings at elementary school zones this summer. Middle schools, including GNS, are scheduled for similar sign and paint upgrades in early 2021.

With the encouragement of staff, in August 2020 the Maddison People Priority Greenway Community Group submitted an application to the My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program to support active transportation use and traffic calming interventions. Their proposed concept focused on a series of raised planter boxes that would be placed on the west side of the street, thereby eliminating all school bus loading zones. As this block was previously identified through the Richardson Street design process as a candidate for greenways enhancements, staff developed two alternative concepts that are shown below. These options align with neighbourhood goals and build on the grant application principles proposed by the Community Group, while balancing the needs of all stakeholders.

OPTION A



OPTION B



Option A: This design emphasizes the people priority greenway by introducing a temporary sidewalk on the east side of the road, separating pedestrians from moving vehicles through the use of bollards and paint. It also includes five planter boxes within two clusters. This design removes the existing residential-only parking (residents on the east side of Maddison would be required to use their private driveways for vehicle storage) but increases the amount of dedicated road space for pedestrians. The planters would act as gateway traffic calming features and support place-making.

Option B: This design proposes 6 planter boxes in different locations along the block and maintains the resident-only on-street parking. Under this scenario, the planters act as natural chicanes for

vehicle traffic, deterring it from being a preferred drop-off route. This is a lighter touch but will still have traffic calming effects and support community place-making.

Both designs accommodate all vehicle types including school buses and emergency vehicles. Vehicle traffic will still be permitted in both directions and driveways will remain accessible for residents. Both scenarios also include upgrades to the existing signage, which is currently set back from the driveway exit, to communicate the no-left turn traffic restriction on to Maddison Street.

These two concepts have been shared with the School and neighbourhood. The preferred treatment will be piloted for 3 years beginning in 2021 as a part of the My Great Neighbourhood Grant program. After this period, additional features may be added, or elements made permanent. A new streetscape mural is also being explored as a community-building activity through the Everyday Creativity Grant program.

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

Accessibility Considerations

Access to convenient passenger loading areas and off-street accessible parking stalls are required to support people with disabilities. The proposed traffic calming designs on Maddison does not impede sidewalk travel. Should the first option be pursued, an additional sidewalk would be installed on the east side of the road offering increased mobility options.

2018 - 2022 Strategic Plan

Investments in traffic calming and improvements to designated greenways supports several actions identified in Council's Strategic Plan.

Impacts to Financial Plan

Funding for greenways enhancements and community place-making projects are a part of previously approved grant programs and capital budgets.

Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

Managing road safety and supporting active transportation is consistent with several policy directions in Chapter 7 of the City's Official Community Plan.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the temporary land use changes at 801 Bank Street are intended to support additional classroom and gym space to address COVID-19 safety requirements, they are not expected to result in a change to the existing transportation profile in this neighbourhood.

The 800 block of Maddison Street would benefit from continued attention to support greenways enhancements and traffic calming. The City has several planned investments that will deter cut-through traffic in 2021 as a part of the Richardson Street AAA Project. In addition, staff are working with stakeholders to introduce complementary traffic calming interventions on Maddison Street that also supports community place-making.

Respectfully submitted,



Sarah Webb
Manager, Sustainable Transportation
Planning & Development



Philip Bellefontaine
Director, Engineering and Public Works

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

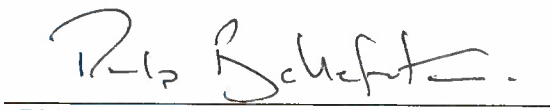


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