

Transportation, Traffic Safety and Transit Committee Report:

Airport Parkway Widening/West Walkley Road Update

Dec 6, 2022, WWR Townhall Meeting: Comprehensive “vision” for the street, including eventually making WWR into a “complete street” safer for all users with benefits for Riverside Park’s quality of life, presented by City and subsequently endorsed by RPCA.

February/March City Budget 2023 – Resolutions adopted stipulating that:

1. Funding “be applied to the Walkley off-ramp, traffic mitigation on Walkley from the off-ramp to McCarthy, a protected intersection at McCarthy, new active transportation measures on the Walkley overpass, and the new MUP along west side of the Parkway, and that these project components move forward . . . as currently planned, including completion of the detailed design for the entire project; and”
2. Funding “beyond the 2023 Budget, specifically for construction of the widening of the Airport Parkway, between Brookfield Rd and Hunt Club Rd, be deferred until the TMP [Transportation Master Plan] update is completed; and after the Trillium Line is in operational for 2 years”.
3. City staff also directed to “continue to engage with the local community and Ward Councillor on the final design process specifically related to the Walkley Road project, including solutions on mitigating negative traffic impacts as a result of the off-ramp from the Airport Parkway and proposed modifications to Walkley Road.”

\$21.5M approved for Airport Parkway-related project elements listed in #1.

Clarifications/Commitments Subsequent to *Budget 2023* Approval:

- WWR-related project elements to be implemented “through one construction package” (City) comprising a “bundled deal” (Councillor Brockington). (March 10)
- Council supported “putting extra emphasis on the Walkley Rd traffic calming project, to ensure public consultation will continue, as a number of outstanding matters remain regarding the current design process.” (Councillor Brockington March 17).
- Reiteration that “any modifications that make WWR worse” should be avoided and won’t be supported (Councillor Brockington).
- “Off-ramp won’t be built without WWR traffic mitigation measures”. (Councillor Brockington, meeting with RPCA Transportation Committee, March 29).
- “Meter by meter” review to be undertaken with City of proposed changes to Airport Parkway and WWR. (Councillor Brockington, March 29).

Recent Developments (1):

- **Project Timing:** One year delay, to end of 2024, to complete overall design as some WWR/Airport Parkway project elements are still in functional design phase (City/June19).
- **Community Safety Zone Designation** -- At Councillor Brockington's initiative and with RPCA support, City Council (June 23) approved CSZ designation under the *Highway Traffic Act* for WWR between Airport Parkway and Otterson/Springland Drs:
 - Doubles fines for speeding and other reckless driving offenses including traffic signal violations;
 - Additional signage to be added to WWR.

Questions/comments re CSZ:

- Timing of implementation and next steps (requires a by-law)?
- Could be of limited utility without increased enforcement.
- Rationale for not including “well-populated and vulnerable block” between Springland/Otterson and Riverside Drive?
- Should complement, not replace, physical traffic safety mitigation measures.

Recent Developments (2):

- **Off-ramp is being “fast tracked”** (Councillor Brockington, August).

Questions/comments:

- Needs clarification – is “fact tracking” relative to Parkway widening or other elements of “bundled deal” relevant to WWR?
- If latter, what are implications for these other project elements, especially commitment not to build off-ramp without WWR traffic safety mitigation measures?

- **City now revisiting proposed WWR traffic mitigation measures:**

"New modelling was conducted this past summer and the data indicates that **Walkley Rd would not be able to accommodate the expected traffic volumes** [from an offramp from an UNWIDENED Airport Parkway] **in a smooth and expeditious manner and there will also be significantly more cut through traffic on branch streets** that run off Walkley. **As such, the City and Parsons must reflect on whether the proposed modifications to Walkley Road are sound and will likely need to make revisions to the plan.**" (emphasis added). (Councillor Brockington mail-out, August)

Recent Developments (3):

Questions/Comments:

- Confirms initial City traffic estimates about traffic volume/flow from an off-ramp from an unwidened Parkway provided in context of *Budget 2023*.
- Importance of receiving more info on traffic modelling and possible design changes -- further info requested but nothing provided so far (mid-August) – and “meter by meter” review of Parkway and WWR designs, plus need for transparency and community consultations .
- Calls into question:
 - Scope and nature of proposed traffic safety mitigation measures for WWR and adjacent streets;
 - City’s proposed “vision” for WWR presented at Dec 6 public info meeting, including goal of transforming WWR into a “complete street”.
- New Mooney Bay parking restrictions implemented during this summer’s festival season are a good example of how modest changes to traffic management and mitigation can have big positive impacts.

Recent Developments (4) -- Questions/Comments (continued):

- Creates a new and unforeseen situation not envisaged in the 2016 Environmental Study Report (ESR), the provincially approved planning framework for the Airport Expansion Project which included commitments to Riverside Park to improve traffic safety:
 - Potential worst-case scenario planning fiasco for Riverside Park exacerbating impact of WWR as a physical barrier dividing community with negative consequences for traffic safety (e.g. more vehicles, fewer mitigation measures), environment (e.g. loss of greenspace due to new MUP), and overall quality of life;
 - Further justifies the need for a comprehensive and thorough review of overall Airport Parkway widening project, as provided for by the 2016 ESR itself:

8.5 Modifying the Recommended Plan (p.254):

“Due to unforeseen circumstances, it may not be feasible to implement the project as described in this ESR [environmental study report]. Accordingly, *any significant modifications to the project or change in the environmental setting for the project which occurs after the filing of this environmental assessment shall be reviewed* by the City of Ottawa and an addendum to the EA shall be prepared as appropriate.” (emphasis added)

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Next steps?

Comments?

Questions?

Thank you!