



Transportation Advisory Committee

Council 2020 Update

November 10, 2020



Committee Chairperson's Remarks

On behalf of myself and the Transportation Advisory Committee, I am pleased to make today's presentation to Council.

While interviewing community members applying to become a member of this Committee, I was reminded that the Committee is only completing its second term. We would like to thank the Mayor and Council for implementing this Committee. It was obvious during community meetings several years ago that roads were a number one concern for all Sturgeon residents. Establishing this Committee is evidence of this Council's commitment to our roads.

2020 has so far been a unique year, with its set of challenges and opportunities. The impacts of COVID-19 and historical 1 in 100-year precipitation events is manifesting significantly in our individual lives as residents and likewise in the operations of the County. While reviewing my comments to Council from last year, I noted I made a comment about the unprecedented weather we experienced in 2019. Let us all hope the weather events of the past several years are not becoming the new normal.

Committee Chairperson's Remarks

COVID has necessitated that our Committee meetings be held virtually.

Year to date the Committee has held five meetings:

- February 19 (in-person),
- July 13 (virtual),
- August 19 (virtual),
- September 23 (virtual), and
- October 21, 2020 (virtual).

Through this entire COVID period, our people in Transportation have continued to work both from home and in the office, while maintaining best practices and protocols, as well as working in the field.

The Committee has been working on its workplan, which will set the direction for its efforts in 2021. Final draft of this work plan has been completed. I would like to thank Hugh Allen, Al Montpelier from the Committee and Gary Mayhew from Administration for completing the schedule for this plan.

Committee Chairperson's Remarks

One area that I have observed as worth mentioning is the department's resident case management efforts. At a 4-year high (Jan-Oct) with 3,254 cases, 2020 cases show a 24% increase in the total tally compared to 2019. The department has maintained a case resolution rate of 92% (previous 3-year resolution rate average stands at 89%).

Attached to this report are several comments from citizens who took the time to reach out to the Transportation Services department.

Here is one example of a resident who was happy:

"Just wanted to drop a line and thank the entire Transportation crew! I know the roads, flooding, and garbage is insane to keep up with right now! Thank you for all you are doing! We are everywhere and we see you are all trying and believe it or not, having some success (when mother nature permits)! (I have had residents say they cannot believe the roads this spring... BUT they are happy to see the graders and Sturgeon employees roadside working hard.)"

Committee Chairperson's Remarks

Also, from interactions members of this Committee have had with residents, Council's injection of funds (\$2.23M) to address historical drainage issues and over (\$3M) to fix gravel roads through the strategic gravel roads stabilization motion is commendable and has been well received. Particularly when those legacy issues were amplified by historical rainfall levels this spring.

During my address to Council last year, I posed a question to Council regarding the number of complaints they received over the past year. Considering the challenges we have all faced this year and despite a 24% increase in logged cases, do the Mayor and Councillors feel the public were well served by our Transportation Department this year?

As our mandate indicates, the Transportation Advisory Committee is there to make recommendations to Council, and we are pleased to submit the following endorsements and recommendations.

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that Council consider increasing the subsidy amount provided to residential dust suppression applicants for the 2021 season.
2. The Committee recommends that Council consider increasing the speed limit on Cardiff Road between Range Road 245 and Highway 28. It is the Committee's opinion that the speed limit can be raised to 100 km/hour without compromising safety. Existing speed limit for this roadway is 80 km/hour.
3. The Committee recommends that Council consider increasing the speed limit on Cardiff Road through the Cardiff subdivision to 50 km/hr from the existing limit of 40km/hr.
4. The Committee recommends Transportation Services' continued engagement in trialing stabilization techniques and products as well as continue to explore the use of alternative dust suppression agents.
5. The Committee recommends further engagement in awareness campaigns (townhall format, COVID permitting), with Committee membership participation in the public engagement process, beginning as early as the spring 2021.

Endorsements

1. The Committee endorses the County's current methodology for placing calcium chloride dust suppression and the continued use of calcium chloride as a preferred dust suppression agent.
2. The Committee continues to endorse Transportation Services' participation in the Rural Crime Watch program.
3. The Committee endorses the proactive action taken by Council in funding extensive gravel road repairs/stabilization.
4. The Committee endorses Council's commitment to increasing drainage funding to resolve legacy drainage files in line with the Drainage Master Plan recommendations.
5. The Committee endorses pavement preservation and asset management as a sound strategy for budgetary allocations versus new construction.
6. The Committee endorses the Local Roads Program restructure with three subcategories: grading component, stabilization and reconstruction.
7. The Committee endorses the trial program of over-sized advanced warning signs.

Closing Remarks

On behalf of the Transportation Advisory Committee, I would like to thank, Scott, Gary and Tracy for the work they have put into the Committee this year.

As well, thank you to Councillor Patrick D. Tighe and Councillor Dan Derouin for their help with keeping us on track regarding our Terms of Reference and for providing Council's perspective.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the other members of our Committee who have volunteered their time: Brian Reed, Dave Kluthe, Don Lancaster, Al Montpellier, Hugh Allen, and Wayne Bullock.