

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Transportation Committee
Comité des transports
3 March 2021 / 3 mars 2021**

**and Council
et au Conseil
10 March 2021 / 10 mars 2021**

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**Submitted by
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Ward: GLOUCESTER-SOUTHGATE (10) File Number: ACS2021-TSD-PLN-0003

**SUBJECT: Albion Road Traffic Study Recommendations (Bank Street to Lester
Road)**

**OBJET: Recommandations découlant de l'Étude de circulation sur le chemin
Albion (entre la rue Bank et le chemin Lester)**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

**That the Transportation Committee recommend that Council approve the
Recommended Plan for Albion Road, as described in this report.**

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des transports recommande au Conseil d'approuver le plan recommandé pour le chemin Albion, comme il est décrit dans le présent rapport.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May 2018, Council directed staff to conduct a traffic study along Albion Road between Bank Street and Lester Road in response to the planned expansion of the Rideau Carleton Raceway. The study was intended to address community traffic concerns in the Emerald Woods – Sawmill Creek and Blossom Park communities that could be further exacerbated by growth in southern communities. The 2013 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) approved a number of major transportation projects intended to serve these growing communities which consist of: the extension of the O-Train Line 2 (Trillium Line); the widening of the Airport Parkway; and the widening of Bank Street. For the Airport Parkway and Bank Street. Full funding for implementation of these measures will be divided over several years and are subject to the annual budgetary process. The recommendations from the Albion Road study focus on relatively lower cost interim improvements that can be implemented in advance of the major roadway projects outlined in the Transportation Master Plan, if funding permits.

Assumptions and Analysis

Data collected during the study indicated that approximately 25 to 40 per cent of traffic on Albion Road was passing through the community to other parts of the city and traffic behaviour was observed to be inconsistent with the street's collector designation. The study recommendations include, primarily, traffic calming retrofits to reduce vehicular speeds without impeding access. These changes are intended to:

- Make Albion Road less attractive as a regional cut-through route,
- Improve attractiveness of sustainable modes of transportation and accessibility; and,
- Align the street design with its adjacent residential context.

Key measures recommended include two new pedestrian crossings (including a raised crossing of Albion Road at Sawmill Creek Pathway), two new gateway features, improved bus stop accessibility, cycle-friendly bulb-outs, and speed tables.

Financial Considerations

There is currently no identified funding for the detailed design and construction of the recommendations. The Recommended Plan offers flexibility in that it can be implemented in phases or individual components, should opportunities arise. Specifically, opportunities to implement the plan, in whole or in part, could be explored through new development or renewal projects, or through future Neighbourhood Traffic Calming Program funding, if directed by Council.

Public Consultation

Throughout the study, staff consulted with the ward Councillor, the community, and other key internal stakeholders. Feedback received through consultation has informed the recommendations.

BACKGROUND

On May 9, 2018, City Council carried a motion rising from the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee ([ACS2018-PIE-EDP-0021-4837](#)), directing staff to conduct a traffic study along Albion Road. This motion was in response to the planned expansion of the Rideau Carleton Raceway, with the study being intended to review and address growing concerns in the Blossom Park neighbourhood related primarily to traffic volumes and speeding on the section of Albion Road between Bank Street and Lester Road.

It should be noted that, in 2004, Albion Road was closed to north-south through traffic at Lester Road to address concerns related to cut-through and overall traffic volume levels. This resulted in lower traffic volumes but was controversial and Council directed staff to re-open Albion Road in 2007. In addition, Council directed staff to install new all-way stop control intersections along Albion Road at Queensdale Avenue, Rosebella Avenue, and Wyldewood Street with the intention of controlling the flow of traffic cutting through the community. Following the re-opening, traffic returned to similar levels that existed before the closure was implemented, and community complaints of cut-through traffic and traffic volumes resumed.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the Albion Road Traffic Study was to address community traffic concerns that could be further exacerbated by growth in southern communities and recommend solutions to reduce the negative impacts of motor traffic along a segment of this roadway.

Study Area

Figure 1 shows the study area which includes the segment of Albion Road between Bank Street and Lester Road and a short connecting segment of Bridle Path Drive. This study area is located in the Emerald Woods – Sawmill Creek and Blossom Park communities and is characterized as primarily residential development. The study area is generally located on the north side of the National Capital Commission's (NCC) Greenbelt and east of the Macdonald-Cartier International Airport.

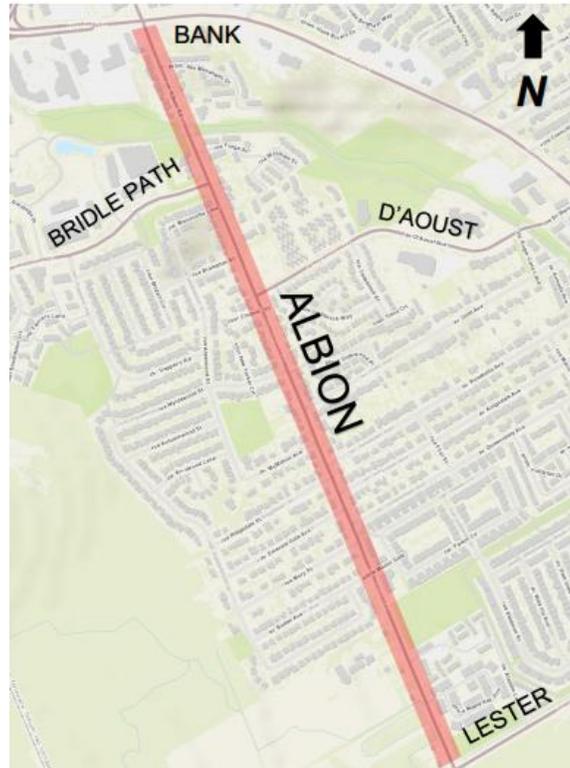


Figure 1: Albion Road Traffic Study Area

Project Need

The section of Albion Road in the study area is designated as a collector road which is intended to provide local residents with access to the citywide arterial network. However, the context of the street, both in design and the broader network, can at times function like an arterial road and can be an attractive route for through-traffic. A localized origin-destination analysis of traffic was undertaken as part of the study. Results indicated that in 2019, between 25 and 40 per cent of vehicular traffic on Albion Road was cutting through the community. Furthermore, vehicular speeds, particularly at the south end of the study corridor, were higher than the posted speed limit.

Development growth has continued south of the Emerald Woods – Sawmill Creek and Blossom Park communities, including the new Hard Rock Casino (at the existing Rideau

Carleton Raceway) in addition to the expansion of communities in Findlay Creek and Riverside South. With this growth, demand on north-south transportation corridors, including Albion Road, is growing.

To respond to this demand pressure at the network level, the 2013 TMP identified transportation projects such as the widening of Bank Street, the widening of the Airport Parkway and the extension of the O-Train Line 2 (Trillium Line) to serve the growing south urban communities. While the O-Train Line 2 extension is currently under construction, securing funding for the other north-south road projects has been ongoing. There is funding in the approved 2021 Budget to initiate some work on these road growth projects, but full funding for implementation will span over several years.

This traffic study reviewed potential retrofit options along the collector portion of Albion Road (between Bank Street and Lester Road) that could be considered in advance of major transportation projects.

Study Objectives

The study examined existing vehicular traffic volumes (including cut-through traffic) and speeds and reviewed collision data. The study team consulted with area residents and City departments to develop a design plan to address public concerns, focusing on localized physical retrofits that could be done without reconstruction of the entire road. This included reviewing a variety of traffic calming and active transportation options.

A set of planning principles was also formulated to guide the development of the study recommendations based on a review of community feedback. These principles are:

1. Apply a community-oriented street design to Albion Road (through Blossom Park /Emerald Woods-Sawmill Creek) in alignment with its collector designation, which would include improvements such as additional pedestrian crossings, gateway treatments and traffic calming;
2. Reduce the attractiveness of Albion Road as a cut-through route without preventing access; and,
3. Improve infrastructure to promote sustainable transportation (walking, cycling and transit).

There was also a need to consider the potential long-term design context for the corridor so that any near-term retrofit options could align with that future design described later in this report.

Analysis

Data collection in the study identified the following conditions:

- Traffic volume levels are above the expected range for typical collector streets as defined by the Transportation Association of Canada Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads. Vehicle volumes are moderately higher in the northern segments of the study area.
- Depending on the time of day, approximately 25 to 40 per cent of traffic along Albion Road was found to be cutting through the community (i.e. traffic that does not have a local origin or destination). Approximately 10 to 15 per cent of traffic on Bridle Path Drive was found to be cutting through the community.
- The operating speeds of all segments of Albion Road within the study limits exceeds the posted speed limit of 50km/h – with 85th percentile speeds ranging from 53km/h to 61km/h.
- The reported collision levels were consistent over the 3-year period from 2016-2018 with 21-26 collisions per year within the study limits.

The study team developed a range of potential solutions to address these traffic conditions that meet the project objectives and further analysed these various options. This included an analysis to gain understanding of travel times along the routes through the community. The travel times for each route were estimated using a combination of GPS data and travel time estimates and compared relative to one another. Intersection capacity analysis was also conducted to understand the vehicular capacity-related impacts of proposed measures. Both analyses helped inform design choices and ensured the proposed design did not introduce excessive negative impacts while improving conditions for vulnerable road users. Results of the analyses indicated there should be no major delay increases at signalized intersections and redirection of traffic to local streets would be unlikely.

Recommended Plan

The Recommended Plan (Document 1) includes a series of retrofits that align with the planning principles established during the study. While full closure of Albion Road was tested from 2004 to 2007, it was not a successful solution and was not carried forward as an option. The Recommended Plan will make Albion Road less attractive as a north-south regional route relative to the parallel arterial corridors along the Airport Parkway and Bank Street by reducing potential travel speeds without restricting access.

Measures in the Recommended Plan include:

- Measures to reduce the attractiveness of Albion Road as a cut-through route and reduce vehicle speeds;
 - Shortened turn lanes – this would include shortening;
 - Two eastbound right turn lanes (one from Bank Street and the other from Bridle Path Drive to Albion Road);
 - The southbound left turn lanes at the D’Aoust Avenue and Lester Road intersection; and,
 - The northbound left turn from Albion Road to Bridle Path Drive.
 - Gateway treatments at two locations – Gateway features, such as signage identifying to motorists that they are entering a community, would be included within a new central median and curbside bulb-out along Bridle Path Drive just west of Albion Road, as well as on both of the north side corners of the Albion Road / Lester Road intersection.
 - Traffic calming measures including speed tables, raised crossings, and bulb-outs would be included at strategic locations along Albion Road and segments of Bridle Path Drive.
- Measures to improve transit operations:
 - Some bus stops would be re-located or consolidated to help improve transit travel times along the corridor, as well as help improve access to the transit system more broadly through the community; and,
 - A number of bus stops would have their designs upgraded to meet accessibility standards and help improve road safety in the vicinity of the bus stops.
- Measures to improve active transportation:
 - Bulb-outs included in the design concept that encroach the existing bike lanes would provide “ride-through” opportunities for cyclists.
 - A number of intersection corners would be retrofitted to comply with accessibility standards.
 - New raised crossings:

- Sawmill Creek Pathway – This new raised crossing would connect the gap between the two discontinuous segments of the pathway, connecting residents with the schools and the community centre on D’Aoust Avenue;
- Queensdale Avenue – A new raised crossing would be installed on the south leg of the Queensdale Avenue / Albion Road intersection; and,
- Trappers Road – A new raised crossing would be installed on the south leg of the Trappers Road / Bridle Path Drive intersection.

Recommended Plan Implementation Considerations

The measures in the Recommended Plan can be implemented through retrofits without reconstructing the entire street. Each measure can be implemented individually or in phases, depending on opportunities and the availability of funding. It also provides an opportunity for the City to explore options to partner with area developers to fund aspects of the project.

Cost

The estimated cost of the Recommended Plan is approximately \$3 million (in 2020 dollars). It is a Class “D” estimate that includes detailed design, construction, and related supporting costs and contingencies. There is no anticipated property needing to be acquired to implement this plan. This cost estimate assumes that modifications at signalized intersections will require full reconstruction of some of these intersections. However, depending on phasing of implementation and considerations during the detailed design stages, this may not be required.

There is currently no identified funding for this project. Opportunities to implement the plan, in whole or in part, could be explored through new development or renewal projects or through future Neighbourhood Traffic Calming Program funding, if directed by Council.

Long-term Design Context Considerations

The Recommended Plan is intended to be an interim solution until Albion Road (Bank Street to Lester Road) can be fully rebuilt into a Complete Street, sometime in the future. While there are currently no planned renewal projects identified in the 5-year renewal forecast along the study section of Albion Road between Bank Street and

Lester Road, the study team explored elements that should be considered for the ultimate design context of the street.

The following features should be explored at the time of any integrated road-water-sewer renewal project along the study segment of the corridor:

- Design features described in the City’s document, [Designing Neighbourhood Collector Streets](#) such as:
 - Separated cycling facilities;
 - Protected Intersections;
 - Additional traffic calming (lateral shifts);
 - Landscaping; and,
 - On-Street parking bays.
- Other key features;
 - Redesigned Albion / Lester configuration; and,
 - Redesigned Albion / Bank intersection.

While property acquisition is not required for the Recommended Plan, there may be requirements for any long-term design that incorporates elements listed above.

Through a conceptual design exercise that considered these long-term elements, the study team identified that property acquisition may be required to create space for such designs. In addition, to accommodate potential re-design options that better direct regional traffic away from Albion Road, potential changes at the Albion Road and Lester Road intersection would likely impact sensitive lands on the south side of Lester Road owned by the NCC. As such, future design changes to the Albion Road and Lester Road intersection may be subject to NCC property acquisition and approval processes.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

The project is in the urban area.

CONSULTATION

The study benefited from the review and feedback of participants through a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and a Public Working Group (PWG). The TAG included City

departmental stakeholders from Transportation Services, Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Development, Public Works and Environmental Services, and Emergency and Protective Services. Feedback from these stakeholders allowed for the development of a Recommended Plan that balances competing objectives.

The PWG included members of the public and other agencies representing local residents, the local community association, the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority, the Accessibility Advisory Committee and School Travel Planning (Ottawa Public Health).

An initial online questionnaire was completed over the summer of 2019 by approximately 680 residents to help the study team understand the broad range of concerns, general background, and potential solutions for consideration.

A public meeting was held on November 7, 2019 to provide the public with an opportunity to review study progress as well as to provide feedback. In total, approximately 40 individuals attended the meeting and 100 comment sheets were submitted.

An online consultation was held from November 5, 2020 to December 1, 2020 to share a summary of progress following the public meeting and to present the draft concept under development to get feedback. Approximately 158 feedback questionnaires were completed in response to this consultation.

The study team also met with the Public Working Group on two occasions (November 28, 2019 and October 15, 2020) to discuss project progress and get preliminary feedback in advance of consulting with the broader public.

Staff also presented at a virtual meeting organized by the Ward Councillor on December 3, 2020 to discuss the project with the public.

There is overall public support for the project. Examples of comments received in regard to the Recommended Plan include:

- Raised pedestrian crossings will be a significant improvement;
- Traffic calming and gateway features will be helpful;
- Make the stop signs along the study limit more visible by making them larger, adding flashing lights, and pruning trees; and,
- Consider potential for project to redirect traffic to local streets and add traffic

calming measures to mitigate this potential.

Notifications for the initial online questionnaire, public meeting, and online consultation were advertised through direct flyer (buck slip) delivery to area resident households that live east of the Airport Parkway, south of Bank Street, and north of Lester Road. These notifications were also posted on the project website, Ottawa.ca/AlbionTraffic and shared by e-mail to the project mailing list. Nearby Ward Councillors were also notified of these activities (Ward 20 – Osgoode and Ward 22 – Gloucester-South Nepean). Finally, the Ward Councillor and Emerald-Woods Residents Association (EWRA) shared information on project activities through various methods such as meetings and social media.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

Councillor Deans

I am supportive of the recommended plan as proposed in this report.

This section of Albion Road from Lester Road to Bank Street runs through Blossom Park and is surrounded by schools, parks, and housing for young families and seniors.

Albion Road experiences high volumes of traffic and is considered to be a convenient cut through route for motorists traveling to and from development to the south. While the traffic is considerable at present, the concern is that it will further increase once the new Hard-Rock Casino entertainment complex is built out. The Hard-Rock development includes a 2,500-seat theatre, large restaurant, hotel, and expanded gaming, which will all draw more traffic into the Blossom Park neighbourhood.

The recommendations proposed in this report will help to minimize the traffic impacts of this new development and create a safer environment for all road users including cyclists and pedestrians.

I fully expect that the proponents of the Hard-Rock will contribute to funding this plan.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

Consultation with the project's Public Working Group included a member representing the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) who participated. The report was circulated to the AAC for information.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to approving the recommendation in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The Recommended Plan does not have funding identified for implementation.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations documented in this report are consistent with the City's Comprehensive Asset Management (CAM) Program objectives. The implementation of the Comprehensive Asset Management program enables the City to effectively manage existing and new infrastructure to maximize benefits, reduce risk, and provide safe and reliable levels of service to community users. This is done in a socially, culturally, environmentally, and economically conscious manner.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is currently no identified funding for the detailed design and construction of the recommendations. Opportunities to implement the plan, in whole or in part, could be explored through new development or renewal projects, or through future Neighbourhood Traffic Calming Program funding, if directed by Council.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

All measures included in the Recommended Plan will be designed to meet the City's Accessibility Design Standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Recommended Plan will help reduce the negative impacts of vehicular traffic and improve conditions for sustainable modes of transportation in the study area.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The recommendation contained herein aims to support the following priority and outcomes of the City of Ottawa Strategic Plan 2019-2022:

Integrated Transportation: Enable effective mobility through a sustainable, accessible and connected city transportation system.

Outcomes:

- An integrated transportation network that incorporates all modes of getting around; and
- Transportation infrastructure investment is sustainable and meets long-term

needs.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – Recommended Plan

DISPOSITION

Staff from Transportation Services will take appropriate action as directed by Transportation Committee and Council.