



## Clarence Avenue & Main Street Intersection Improvements

*What We Heard - Engagement Summary*

March 3, 2023



## What We Heard - Engagement Summary

## Engagement Summary

The City of Saskatoon recently completed a traffic review at the intersection of Clarence Avenue and Main Street after several residents reached out with concerns about safety. To improve safety at the intersection and address collision patterns, channelization on Main Street is recommended. This involves modifying the existing medians on Main Street at both approaches to create right turn only lanes. Drivers on Main Street would be required to turn right at the intersection and would no longer be able to drive straight through or turn left onto Clarence Avenue.

Engagement with local residents on this recommendation took place between August 2022 and February 2023. Residents living within one block of the intersection were identified as being highly impacted by this work due to potential changes to traffic flows on Main Street and access to Clarence Avenue. Residents of nearby streets may be impacted by changes to the intersection and the potential for traffic to be redirected to 9<sup>th</sup> Street E or 10<sup>th</sup> Street E. In addition, Clarence Avenue is a major arterial street through the neighborhoods of Nutana and Varsity View so members of the nearby community may be impacted by these changes.

This intersection was also discussed as a part of the Nutana and Varsity View Neighborhood Traffic Reviews (NTRs) when residents raised concerns about short cutting and collisions at the intersection.

Following the first phase of engagement in August 2022, the recommendation was updated to include a pedestrian crossing on the south side of Clarence Avenue and to ensure that cyclists and pedestrians will be considered in the design of the permanent channelization. A second phase of engagement was held in February 2023 to present the updated recommendation and gather additional community feedback.

## Summary of engagement activities

The goal of this engagement was to **inform** local impacted residents of the potential changes to the intersection and to **collect feedback** from the residents about the impacts of these changes.

Table 1: Summary of Engagement Strategy

Phase		Participants	Engagement Goal	Engagement Activities
1	Local Feedback	Local Residents Community Associations (CA) Residents of Nutana and Varsity View	Share the recommended option for Clarence Avenue & Main Street and collect feedback from impacted residents living near the intersection	On-site meeting Flyers Emails to CAs Correspondence
2	Community Feedback	Local Residents Community Associations (CA) Residents of Nutana and Varsity View	Share the recommended option for Clarence Avenue & Main Street and gather feedback from broader community and impacted residents	Drop-in community session Flyers Emails to CAs Correspondence Engage Page

## What We Heard - Engagement Summary

### *Phase 1 – August 2022*

Flyers were mailed to local residences on Main Street within one block of the intersection describing the recommended changes and results of the traffic review. The flyer also advertised a pop-up engagement event that was held on-site at Clarence Avenue and Main Street to review the proposed changes with local residents and staff from the Transportation Department. The flyer and information about the pop-up engagement was also shared with the Nutana and Varsity View Community Associations.

Approximately 45 people attended the pop-up engagement event on August 23, 2022. Feedback forms were completed by people at the event, and residents were also able to submit their comments through email to the project team. Overall, feedback was received from approximately 50 residents through feedback forms, emails, and conversations with the project team.

### *Phase 2 – February 2023*

Flyers were mailed to local residences within one block of Clarence Avenue on Main Street, 9<sup>th</sup> St E and 10<sup>th</sup> St E describing the recommended changes and results of the traffic review, along with changes made to the recommendation based on feedback heard so far. The flyer also advertised a community drop-in engagement session that was held at the Albert Community Centre to review the proposed changes with local residents and staff from the Transportation Department. The flyer and information about the drop-in session was also shared with the Nutana and Varsity View Community Associations.

Approximately 15 people attended the drop-in engagement session on February 1, 2023. Feedback forms were completed by people at the event, and residents were also able to submit their comments through email to the project team or on the City's Engage page. Overall, feedback was received from approximately 20 residents through feedback forms, emails, and conversations with the project team.

## What We Heard

### *Phase 1 – August 2022*

The majority of local residents living within one block of the intersection were in support of the recommendation. Local residents who were opposed were concerned about restricted access onto and across Clarence Avenue, as well as the potential to displace traffic to adjacent streets or back lanes.

Of the community residents living elsewhere in Nutana, Varsity View, or another neighborhood of Saskatoon, several residents were opposed due to the impact of the changes on the ability to cycle on Main Street. Several cyclists commented that Main Street is an alternate cycling route for 8<sup>th</sup> Street and suggested allowing cyclists the ability to cross Clarence Avenue or alternate options such as a 4-way stop. Additional concerns from residents are detailed in the themes below.

### *Phase 2 – February 2023*

## What We Heard - Engagement Summary

In the second phase of engagement, most responses were from residents opposed to the recommendation, or with other comments and questions about the proposed changes, such as questions about the cost of implementing the recommendations and whether the growth levels in the surrounding neighborhoods have been taken into account for the changes.

Residents living next to the intersection were once again concerned with changes to the flow of traffic on Clarence Avenue and the inconvenience of not being able to turn left onto Clarence Avenue from Main Street. Many responses preferred the alternate options of traffic signals or a 4-way stop instead of channelization.

Residents in favour of the recommended changes were supportive of channelization to address safety concerns at the intersection and help reduce collisions. The importance of maintaining cycling routes was a theme heard from several responses, including suggestions to include a bike button or option for cyclists to complete a through movement across Clarence Avenue once the channelization is permanently implemented. Further responses are detailed in the themes below.

Table 2. Summary of Input from Emails and Feedback Forms (includes feedback from both phases)

	Local residents (within 1 block on Main Street)	Community residents (Nutana / Varsity View)	Resident elsewhere in Saskatoon
Supportive of recommendation	18	6	2
Unsupportive	10	11	4
Other comments and questions	3	4	5

## The main themes from engagement included:

### *Alternate Options for Improvements*

The most common question from residents was why alternate options for the intersection are not being recommended. Many residents suggested traffic signals, a 4-way stop, or a roundabout at the intersection of Clarence Avenue & Main Street as an alternative to channelization. Suggestions for timed traffic signals, pedestrian actuated signals, and adding crosswalks to the north and south side of Clarence Avenue were also received. Residents also suggested changing yield signs on adjacent streets to make it easier to re-route traffic on nearby streets.

Based on feedback from engagement event #1, a pedestrian crossing was added to the south side of Clarence Avenue to allow pedestrians to cross safely on both sides of the street, which involves modifying the existing pedestrian-actuated signal.

### *Active Transportation Options*

Many residents commented on the need to support pedestrian and cycling movements through Main Street across Clarence Avenue. The right-hand only turn movement will restrict cyclists' ability



## What We Heard - Engagement Summary

to bike down Main Street as an alternate route to 8<sup>th</sup> Street and several people noted they would not feel comfortable cycling down Clarence Avenue. Residents suggested infrastructure to allow cyclists to travel across Clarence Avenue, such as a bicycle signal with some form of cyclist detection.

Several people also requested an additional pedestrian crossing on the south side of Main Street and Clarence Avenue to allow pedestrians to cross safely on both sides of the street, noting the south side is near to a bus stop as well.

Based on feedback from engagement event #1, a pedestrian crossing was added to the south side of Clarence Avenue to allow pedestrians to cross safely on both sides of the street, which involves modifying the existing pedestrian actuated signal. In addition, cycling will be considered in the design of the permanent channelization. Feasible options for cyclists at Clarence Avenue and Main Street will be determined in the next phases of the project, if approved.

### *Safety*

Concerns about the number of collisions at the intersection were raised by several residents, particularly those who live near the intersection and have witnessed or responded to multiple collisions over the years. Local residents in particular recognized the need to address safety concerns at this location.

### *Speed*

Some residents believed that speed is also an issue at this location and suggested traffic calming or measures to address speeding problems would also improve the intersection. A request for additional monitoring of speed data and police enforcement in the area was also made. Some residents also expressed a preference for the temporary concrete curbs over temporary rubber traffic calming curbs.

### *Moving the Problem to Adjacent Streets*

Feedback from residents suggested the channelization measures would only shift the problems at Clarence Avenue and Main Street to nearby intersections at 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Street and encourage drivers to shortcut through other streets in the neighborhood or through back lanes. Residents were concerned the number of collisions on nearby streets would increase as a result of these changes, noting that 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Street have worse visibility and are narrower streets than Main Street currently.

### *Inconvenience to local residents*

The next theme raised by residents was the restricted access for very local residents of Main Street who would lose the ability to turn left onto or cross Clarence Avenue. Some local residents indicated they were willing to tolerate some inconvenience in order to improve safety at the intersection, while others were strongly opposed to losing access.

### *Trees*

The final theme identified by residents was the trees surrounding the intersection. Most residents were supportive of removing trees to increase the visibility surrounding the intersection and improve

## What We Heard - Engagement Summary

safety. Several people suggested removing key trees on the corners and next to alleys to improve visibility in the area, including on other nearby streets. Other residents expressed the desire to ensure the existing trees were preserved.

## Limitations

This engagement was focused on the residents closest to the affected intersection in order to gather feedback from those most impacted by the potential changes. Surrounding neighbourhoods and other stakeholders may also have an interest in potential changes to the intersection at Clarence Avenue and Main Street.

Both online and in-person options were offered as part of this engagement process to try and accommodate participation. Some residents may not have been comfortable or available to attend the in-person engagement sessions. Some residents may have limited access to internet or technology that presented challenges in accessing the online engagement information.

## Next Steps

Engagement results from both phases will be shared with City Council along with the recommended option of channelization.