
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: 18th February, 2004
File No.: 5460-09
To: Mayor and Council
From: Transportation Manager
Subject: Truck Traffic on Crawford Road

Recommendation:

THAT Council support the retention of the restriction of truck traffic on Crawford Road to southbound only, as approved by Council on 27th October, 2003.

Background:

In July 2003 and the months following, the City received many complaints about the impact of high volumes of truck traffic on the quality of life and safety of residents along Crawford Road. These trucks were generally traveling via DeHart Road between areas west of Crawford Estate and the Arthon and Apex gravel pits located on Stewart Road West. In response to these complaints, staff investigated the possibility of diverting truck traffic from Crawford Road to the Stewart Road West – Saucier – Bedford – DeHart Road route.

Because of concerns about the safety of the alternative route, the City commissioned a road safety consultant to review the two alternative routes between DeHart/Crawford and Crawford Stewart Road West intersections. While recognizing that there were problems on the Crawford Road route, the report concluded that the Stewart Road West route was the higher risk route, and that diverting additional truck traffic onto the Stewart Road route would not be prudent until improvements could be made to the route.

Major upgrading of the Stewart Road West route is scheduled for around 2010 to 2015. Short-term improvements would need to be low cost, and preferably be staged for inclusion in the ultimate road upgrading. For this reason, the consultants were asked to prepare a signage and improvement plan which would require trucks leaving the Arthon and Apex pits to use the Stewart Road West route, but permit trucks traveling south to the pits to use Crawford Road (i.e. in the uphill direction). This would half the truck traffic on Crawford Road, but not increase two-way truck traffic to the extent that the Stewart Road route became unduly hazardous. In order for the plan to be implemented quickly, it would need to be feasible within the existing right of way, and involve limited capital outlay.

On 27th October, 2003, Council approved the restriction of truck traffic on Crawford Road to southbound only and approved a budget of \$75,000 to implement short-term improvements to the Stewart Road West route to make it somewhat safer so that it could accommodate the increase in truck traffic. Truck traffic on Crawford Road has been restricted accordingly and most of the planned improvements have been implemented. The paving of sections of the Stewart West – Saucier route that have been widened and the installation of reflective post-mounted delineators around curves will be implemented as soon as ground conditions and air temperature permit.

In approving the measures described above, Council instructed Staff to obtain information from the pit operators about their long term plans as to the number of loads per day that might be expected in the coming years; to consult with residents on the Stewart West - Saucier route; to monitor the operation of trucks in relation to the restrictions implemented and to advise Council as to the desirability of a total restriction of all trucks from using Crawford Road, as had been requested by some of the residents of Crawford Road.

At the time of writing, the operator of the Arthon Pit had not yet responded to requests for information. To provide a benchmark, the periods of heavy usage of the Arthon Pit which led to the original complaints related first to the fill material used for preloading at the Mission Park Sports Complex, when a resident of Crawford Road complained that 189 trucks had used the road on one day (i.e. 95 loads). When the fire debris truck traffic was at its peak, the maximum number of loads of wood and concrete debris delivered to the Arthon Pit on a single day was 111 loads (or 222 round trips), but the daily tally only exceeded 80 loads on six days in total, and not all of these trips used Crawford Road, as some came from properties to the south within Crawford Estate. While it is not impossible that a large contract may generate more trips, this would likely only occur sporadically, with average conditions being far lower. The operator of the Apex Pit could not provide a forecast of future truck loads, but noted that they were not a major supplier and that he estimated their average supply of material to be 50 loads per week. He anticipates that their operations would end within two to three years.

All the residents along the Stewart-Saucier-Bedford-DeHart route were advised of the measures approved by Council on 27th October, 2003 and were invited to send their comments to the City. Two phone calls and five letters or e-mails were received. One caller simply wanted additional information, while the other was strongly opposed to the additional traffic on the Stewart-Saucier route. One letter from a resident of DeHart Road indicated that the writer saw no problem with the status quo either before or after the improvements, while the other noted the use of DeHart Road by walkers and cyclists, the lack of bike lanes on DeHart between Crawford and Casorso Roads, and problems with speeding, especially at one curve in the road; she did comment that there had been a noticeable increase in truck traffic past her home on DeHart Road. One e-mail indicated strong opposition to any increase in traffic on Stewart Road West as having a negative impact on agriculture and the rural environment, while the other two regarded any increase in traffic on the Stewart-Saucier route as making the road more unsafe, noting that the road was dangerous already due to sharp curves, narrow roadway, poor visibility and speeding vehicles.

In the time since the truck restrictions on Crawford Road were applied, truck traffic resulting from the clearance of fire debris has virtually ceased, though there are significant volumes of home reconstruction traffic. Staff has continued to receive complaints from Crawford Road that certain truckers are not adhering to the restrictions. Bylaw Enforcement together with the RCMP have undertaken enforcement operations, but no violations were observed on those occasions. City Staff have also contacted trucking firms identified in the complaints to reinforce the new truck route requirements.

Two road projects were submitted as Priority 2 items in the 2004 budget. Stewart 3 would have been the first stage of a DCC project otherwise scheduled for implementation some time between 2010 to 2015. This project would have improved the DeHart/Bedford/Casorso intersection at an estimated cost of \$793,000; however, this would have left Saucier Road and Stewart Road West unchanged, so would not have made that route a sufficiently safe alternative to justify moving all truck traffic from Crawford Road. A second Priority 2 project was the upgrading of Crawford Road from Westridge Drive to Parkridge Drive at a cost of \$500,000. This would have provided a wider roadway with a sidewalk adjacent to the homes on the south side (the north side is agricultural land), making it considerably safer for all traffic, including trucks. If the upgrading of Crawford Road were to be implemented, Staff would recommend the removal of the restriction on northbound trucks on Crawford Road, as it would certainly be the safer of the two roads for general traffic, including trucks.

On the basis of the results staff will continue to monitor traffic in this area and will report back to Council should the new truck route restrictions be unsuccessful in addressing the situation.

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Director of Works & Utilities

Cc: Roadways Superintendent