
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 7, 2004
File No.: 5400-20 Abbott Street
To: City Manager
From: Director of Works and Utilities
Subject: Extension of Abbott Street Corridor

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council direct staff to bring forward a 2005 Provisional Budget submission of \$40,000 to allow for a pre-design study to determine costs and other implications for the extension of the Abbott Street Recreational Corridor to Gyro Beach.

DISCUSSION:

At the Regular Meeting of Council held September 27th, Council passed a resolution stating "That staff report back to Council with the options and cost implications for extending the Abbott Street Recreational Corridor South."

The Abbott Street Recreational Corridor was initiated by the Works and Utilities Department in 2001 in direct response to public safety concerns due to conflicts between automobiles, cyclists, roller bladers and skateboarders. The portion of Abbott from the Kelowna General Hospital to the intersection of Harvey Avenue was experiencing 6,000 vehicles per day. Over the years there was a dramatic increase in cyclists, roller bladers, and skateboarders using the road surface to provide access to the various waterfront parks as no bike paths existed. Recognizing this concern and the fact that the City's water, wastewater, and drainage utilities had plans to upgrade aging infrastructure, the Transportation Division initiated a design process with extensive community input. The resultant design reflected the heritage zone in which this road exists and also a desire by the Parks Division to create a strong link between the waterfront parks and beach accesses. The work to date has been done in 3 phases with the last phase from Royal to Strathcona Park awaiting resolution of some land acquisition. Total cost of the project, including utility upgrades, is \$ 3.7 Million of which \$2.7 M is for road, bike path and sidewalk works. Funding of the project was possible due to the benefit to the 3 utilities, Transportation and Parks Divisions since existing capital funds within each area could be allocated to the project.

The project to date has been highly successful. A safe corridor for the recreational cyclists, roller bladers, and skateboarders was created. The design has resulted in speed reductions as well as a reduction in overall daily traffic to less than 5000 vehicles per day. This in combination with the beautiful landscaping, public art and heritage context features has created a very high public usage of the corridor and a desire to see it extended southward ultimately to Gyro Park.

Consideration of extending the corridor south of the Hospital has been discussed by staff of various City Departments recognizing the success of the initial portion. Moving forward with further extension however does not have the same priority as the initial portion for the following reasons:

- 1) Traffic safety concerns are significantly reduced south of the Hospital. South of the hospital daily vehicle traffic drops below 2000 vehicles per day. The Transportation Division has largely completed the extension of sidewalks and bike paths southward except in the area of Christleton where property issues exist.
- 2) The City's water and wastewater utility have no plans to upgrade their infrastructure for the foreseeable future.
- 3) The Parks Division, while supportive of an extension, has other projects including the waterfront walkway in the area of the future phases. Funding priority would have to be determined.
- 4) The Transportation Division ability to fund further extensions is very limited. The primary source of funding within the 10 Year Capital Plan is the Non DCC Road account which has an annual allotment of some \$600,000 annually. This account is also used for improvements to all other roads not part of the DCC Roads program. When considering all the road locations within the City requiring improvements for capacity or safety as well as other corporate initiatives such as downtown revitalization and Rutland Town Center improvements, additional Abbott Street works can not be justified at this time.

Due to the success of the corridor, it is understood there is a strong interest to explore extension of the corridor some time in the future. In order to determine the cost implications of such an extension, it is recommended that a preliminary design be completed. The design would be on a similar basis at the present corridor and examine all facets of construction including property and shallow utility impacts.

With this information Council can then consider where this project would fit with other corporate initiatives and available funding.

John Vos

cc. Director of Corporate and Planning Services
Director of Parks and Leisure Services
Director of Financial Services
Transportation Manager
Parks Manager