
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 23, 2006
File No.: 6140-20

To: City Manager

From: Andrew Gibbs, Supervisor, Planning, Design and Construction
Harry Thompson, Traffic and Transportation Engineer

Subject: Knowles Park Laneway – Supplemental Report

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the supplemental report regarding Knowles Park laneway be received.

BACKGROUND

At a Regular Meeting of Council on January 9, 2006, Council adopted the following resolution:

THAT staff provide a supplemental report back to Council to provide the following with respect to the proposed realignment of the Knowles Park laneway:

- *Information on the physical impact of the dog leg option on the park and what the trade off is from the Parks perspective;*
- *Statistics on traffic accidents at Lawrence and Ethel and at Richter and the lane.*

The requested supplemental information is provided by staff as follows:

1. **Park Issues**

The existing configuration of the park provides two moderate-sized greenspaces separated by a laneway. The area north of the lane is 3,315m² in size and the area south of the lane is 1,523m² in size. The lane occupies 252m², or 5.0%, of the land area of the park.

If the lane were to be re-aligned to provide a southward dog-leg connection to Lawrence Avenue, it would occupy 279m², or 5.5%, of the land area of the park. This configuration would result in one large contiguous area of greenspace 4,705m² in size and a 3.0m wide band of residual park land (106m²) west of the proposed dog-leg, adjacent to 868 Lawrence Avenue.

From a parks perspective the proposed re-alignment of the lane provides a larger greenspace that enhances opportunity for park use and reduces potential conflicts between park users and vehicle traffic in the lane.

The proposed alignment will impact one street tree in the Lawrence Avenue boulevard, may require moving a park light and require the re-routing of the angular pathway that connects the corner of Ethel and Lawrence with the Knowles House.

2. Traffic Issues

ICBC crash statistics for the period from January 2001 to September 2005 inclusive were reviewed. The number of crashes recorded in this area was as follows:

▪ Bernard / Richter intersection	48
▪ Bernard / Ethel	40
▪ Lawrence / Richter	13
▪ Lawrence / Ethel	13

The only street block for which had any crashes were recorded away from intersections was Bernard Avenue between Richter and Ethel Streets, where there were 3 recorded crashes. However, it should be noted that many of the crashes recorded took place in the approaches to intersections, i.e. the area within which queuing typically occurs. The functional area of the intersections on Richter Street, and to a lesser extent on Ethel Street, extends to the entry points of the lane. At Richter in particular, lane changes are taking place, with vehicles moving to the left to turn either into the Safeway parking lot or at Richter Street. With vehicles also turning left out of the Safeway parking lot, the potential for conflict is significantly higher here than at the Ethel Street end of the lane. The point with least conflict will be where the proposed lane alignment meets with Lawrence Avenue, as the peak hour two-way flow there is less than 300 vehicles, leaving many sizeable gaps in the traffic stream for vehicles to enter.

While the upgrading plan for Richter Street will include a short median island to eliminate left turns into or out of the lane at Richter Street, motorists' exposure to potential crashes will still be greater if they are intending to travel east on Harvey Avenue and have to exit via Richter Street. They will then likely turn right from Richter into Bernard, right again at Ethel, and on through Lawrence. The total recorded crashes at the three intersections was 101, compared with just 13 if they are able to use a lane feeding onto Ethel or Lawrence. Crash risk is therefore significantly reduced by retaining an access at the east end of the lane.

Transportation Division's position is that an access onto either Ethel Street or Lawrence Avenue provides a safer alternative for motorists heading eastwards than requiring all movements into and out of the lane to take place at Richter Street. It should also be noted that the 90 degree bend in the lane to relocate the exit to Lawrence Avenue would ensure that vehicle speeds within the park will be low.

Andrew Gibbs
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Harry Thompson
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