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**CITY OF KELOWNA**

**MEMORANDUM**

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**Date:** February 22, 2006  
**File No.:** 5480-08

**To:** City Manager

**From:** Chair of Kelowna Parking Committee

**Subject:** **Free Veterans Parking Request– Recommendation from Parking Committee**

Report prepared by Jerry Dombowsky, Transportation Demand Supervisor

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Council extend the “Free Parking for Veterans” program through to May 31, 2006;

AND THAT the program be discontinued from that point forward.

**BACKGROUND:**

In May of 2005, City Council offered free downtown on-street parking to Veterans to coincide with the Government of Canada declaring 2005 the Year of the Veteran, intended to honour, celebrate, remember and thank all those who served Canada in times of war, military conflict and peace. Free on-street parking for veterans was later extended to March 31, 2006 due to the late introduction date. All posted time limits (1 or 2 hour) were still in effect to encourage parking turnover and facilitate convenient customer access to downtown businesses.

Eligibility for free parking privileges was defined by those having met the criteria to obtain a Veterans license plate. This generally includes those who have been honorably discharged from service in a war, those meeting the National Defense Classification Requirements, or those who have served in UN or NATO operations (see attached application form).

Beginning in late 2005, a number of requests were received, asking for free parking to be extended indefinitely for Veterans.

Due to the number of requests received each year - all from worthy groups e.g., volunteer organizations, sporting groups, non-profit special events, etc. deciding who to favour with free parking is problematic as every request cannot be accommodated without a significant impact upon revenues.

Staff research determined that most centres that participated in free Veteran parking have not extended it past the Year of the Veteran (2005). This includes Victoria, Ottawa, Vancouver, Toronto, Calgary, Lethbridge, Penticton and Trail. Some smaller centres have extended the free parking for 2006 (Vernon, Kamloops and Whitehorse).

Discussion at the Kelowna Parking Committee meeting centered around the issues of equity, consistency, revenue impacts, and ensuring stall turnover for convenient customer access. The final recommendation adopted by the Parking Committee at the February 17, 2006 meeting was to extend the Free Veterans Parking program through to the end of May 2006, in order to grant Veterans one complete year of free parking, and to discontinue the program from that point forward.

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Colin Day  
Chair, Kelowna Parking Committee

cc Director of Finance