

REPORT TO COUNCIL



Date: July 17, 2012
File: 1340-51
To: City Manager
From: General Manager, Community Sustainability and Director, Regional Services
Subject: Bernard Avenue Revitalization; Parking Management during Construction

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the Report from the General Manager, Community Sustainability and Director, Regional Services dated July 18, 2012 concerning parking management during the course of the Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project;

AND THAT Council directs staff not pursue "free" on-street parking during the course of the Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project.

Purpose:

To provide Council with information on the management of parking during the Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project, and to respond to a Council Resolution regarding on-street parking, as well as to confirm direction on the external Communication Plan with regard to the Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project; and

To address the COUNCIL RESOLUTION FROM THE OCTOBER 17, 2011 P.M. REGULAR MEETING:

THAT Council directs staff to consider the options, and implications, of "free" on-street parking in the downtown area during the construction phase of the Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project and report back to Council;

AND THAT Council directs staff to develop a parking plan for the construction workers and the staff of the Bernard Avenue merchants during the construction phase of the Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project and report back to Council. (SR #230498); and

To address COUNCIL DIRECTION FROM THE JUNE 24, 2012 AM REGULAR MEETING:

That the Acting City Manager investigate whether or not staff are considering "wayfinding signage" for the downtown area and report back to Council. (SR #230341 AND SR #230190); and as well

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To provide information with regard to the City response to the letter to Kelowna Mayor and Council dated May 10, 2012, from the Downtown Kelowna Association (attached).

Background:

The Downtown Kelowna Association (DKA), as well as individual merchants, have expressed concerns with regard to the potential disruption to business caused by the reconstruction of Bernard Avenue. Staff were equally concerned that business be impacted as minimally as possible throughout the course of the construction.

By letter dated May 10, 2012, the DKA requested the following (summarized):

1. Provide free parking downtown during the construction time period.
2. Downtown Kelowna Signage - install parking wayfinding signage
3. Implement an alternative truck route - remove truck traffic off of Ellis Street.
4. Kerry Park Redesign - realize the opportunity to reconstruct Kerry Park concurrent with the Bernard Avenue reconstruction.
5. Redevelop Anchor Park as a true 'Welcome to Downtown'.

Discussion:

In order to address the issues referenced in the Purpose / Background portion of this report, staff has structured the response as follows:

- A. What are the implications of the Bernard reconstruction on parking?
- B. What are the options and implications of "free" on-street parking during reconstruction?
- C. What is the parking plan for construction workers and staff during reconstruction?
- D. What response has been provided to the Downtown Kelowna Association letter?
- E. What is the Communications Plan for the downtown during the Bernard Avenue reconstruction?

A. What are the Implications of the Bernard Reconstruction on parking?

The Design & Construction Department have established a Construction Staging Plan for the Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project as follows:

- Stage 1 - between Ellis Street and Richter Street between late August and December, 2012;
- Stage 2 - between Abbott Street and Pandosy Street between March and July 2013; and
- Stage 3 - between Pandosy Street and Ellis Street between September and December, 2013.

In order to assess the availability of alternate short-term (customer) parking in the area of Bernard Avenue, City staff completed parking inventories and occupancy surveys. Existing short-

term parking was looked at within a distance of 300 m (one City block) of the construction zones. Parking occupancy surveys of on-street metered parking were completed during the summer of 2011, peak season (July), for both week day as well as weekend (Saturday) conditions. The summer week day condition was used as a basis to estimate expected parking availability during construction as it was the worst case (highest usage) scenario. Actual construction will take place during spring and fall periods so staff is of the opinion this would be a conservative estimate.

The following is a summary of the outcome of our assessment of total short-term parking availability nearby to Bernard Avenue during each of the stages of construction. The vacant on-street and off-street stall estimates were found within the 300 m radius from the construction zone.

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. Stage 1; Ellis Street to Richter Street | |
| a. Estimated on-street parking displaced | 91 stalls |
| b. Alternate (vacant) parking available | 135 stalls |
| c. Supply less/demand | 148% surplus |
| 2. Stage 2; Abbott Street to Pandosy Street | |
| a. Estimated on-street parking displaced | 69 stalls |
| b. Alternate (vacant) parking available | 144 stalls |
| c. Supply less/demand | 200% surplus |
| 3. Stage 3; Pandosy Street to St Paul Street | |
| a. Estimated on-street parking displaced | 50 stalls |
| b. Alternate (vacant) parking available | 95 stalls |
| c. Supply less/demand | 180% surplus |

While the results of the staff analysis indicates that it is not necessary to provide new parking facilities in the Bernard Avenue area during construction, it will be important to continue to provide enforcement of time limit restrictions on parking. If this is not done, longer-term parkers, (ie. employees), could displace the short-term on-street parking expected to be available for customers.

Off-street short-term parking availability was assessed based on City and privately operated facilities. The spring of 2012 occupancy of these facilities was used as this is expected to be a reasonable representation of actual construction period occupancy. As a part of the strategy to reduce the impact from construction, both the City and the private operator, (Impark), will limit long-term parking usage of facilities within 300 m of Bernard Avenue in favour of short-term parking.

To further accommodate short-term parking during construction, the lower level, (Lawrence Avenue side), of the Chapman Parkade will be designated for short-term parking only. Short-term parking will also be allowed on other levels of the Parkade, but long-term parking will be restricted to the second floor and above. The time limit for customer parking on the ground level in both the Chapman and Library Parkades will be set at four (4) hours to allow for extended customer use.

Provision of longer term parking for merchant/business staff parking is not expected to be impacted by construction. This parking is currently available within public or private off-street

facilities. Those facilities are not impacted by the Bernard Avenue Project and should remain available to this group during construction.

B. Options and Implications of “Free” On-Street Parking during Bernard Avenue Reconstruction

Directly charging for parking has significant economic and environmental benefits for businesses. The simple act of charging for parking causes desired turnover and allows more customers greater access to sought-after storefront parking stalls. This encourages staff and long-term users to utilize off-street parking stalls or transit, while providing greater accessibility to business customers. When parking is left to time restrictions alone, it has been proven that turnover significantly decreases.

The Victoria Transport Policy Institute has provided a concise overview of the benefits of directly charging for parking and the issues facing British Columbia municipalities:

Parking is never really free; the choice is really between paying directly or indirectly for parking facilities (for example, Orchard Park tenants pay for their otherwise “free” parking for their customers through higher rents). Under-pricing increases demand and the amount of parking needed to meet demand, and tends to increase problems such as traffic congestion, housing in-affordability, sprawl and pollution.

Charging users directly for parking tends to be more efficient and equitable, and generates revenues that can finance new services or reduce taxes and rents. Potential benefits include:

- Increased turnover of the most convenient spaces. This increases consumer convenience, facilitates deliveries, and reduces cruising for parking (searching for an unoccupied space).
- Reduces the number of spaces needed to meet demand, reducing total parking costs, and allowing more compact development.
- Encourages longer-term parkers to use less convenient spaces (such as off-street or urban fringe), and encourages travelers (particularly commuters) to use alternative modes when possible.
- Reduces total vehicle traffic and therefore problems such as traffic congestion, accidents, energy consumption and pollution emissions.
- Generating revenue. Insures that users pay their share of municipal road and parking costs.

Source: Victoria Transport Policy Institute (2011). How More Efficient Parking Pricing Can Help Solve Parking and Traffic Problems, Increase Revenue, and Achieve Other Planning Objectives.

Staff has assessed the provision of “free” on-street parking during the period of the Bernard Avenue Revitalization, and has determined the following significant impacts:

- a) “Free” on-street parking would need to be effective from September 2012 through winter 2013, as staff would not recommend turning off and on the meters as it would confuse

and frustrate those visiting downtown (even though the construction impacts will effectively be limited to the spring and fall seasons).

- b) A contract amendment would be required with Impark that would result in compensation owing to them by the City causing the potential for staff reductions by Impark.
- c) There would be a substantial impact to revenue that currently services debt, operational commitments and infrastructure renewal.
- d) There would be service contract issues with other related service providers.
- e) There would be a loss of contribution to general taxation from parking revenues.

Meters, even with their minimal hourly cost, do promote turnover usage of the on-street parking supply which ultimately better serves customers (and by extension, the merchants). Our parking meters have significant deferred maintenance and are at the end of their service life while our off-street lots also have ongoing improvement needs. Staff are therefore of the opinion that continuing to charge for on-street parking will contribute to the sustainability of parking operations through infrastructure renewal and future capital investments.

Staff also assessed the impact of providing for continual “free” Saturday on-street parking and, for many of the same reasons, would not recommend the practice beyond special “Small Shop Saturday” initiatives. An extensive amount of convenient and free off-street parking is available to customers on weekends and holidays (ie. City Hall parking lot).

The following table demonstrates that Kelowna has very reasonable downtown parking rates relative to other Canadian cities.

MARKET	DAILY PARKING RATE (CAD)				HOURLY PARKING RATE (CAD)		
	HIGH	LOW	MEDIAN	% CHANGE FROM 2010	HIGH	LOW	MEDIAN
Calgary, AB	35.00	11.00	25.00	13.6	10.00	3.00	7.00
Edmonton, AB	30.00	8.00	18.00	28.6	5.00	3.00	5.00
Halifax, NS	20.00	10.00	14.00	-12.5	4.00	2.00	3.00
Kitchener-Waterloo, ON	18.00	10.00	12.00	20.0	3.00	2.00	2.75
Montreal, QC	20.00	15.00	18.00	5.9	10.50	6.00	9.00
Ottawa, ON	24.00	12.00	15.00	-16.7	7.00	4.50	5.50
Regina, SK	10.00	6.00	10.00	0.0	3.00	1.00	2.00
Saskatoon, SK	12.00	8.50	9.50	0.0	3.00	2.00	2.00
Toronto, ON	38.00	14.00	23.00	0.0	21.00	4.00	9.00
Vancouver, BC	31.00	10.00	20.00	8.1	9.00	2.50	7.00
Victoria, BC	15.00	10.75	13.50	22.7	2.25	1.00	1.25
Winnipeg, MB	12.00	8.00	9.00	0.0	4.50	2.00	4.00
CANADA NATIONAL AVERAGE	22.00	10.27	15.58	5.1	6.85	2.75	4.79
City of Kelowna	4.00	3.00			0.50	0.50	

Source: Colliers International (2011). North America Central Business District Parking Rate Survey

C. What is the Parking Plan for construction workers and staff during construction?

The Design & Construction Department is overseeing the Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project. They have incorporated clauses within the construction contract documents that require the contractor and sub-contractor workforces/staff to avoid using on-street parking within three blocks of the construction site.

The City-owned property at the north-west corner of Richter Street and Clement Avenue (proposed Protective Services site), is being made available to the contractor for staff parking as well as construction equipment, materials storage and staging area.

An umbrella to all of these measures is our Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategy and OCP that promotes cyclist, pedestrian, and transit ridership over the vehicle.

D. Response to the Downtown Kelowna Association Letter dated May 10, 2012.

The GM of Community Sustainability attended the May 16th, 2012 Board Meeting of the DKA and addressed the matters directly. A summary of the response follows:

1. **Provide free parking downtown during the construction time period** - this report provides the rationale for which staff do not recommend that “free” on-street parking be provided during construction.
2. **Downtown Kelowna Signage** - install parking wayfinding signage. First, City staff is in the process of securing shorter term wayfinding signage for the construction period. A provision in the Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project contract will allow for short term signage to be installed by the contractor. Second, Staff is also aware of the DKA’s desire to capture tourists on Highway #97 that may otherwise not be aware that Kelowna’s downtown is in such close proximity to their travel. Staff are working on permanent wayfinding signage for the Highway that will direct traffic towards the downtown core, as well as signage throughout the downtown area that will direct visitors to the parking areas. Approval by the Ministry of Transportation for the Highway signage will be required. Third, Staff is preparing technical guidelines, sign templates, a signage plan, and coordinating the production and installation of permanent wayfinding signage to major parkades and off-street parking lots off of key circulation routes in the downtown area. Ultimately, an integrated system of signs will provide parking location, direction, distance, availability, hours of operation, fee structures, methods of payment, ownership, and facility branding for motorists. Staff currently anticipate that this signage will be installed by early fall 2012.
3. **Implement an alternative truck route** - staff is aware of the DKA’s longstanding desire to redirect truck traffic off of Ellis Street in order to promote the further pedestrianization and private investment along Ellis Street. Following consultation with impacted industries (primarily Tolko and Kelowna Ready Mix), staff will be reporting back to Council in the fall of 2012 (SR #179239 & SR #212051).
4. **Kerry Park Redesign** - consistent with the Downtown Plan, Staff agrees that the Kerry Park redesign is a priority. Staff is collaboratively working with stakeholders, including the DKA, to redesign Kerry Park (SR #221919 re the Downtown Plan). While concurrent construction of Kerry Park with the Bernard Revitalization Project would be ideal, it may not be financially achievable given other priorities, including the development of Stuart Park II following the Yacht Club demolition and reconstruction of a new Yacht Club on the existing Seniors Centre site. Staff will be reporting to Council in the fall with regard to a Draft 10 Year Capital Program as well as the Draft 2013 Capital Program.

5. A true Welcome to Downtown Kelowna - beyond the design and installation of Highway wayfinding signage, Staff will consider the redesign of Anchor Park at the N.E. corner of Harvey Avenue at Ellis Street in the City's 10-year Capital Plan. Staff agrees that this site could serve as a significant symbolic gateway for the downtown.

E. What is the Communications Plan for the Downtown during Bernard Reconstruction?

The Communications Department has developed a full Communications Plan for the Project. A component of this Plan will address the following:

- Monitor parking and traffic flow management throughout the project.
- Develop enhanced business directional signage (Bernard Business Directory).
- Provide enhanced permanent parking directional signage (wayfinding signage).
- Produce an updated Downtown Parking brochure.
- Promote Google Maps applications showing parking locations.
- Manage parking demand with City TDM initiatives.
- Provide construction management signage.
- Continue regular updates through Bernard Avenue Revitalization e-subscribe.
- Provide ongoing updates through kelowna.ca/city/projects, Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project webpage.

Summary:

There are justifiable concerns from the Downtown Business Community that the City does not have a City-wide Parking Policy; instead, the focus has been on downtown. Staff understands the importance of having a Parking Policy that addresses other town centers' specific needs, including TDM goals. Staff will be undertaking a Parking Policy Review for major urban town centres and destinations and will report on the results by year end.

Internal Circulation:

Director, Design & Construction
Director, Communications
Director, Infrastructure Planning
Acting Director, Real Estate & Building Services
Parking Coordinator

External Agency/Public Comments:

Kelowna Parking and Impark were consulted for information on parking conditions in off-street facilities.

The assessment of available parking was provided to the Downtown Kelowna Association for review and comment in mid-May.

Existing Policy

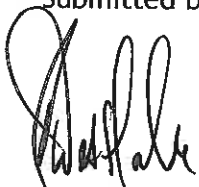
The 2030 Official Community Plan objectives and policy for parking is outlined in Chapter 7.

- Objective 7.11: Implement parking management programs that promote reduced car ownership, reduced car trips and increased use of active modes of transportation.
 - *Policy .1: Parking Cost.* Work towards a pricing structure where the cost of parking for an hour at a municipal facility (City owned parkade, off-street surface lots and on-street parking) exceeds the price of a single transit trip.
 - *Policy .2: Cash-in-Lieu Pricing.* Work towards cash-in-lieu parking programs that reflect the full costs of providing land/facilities for parking.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements
Financial/Budgetary Considerations
Personnel Implications
Alternate Recommendation

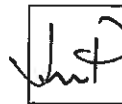
Submitted by:



Ron Westlake
Director, Regional Services

Approved for inclusion:

Jim Paterson, FCSLA, GM, Community Sustainability



DOWNTOWN KELOWNA

May 10, 2012

City of Kelowna
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4

Dear Honorable Mayor Gray and Council,

The Downtown Kelowna Association (DKA) views the Bernard Avenue project as a significant step towards the revitalization of Downtown Kelowna. It is imperative that the construction project is completed as quickly as possible and is executed in a manner which minimizes the negative impact on Downtown businesses.

With the Bernard Avenue construction phasing now set, the DKA is requesting that the City implements the following initiatives to assist Downtown businesses and the people who work and visit Downtown.

1) Free parking Downtown during the construction time period

As Downtown is one of the only areas that the City that has implemented paid parking, businesses are already at a disadvantage during the entire year. The construction will only compound the stigma that there is "no parking" Downtown. If the City would offer free on-street parking as well as free parking in all City lots, it would display a sense of good faith with the Downtown merchants.

During our Small Shop Saturday on March 31, the City granted free parking and the feedback from consumers AND business owners were VERY positive.

2) Downtown Kelowna signage

The Bernard Avenue Revitalization Project is the most important project to hit Downtown in recent memory. It is important that every effort is made to make the visitor experience a positive one.

With the number of phases and road closures scheduled for the construction it is imperative that visitors to Downtown can navigate throughout the core and find the 3,050 parking stalls in Downtown Kelowna. Signage is currently limited and unclear.

We are requesting highly visible signs indicating where parking is located as well as times the lots are open and free. The times of lot operation along with times of payment should also be displayed. The advantage to producing these kinds of signs is that they will last for the next number of years.

3) Implement an alternative truck route

As with any construction site the increased volume of heavy equipment and trucks is significant. We would request the City divert the existing commercial truck traffic to Gordon Drive during the construction phasing. By changing the truck route, Downtown Kelowna would immediately become safer for pedestrian traffic, which is in line with the outlook of the new Bernard Avenue; more pedestrian friendly.

We feel that determining an alternate truck route should be an immediate priority and completed before the start of the Bernard Avenue Revitalization.

4) Kerry Park redesign

Perhaps the two most recognizable symbols Downtown are the Sails and the Ogopogo statue resting in Kerry Park. We are thrilled there is a plan to revitalize the park, but we believe this should be completed concurrently with the Bernard Avenue Project.

It's an unbelievable opportunity for the City to fully complete and put their stamp on the Bernard Ave. As Phase 2 of the project begins and Bernard Avenue is ripped up, it would be advantageous for Kerry Park to go under the same construction umbrella to ensure the job is not done twice.

This would truly give the City a proper Grand Opening to the new Bernard Avenue when completed.

5) A true Welcome to Downtown Kelowna

We are eagerly looking forward to the redevelopment of Anchor Park at the corner of Ellis Street and Harvey Avenue to give visitors a proper welcome when entering Downtown Kelowna.

In the short term and prior to the Bernard Avenue construction, we are requesting the implementation of highly visible signage on Harvey Avenue. As visitors exit the William R. Bennett Bridge from West Kelowna a sign stating "Downtown Kelowna next 3 left turns" and just before Richter Avenue a sign stating "Downtown Kelowna next 6 right turns" This will give people a clear understanding they are entering the Downtown boundaries.

We believe this will increase traffic flow and the visibility of Downtown Kelowna and will be critical informing the public, Downtown is still open for business during the revitalization.

The Downtown Kelowna Association is committed to working with City Staff to implement programs that will reduce the impact of construction on the economic health of the Downtown Kelowna businesses and look forward to Council's support.

Sincerely,



Peggy Athans, Executive Director

Phone: 250.862.3515

Email: peggy@downtownkelowna.com

The Downtown Kelowna Association (DKA) is a registered not-for-profit society with a mission to ensure the Downtown Kelowna neighbourhood is a safe and desirable place to conduct business, live and work. The DKA officially became an entity in November 1989 funded through an improvement levy collected by the municipality from commercial properties in the area. The annual levy becomes the Association's base operating budget upon which the organization leverages additional funding from partners, including various levels of governments and corporate sponsors, to support programs and initiatives.

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downtownkelowna.com