

# Report to Council



**Date:** November 14, 2012  
**File:** 1350-90  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Engineering Traffic Technician, Transportation & Mobility  
**Subject:** Ellis Street Truck Route (SR 179239, SR 221892, SR 237667 & SR 212051)

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Engineering Traffic Technician, Transportation & Mobility dated November 14, 2012 regarding the Ellis Street Truck Route.

AND THAT Council directs staff to continue discussions with BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) staff regarding potential upgrades to the intersection of Harvey Avenue (Highway 97) and Gordon Drive to accommodate a potential truck route closure of Ellis Street to heavy truck traffic effective Fall 2013.

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs staff to seek input from all affected businesses, residents, and stakeholders of the potential Ellis Street truck route closure and report back to Council on input received with a final recommendation.

## **Purpose:**

SR 179239 COUNCIL RESOLUTION FROM THE SEPTEMBER 20, 2010 P.M. REGULAR MEETING:

THAT Council amends the hours of operation of the Ellis Street truck route from 24 hours to 7:00 am to 7:00 pm; AND THAT Council directs staff to request that truck route locations be part of residential sales disclosures and that staff forward a link of the City's truck route map to the Real Estate Board of British Columbia and request that they forward that link to the local realtors; AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to Council within one (1) year's time with respect to the implications of the change to the Ellis Street truck route.

SR 212051 - COUNCIL DIRECTION FROM THE NOVEMBER 7, 2011 A.M. REGULAR MEETING:

THAT the City Manager report back to Council with respect to the Ellis Street Truck Route.

SR 221892 - COUNCIL RESOLUTION - February 27, 2012 P.M. Regular Meeting:

THAT Council endorse the vision, goals, strategy, policies and monitoring system contained in the Downtown Plan (Appendix 1);

AND THAT Council receive the action plan (pages 22 to 35) contained in the Downtown Plan (Appendix 1) as input into future deliberation regarding downtown implementation initiatives and investments.

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This Action Plan initiative is for future consideration:

1. Remove truck traffic from Ellis Street (pg 22-23).
  - a) Gather public and stakeholder feedback received on the Ellis/Gordon truck route arrangement.
  - b) Assemble information on truck trip counts.
  - c) Bring report to Council with information on the impacts of the current arrangements, the feedback received, and the impacts that would be associated with removing truck traffic from Ellis Street.
  - d) Should Council direct that Ellis Street remain as a truck route, revisit the issue should Tolko in the future no longer be attracting logging trucks.

[Link](#) to Downtown Plan.

SR 237667 - COUNCIL RESOLUTION FROM THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2012 AM REGULAR MEETING:  
THAT Council directs staff to bring forward a Report to Council outlining the Ellis Street truck route's history, the next logical steps and the impacts and implications of relocating the truck route permanently to Gordon Drive.

**Background:**

Ellis Street performs an important function in the City's truck route network providing truck access and egress from the north-end industrial area to the W.R. Bennett Bridge. The Ellis Street intersection with Highway 97 was designed to accommodate truck traffic.

In September 2010, Council amended the hours of operation of the Ellis Street truck route from 24 hours to 7:00 am to 7:00 pm based on information obtained from the Ellis Street Truck Route Study completed by Boulevard Transportation Group. Council has asked staff for an update of the resulting impact on the Ellis Street truck route operations with the intent of permanently closing Ellis Street to heavy truck traffic. Recent data collection shows a daily average of 400 heavy trucks on Ellis Street over the 12 hour operating period. There have been only seven public service requests notifying the City that heavy truck traffic on Ellis Street was operating outside of the reduced operating hours. The RCMP indicated that over the past year fewer than 10 tickets were given for infractions. The City of Kelowna Bylaw department also stated that fewer than 10 tickets were given for infractions.

It is understood that as the downtown develops and the residential population and pedestrian traffic increases along this corridor, the truck route will conflict with the changing urban land use in this part of the downtown.

In February 2012, City Council endorsed the Downtown Plan. The plan focuses on making downtown Kelowna unique, thriving, prosperous and livable. Some of the priorities outlined in the Action Plan include making downtown more pedestrian friendly, increasing activity downtown and increasing the number of residents in a compact, livable, mixed use urban setting. The desire to remove trucks from Ellis Street was noted by many participants of the Downtown urban design charrette held in the summer of 2011. The Action Plan recommends achievement of focal priorities in part through removal of truck traffic from Ellis Street.

Since 2010, City staff has received numerous requests to eliminate heavy truck traffic from Ellis Street. Staff has considered numerous possible compromise solutions to moderate this conflicting land use including time-of-day or day-of-week restrictions, reduced speed limits

and/or noise abatement requirements for the construction of all residential units facing Ellis Street. An online petition has been started, by the public, and to the date of this memo, has over 360 signatures. See the petition at the following [link](#).

Planning to remove heavy truck traffic from Ellis Street must consider:

- where the displaced trucks will go;
- the resulting impacts on other roadways, intersections and neighbourhoods;
- the impact on businesses using Ellis Street as a truck route;
- the impact on Highway 97.

#### Safe Alternatives

Closing Ellis Street as a truck route would leave Gordon and Spall Roads as alternatives for trucks destined for the industrial North End of downtown. Gordon Drive is a 24-hour truck route.

Currently there is no advanced traffic signal for the eastbound to northbound left turn at the Harvey Avenue/Gordon Drive intersection. With the high volumes along Harvey Avenue / Highway 97, safe movements for larger, fully laden and slow moving vehicles need to be provided. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) are prepared to consider adding a protected/permissive northbound left turn to Gordon Drive subject to analysis being done to determine the necessary left turn storage on Highway 97 eastbound and the impact of a left turn arrow on the capacity of this intersection. This will be evaluated by MoTI and the City over the winter.

#### Alternate Route Impact

Collected data notes that heavy truck volumes and overall traffic volume along Gordon Drive decreased from 2007 to 2010 between 7pm and 7am. This was before the partial closure of Ellis Street to truck traffic. In 2007, the average traffic volume during that time was 3,050 vehicles with 245 heavy trucks (8% heavy trucks). The average traffic volume in 2010 was 1,900 vehicles with 145 heavy trucks (7.6% heavy trucks). The reduction can be partly explained by the completion of Clement Avenue from Spall Road to Glenmore Drive in late 2007. Overall, the heavy truck traffic volume has decreased on Gordon Drive over the past five years, as shown in the table below. The table reflects traffic volumes on Gordon Drive during the current Ellis Street operating hours. More importantly, it shows the truck traffic during the two times in 2010 and 2012 when Ellis Street was closed for construction and all truck traffic was diverted to alternative routes. Despite the closure of Ellis, truck traffic has continued to decrease, but this may be in part a reflection of reduced economic activity.

#### **DAILY VOLUMES 7 AM - 7 PM**

Comparison 7 am - 7 pm			
	2007	2010	2012
TOTAL VEHICLES	11600	7225	9510
HEAVY TRUCKS	2190	1215*	770*

\*Captured during the Ellis Street closure for construction in May 2010 & September 2012.

#### North End Business Impact

Some businesses in the City's North End are concerned about the additional cost of the extra travel time for vehicles traveling to/from the west on the WR Bennett Bridge. As noted in the June 2009 Ellis Street Truck Route Study by Boulevard Transportation Group, re-routing truck traffic to Gordon Drive would add approximately five minutes of travel time which equates to an added \$3.91 in operating costs per truck per direction. Based on the current truck traffic

volumes, this amount is estimated to be approximately \$600,000 per year, distributed across the north-end businesses.

#### Preliminary Conclusions

Closure of Ellis Street to heavy truck traffic will help achieve the goals of the Downtown Plan with negligible impacts on the remaining truck route infrastructure. The next steps proposed, pending Council support, are:

- Send a formal request from the City to MoTI to install an advanced north-bound left turn arrow at Highway 97 and Gordon Drive;
- Implement a communication plan with north end industrial area businesses to identify possible impacts, to consider route design mitigations and to provide them sufficient time to make changes to their operations;
- Implement a communication plan with residents along the affected segment of Gordon Drive to identify possible impacts and to consider route design mitigations;
- Remove Ellis Street from the Truck Route Map in Traffic Bylaw 8120 in the Fall of 2013 to coincide with the next closure of Ellis Street in conjunction with the Bernard Avenue revitalization project.

#### **Internal Circulation:**

A/General Manager, Community Sustainability  
General Manager, Community Services  
Director, Civic Operations  
Director, Regional Services  
Director, Policy & Planning  
Director, Communications  
Manager, Transportation Services  
City Clerk, Corporate Services  
Roadways Projects Manager, Regional Services  
Planner Specialist, Infrastructure Planning  
Traffic Supervisor, Transportation Services  
Traffic Technician, Transportation Services  
Senior Communications Consultant, Communications  
RCMP

#### **Existing Policy:**

Following closure, the truck route map would be updated to remove Ellis Street and Ellis Street would be subject to the following:

#### Consolidated Traffic Bylaw 8120; Part 5 - Highway Use Regulations

5.1.12 **Weight Restrictions.** Unless otherwise posted with **traffic control devices** indicating a truck route, no person shall operate a **truck or a commercial vehicle** with a **gross vehicle weight** in excess of 13,700 kg. on a **roadway** except:

- (a) while such **truck or commercial vehicle** is making a collection or delivery of goods or materials, provided that the operator proceeds by the most direct route from the point of collection or delivery, to or from the nearest truck route;
- (b) while such **truck or commercial vehicle** is proceeding to or from the business premises of the **truck or commercial vehicle**, provided that the operator proceeds to or from the business premises by the most direct route to or from the nearest truck route;

- (c) while such **truck or commercial vehicle** is proceeding to or from a garage for the purpose of repairs or servicing provided that the operator proceeds to or from the garage by the most direct route to or from the nearest truck route;
- (d) municipal or utility **vehicles** while engaged in work upon such **roadways** provided that the operator proceeds to or from the work site by the most direct route;
- (e) while such **truck or commercial vehicle** is being operated in the service of the **City** while engaged in work upon such **roadways** provided that the operator proceeds to or from the work site by the most direct route;

This subsection does not apply to transit buses or school buses while engaged in the pick-up or drop-off of passengers.

- 6.1.2 **Format of Traffic Orders.** Traffic Orders shall be issued in written form, dated and signed by the **Engineer** and may include any number of orders pursuant to this Part.

Refer to the [Truck Route Map](#)

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:**

Implementation costs include:

- adding a protected/permissive northbound left turn to Gordon Drive for east-bound Highway 97 traffic;
- potential lengthening of the eastbound to northbound left turn bay;
- implementing a communication plan to notify affected business owners, residents and stakeholders.

The communication plans can be implemented with existing budgets. Estimated construction costs will be provided after consultations with MoTI and stakeholders and provided with the final recommendations in the Spring of 2013.

**Personnel Implications:**

Since the 2010 partial closure of Ellis Street, staff has received and responded to 46 Service Requests to close Ellis Street to heavy trucks. If Ellis remained a truck route, this would likely increase as the area becomes more densely populated.

**External Agency/Public Comments:**

To date, 366 people have supported the online petition for the Ellis Street truck route closure and 174 individual emails to Mayor and Council have been sent requesting the Ellis Street truck route closure.

The Downtown Kelowna Association (DKA) have advocated for the City to close Ellis Street to heavy trucks as part of the Downtown Plan.

Four companies with high volumes of truck traffic from the City's industrial north end have been contacted in 2012: OK Ready-Mix (August), Kelowna Ready-Mix (October), Tolko Industries (August) and Diamond Delivery (September). For some, alternative routes are already being used. There were some concerns, however, about improving the Gordon/Hwy 97 intersection and the added costs and time of travel. For instance, Tolko stated that

rerouting the traffic would have a business impact during peak months (July-March) affecting up to 50 trucks per day.

**Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:**

- Signs would be posted at relevant locations to indicate the change in the hours of operation.
- A traffic order would be signed by the Traffic Supervisor to notify the RCMP and City Bylaw regarding the change in operation.

**Communications Comments:**

The City will:


- notify all businesses in the industrial north end and residents on Gordon Drive of the potential removal of the truck route;
- advertise by Public Notice to invite comments within a specified time frame;
- summarize the input for consideration in the recommendations to Council.

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

Alternate Recommendation:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Submitted by:



B. Oliveira, Engineering Traffic Technician, Transportation & Mobility

Approved for inclusion:



R. Cleveland, Director, Infrastructure Planning

cc: A/General Manager, Community Sustainability  
General Manager, Community Services  
Director, Civic Operations  
Director, Communications  
Director, Regional Services  
Director, Policy & Planning  
Director, Corporate Services



City of  
**Kelowna**

# ELLIS STREET TRUCK ROUTE





**Industrial  
North End**

**Ellis Street**

**Gordon Dr.**



## NEXT STEPS

- ▶ Negotiate Intersection with MoTI
- ▶ Implement Communication Plan
  - ▶ North End Businesses
  - ▶ Gordon Drive Residents
- ▶ Final Recommendations to Council