



Corporate NO: R263

Report COUNCIL DATE: December 11, 2000

REGULAR COUNCIL			
TO:	Mayor & Council	DATE:	December 8, 2000
FROM:	General Manager, Engineering	FILE:	2152-08400
SUBJECT:	84 Avenue: King George Highway to 140 Street		

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the planned extension of 84 Avenue between King George Highway and 140 Street.

INTENT

To apprise Council of the rationale for the future construction of 84 Avenue, preliminary design work and public consultation undertaken to date, and to receive Council's endorsement of the future construction.

BACKGROUND

The Engineering Department has worked to plan and construct a grid network of roads to ensure the mobility and continued economic viability of the City. As part of this effort the R-91 Arterial, Major Collector, and Grid Roads Plan was established in 1989. As part of the original R-91 plan, 84 Avenue from Fraser Highway to Scott Road (120 Street) was shown to be an arterial road with unopened sections, including the portion at the south boundary of Bear Creek Park, designated as future arterial roadway.

84 Avenue is the only viable alternate corridor to provide additional east/west capacity between 72 Avenue and 88 Avenue. 84 Avenue is the only viable alternate corridor to provide additional east/west capacity between 72 Avenue and 88 Avenue (64 Avenue, although a continuous east/west corridor, is too far south to serve the travel demand generated by the Fleetwood/Guildford and Newton Industrial areas). Other potential alternatives that have been evaluated include:

- 72 Avenue widening and extension east of 152 Street

- 80 Avenue extension east of King George Highway
- 88 Avenue corridor widening
- 96 Avenue corridor widening

72 Avenue is not deemed to be a viable option due to the significant impact on the Agricultural Land Reserve for the extension to 168 Street as well as the cost to acquire property through Newton to widen the road to six-lane cross-section. 80 Avenue is not a viable option due to topographical constraints and due to the more extensive lack of network continuity – the road does not exist between 140 Street and 152 Street. In addition to the topographical constraints, there would be a significant environmental impact on Bear Creek and its tributaries. The 88 Avenue corridor currently is carrying a volume in excess of 35,000 vehicles per day and in order to accommodate additional traffic, additional lanes would be required. The capital cost to acquire the land would be very significant (at least one row of residential properties on one side of the existing road) and the environmental impact on Bear Creek Park and Bear Creek would be substantial. The 96 Avenue corridor is not a viable alternative in that it does not provide the direct connection to the Newton Industrial area and significant widening of this road would impact Green Timbers Urban Forest.

Providing another east/west link will allow for better circulation of local traffic and will alleviate congestion on other east/west links such as 72 Avenue, 80 Avenue and 88 Avenue. 88 Avenue is the designated truck route and will remain so. 84 Avenue is not currently a truck route and is not proposed to become a truck route following the future extension.

Staff made a presentation to Council on July 25, 2000 that outlined the design work completed to date on the 84 Avenue project. At that meeting Council directed staff to evaluate other alignment options, consult with the Parks, Recreation & Culture Commission and to consult with the public regarding the project.

Three options by which to solicit community input were evaluated: Open House, Meet with Community Association, and Public Opinion Survey. The first two options, the Open House and meeting with the Community Association, were rejected because based on prior experience, it was felt that only special interest groups would take the time to appear at either venue. It was determined that, in order to obtain a true, unbiased public opinion of the project, a telephone survey, conducted by an independent polling company, would be the most appropriate option. This survey was completed in September of 2000 and the results of the public opinion survey were presented to Council via a memo on October 18, 2000 (please see Attachment C).

Staff presented the results of the corridor study and the preliminary design study to the Parks, Recreation & Culture Commission on September 6, 2000. Subsequent to that meeting, the Commission elected to hold a public meeting on the project to ascertain the public's perception of the impact of the road on the park. This public meeting was held at Bear Creek Community Church on November 15, 2000. Approximately 185 persons attended the meeting.

Staff presented the results of the corridor study and the preliminary design study to the Environmental Advisory Committee on October 19, 2000. The chair of the EAC submitted a memo to Mayor and Council (please see Attachment B) requesting that, if the road is constructed, that particular attention be paid to the old municipal landfill to ensure that no additional leachate be introduced to the highly sensitive creek systems.

DISCUSSION

The proposed extension of 84 Avenue between King George Highway and 140 Street has generated a limited amount of controversy and has received a significant quantity of media coverage. Historically, the Engineering Department has not undertaken any public consultation or involved Council in the planning and preliminary

design of roads, particularly roads that are shown on the Arterial, Major Collector and Grid Roads Plan (R91) which is adopted by Council. 84 Avenue is acknowledged to be a special case due to its proximity to Bear Creek Park.

The public opinion survey undertaken by the Engineering Department indicated a strong level of support for the extension of 84 Avenue – 67% of the respondents indicated unqualified support for the project and a full 80% of the respondents indicated support for the project, provided that there are no major environmental impacts. The public, via the survey, has acknowledged the need for additional east/west road capacity and they have recognized that the extension of 84 Avenue will have a net positive effect on mobility.

The public meeting held by the Parks, Recreation & Culture Commission was widely advertised and the issue has been extensively covered in the local media. A total of about 185 persons, representing 123 households, attended the meeting. Based on the input received at the meeting, it can be said that over 90% of the attendees were opposed to the extension of 84 Avenue. Subsequent to the meeting, the Engineering Department geocoded the addresses of the attendees (please See Attachment D) using the sign-in sheets. The results of the geocoding clearly show that 59% of the households represented at the meeting either live on 84 Avenue or within one block of 84 Avenue. Prior to the public meeting, the majority of the comments received from residents living along 84 Avenue centred on traffic issues such as noise, speed, volume and possible use by trucks with little or no mention of the impact on the park. It would appear that this same group of people was well represented at the Commission's public meeting.

Subsequent to the public opinion survey and the Parks, Recreation & Culture Commission public meeting, staff have received a number of letters and telephone calls from area residents. The majority of the responses have been against the proposed extension.

One of the principal issues that has been raised is that of elementary school catchment boundaries crossing 84 Avenue. Based on discussions with the School District, it is understood that upon the completion of additional pedestrian infrastructure, the catchment boundaries will be adjusted so that 84 Avenue will form the boundary for almost all of the affected schools. For those schools whose catchment will still cross 84 Avenue, the Engineering Department has installed pedestrian activated traffic signals.

The Engineering Department and the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department have been working and will continue to work together to achieve the best possible design for 84 Avenue that incorporates the needs of all of the stakeholders. As an example, the path system has been designed and constructed with the future extension of 84 Avenue in mind. The design of 84 Avenue will allow for the construction of a grade separated pedestrian crossing to provide a high quality connection between the land owned by the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department south of the 84 Avenue alignment and Bear Creek Park.

Based on current information, the Engineering Department is not proposing to construct the 84 Avenue extension within the next two to three years. When funding becomes available and current, more urgent priorities have been addressed, the project will be added to the construction program for Council's review and consideration. At that time the Engineering Department will also put forward its recommendation regarding the public consultation program to accompany the design phase of the project.

CONCLUSIONS

The Engineering Department has completed the preliminary design of 84 Avenue along the southern border of Bear Creek Park. This design effort is predicated on current levels of congestion, and an increase in demand for east/west traffic capacity due to overall residential and commercial/industrial growth. The intersection of 88 Avenue and King George Highway is currently operating beyond capacity during the peak period and it is

anticipated that an alternate route will be required. 84 Avenue is the only viable east/west route between 72 Avenue and 88 Avenue. Despite, what appears to be, a vocal minority of residents who oppose the project, a full 80% of residents support the project provided that there are no major environmental impacts and 67% of residents have unqualified support for the project. Consequently, the Engineering Department recommends that Council endorse the planned extension of 84 Avenue between King George Highway and 140 Street. It is not anticipated that this link would be brought forward for Council's consideration for future construction until 2002 at the earliest.

Jorgen Johansen, P. Eng.

General Manager, Engineering

Attachments

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