

## **REPORT**

### *Engineering Services*

**To:** Mayor Côté and Members of Council      **Date:** 4/8/2019

**From:** Jim Lowrie  
Director of Engineering Services      **File:** 09.1860.50.05  
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**Item #:** 146/2019

**Subject:** **Victoria Hill Parking Study**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** Council direct staff to update on-street signage in the Victoria Hill neighbourhood, and provide information to support strata councils and property managers, to encourage visitors to Victoria Hill to park in on-site visitor parking possible;

**THAT** Council direct staff to work with car share service providers to increase the availability and awareness of car share in the neighbourhood by providing designated car share parking stalls on-street, and seek permission from the Fraser Health Authority to add designated car share spaces in the parking lot at the Queen's Park Care Centre;

**THAT** Council direct staff to request that TransLink increase bus service in the neighbourhood to address existing and future demand for transit;

**THAT** Council direct staff to extend on-street parking restriction times to 9pm;

**THAT** Council direct staff to conclude the technical analysis and public engagement with an information update to the neighbourhood.

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of the technical analysis and public engagement undertaken in 2018 in response to questions from residents of Victoria

Hill with respect to ongoing complaints about on-street parking in the neighbourhood, and to present staff recommendations to manage on-street parking in Victoria Hill.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2002, Council adopted Official Community Plan Designation Amendment Bylaw No. 6747, 2002 and Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 6748, 2002 to allow the former Woodlands property to be redeveloped into a planned residential community. The various research, planning studies and public consultation results were then amalgamated into the Woodlands Rezoning Summary Report, which formed the basis for the Woodlands Design Guidelines. The Design Guidelines adopted an internal roadway network comprising narrower than standard streets, with pavement widths of 6.4 to 7.4 metres. This resulted in limited space for on-street parking, and the need to provide on-street parking through creation of 2.2 metre wide lay-by parking. Lay-by parking was originally designed to occur on one side only, in select locations throughout the neighbourhood. The lay-bys were carefully located so as to work with existing heritage trees and topography. In response to the nature of development and predicted lower demand for on-site parking, subsequent phases of development were approved with relatively low on-site parking requirements; the parking ratios that were approved are more typically seen in neighbourhoods with significant supporting commercial development and/or within close proximity to SkyTrain or other frequent transit.

Since approval of the Design Guidelines, on-street parking for an additional 28 to 30 motor vehicles has been implemented by the city, including: 1. on McBride Boulevard, north of Royal Avenue (14 spaces); 2. as part of the rezoning of 295 Francis Way multiple unit residential development, the City worked with the developer to implement changes to on-street parking adjacent to 295 and 271 Francis Way (10 to 12 spaces), and; 3. upon completion of the most recent parcel, additional on-street parking space was provided (4 additional spaces).

## **EXISTING POLICY/PRACTICE**

Street and Traffic Bylaw No. 7664, 2015 regulates the use of public right of way, including on-street parking. Under Section 5 of the Bylaw, provision is made for resident parking permit zones. Some residents have requested that a resident permit parking system be implemented in Victoria Hill to manage demand for on-street parking; this type of program is generally used only where on-street parking is observed to be used by people who do not live in the neighbourhood, such as near SkyTrain stations or major commercial or institutional employers. In Victoria Hill, there are minimal external influences affecting the availability of on-street parking; the majority of parking that is currently occurring on-street is by residents. As a result, implementing a permit system would not result in an improvement to space available for visitors, and staff do not recommend that such a system be implemented.

The Master Transportation Plan does not include any policies which support construction of additional on-street parking in neighbourhoods that are experiencing parking pressures due to limited on-site parking supply.

### **ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION**

An inventory of parking supply and usage was conducted by Bunt and Associates in 2018, which replicated a study completed in 2011, confirming that occupancy rates for on-street parking are relatively high. Please refer to Attachment 1.

A public survey was undertaken in Spring 2018, seeking feedback from residents and others on their experience with parking in the neighbourhood. Please refer to Attachment 2 for the public engagement summary.

It is apparent that vehicle ownership exceeds on-site parking availability in this neighbourhood; it is not uncommon for a household to own two or more vehicles, but to not have space to park the surplus vehicle(s) on-site, opting instead to park on-street. As a result, residents are parking on-street at rates higher than is typical, and there are fewer spaces on-street for visitors to the neighbourhood. This is particularly challenging on special dates such as Thanksgiving, during which time a high number of visitors enter the neighbourhood and are unable to find space to park on-street.

In response to the technical review and survey, staff conducted a high level analysis of options to increase the supply of parking in the neighbourhood. Bunt and Associates conducted a preliminary analysis of 3 options that would be most likely to generate sufficient additional supply to address current demand. These options included:

1. Building additional lay-by parking on-street;
2. Converting Ross Dr. and Francis Way to one-way circulation and allowing parking on both sides of the street, without constructing additional lay-bys;
3. Constructing a surface parking lot on the empty lot owned by the Fraser Health Authority.

Based on recent experience with construction of lay-by parking in the neighbourhood, it is estimated that, with the removal of 35 street trees, and between 5 and 7 street lights, space to park an additional 50 to 60 motor vehicles could be provided. It is predicted that the cost to design and construct these additional spaces would be in the order of several hundred thousand dollars.

Staff also engaged Bunt and Associates to complete a preliminary assessment of converting Ross Dr. and Francis Way to one-way circulation. With conversion to one-way, the road width required for general purpose motor vehicle circulation would be significantly less, potentially providing space to allow parking on both sides of the street without the need to

construct lay-bys. However, with parking on both sides of the street, the resultant road width would be insufficient to meet BC Building Code requirements for fire apparatus, which is minimum 6m clear width. As a result, the New Westminster Fire Service expressed a significant degree of concern about converting to one-way circulation if the resultant road width were to be taken up with additional on-street parking, due to concerns that fire fighting apparatus would be impeded.

A preliminary functional design for conversion of the empty Fraser Health Authority owned vacant lot was conducted by Bunt and Associates, and is included in the Bunt and Associates technical report in Attachment 1. At a minimum, it would be necessary to grade and level the site, compact it, place gravel and other dust and mud mitigation - and potentially pave it - install more suitable fencing, wheel stops and other basic parking lot infrastructure, in addition to installing a minimum amount of lighting to ensure a safe and secure experience for people who are parking. At a minimum, to meet these basic requirements, to a standard that the City would typically require, it is predicted that conversion of the vacant lot for parking would cost several hundred thousand dollars.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Victoria Hill neighbourhood was master planned and development approved on the basis of a sustainable community, optimized for walking, cycling and transit, and with an expectation that motor vehicle use would be more closely aligned to rates observed downtown or in frequent transit areas. There are limited competing demands for on-street parking, due to limited destinations within the neighbourhood, and sufficient on-site parking is provided by Fraser Health Authority to serve the needs of people who work and visit the Queen's Park Care Home.

Provision of additional surface parking, whether on-street or in the vacant lot owned by Fraser Health Authority, would further support use of private vehicles for residents and those visiting, and would not align with the objectives of the Master Transportation plan; the financial resources required to provide additional parking would reduce resources available for sustainable transportation capital investments. Further, construction of additional on-street parking lay-bys would require removal of several dozen street trees, which would be in conflict with the City's commitment to increasing tree canopy cover.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

In order to enable staff to continue to work on projects supporting the Master Transportation Plan, consultants were hired to complete the technical analysis and public survey referenced in earlier sections of this report. To date, approximately \$50,000 has been spent on consultant fees and engagement expenses to complete the work required to prepare this report. In order to complete further analysis and public engagement, consultants would need to continue to be engaged, as staff are fully committed to other projects.

Construction of additional on-street parking, whether on-street or in the vacant lot held by FHA, would require several hundreds of thousands of dollars of investment. Sufficient capital resources are not currently available in the Capital plan to complete this work. Should Council direct staff to construct additional parking, a request for resources would be included for consideration by Council as part of the 2020 capital budget.

### **OPTIONS**

The following options are presented to Council for their consideration:

1. Update on-street signage in the Victoria Hill neighbourhood, and provide information to support strata councils and property managers, to encourage visitors to Victoria Hill to park in on-site visitor parking possible;
2. Work with car share service providers to increase the availability and awareness of car share in the neighbourhood by providing designated car share parking stalls on-street, and seek permission from the Fraser Health Authority to add designated car share spaces in the parking lot at the Queen's Park Care Centre;
3. Request that TransLink increase bus service in the neighbourhood to address existing and future demand for transit;
4. Extend on-street parking restriction times to 9pm;
5. Conclude the technical analysis and public engagement with an information update to the neighbourhood;
6. Provide different direction to staff.

Staff recommends Options 1 through 5, inclusive.

### **INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON**

Engineering Department staff worked with staff in Development Services, and received input from the New Westminster Fire Department, to complete this report.

### **CONCLUSION**

While it is appreciated that the experience of residents and visitors in Victoria Hill with respect to on-street parking is frustrating and challenging, particularly during times when a higher than normal number of visitors is experienced, the options for increasing the amount of on-street parking supply to meet expectations would require significant financial investment. A number of low cost options to better manage parking and motor vehicle use in Victoria Hill are recommended by staff, including encouraging use of available visitor parking on-site, supporting car share, improving bus service, and extending parking restriction times.

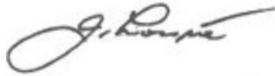
**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1- Victoria Hill Neighbourhood Parking Study, April 2019, Bunt and Associates

Attachment 2 - Victoria Hill Parking Study Engagement Summary Report, July 2018, Kirk and Co. Consulting Ltd.

This report has been prepared by:  
Lisa Leblanc, Manager of Transportation

Approved for Presentation to Council



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Jim Lowrie, Eng. L., MBA  
Director of Engineering Services



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Lisa Spitale  
Chief Administrative Officer