

Corporate Report

NO: R227

COUNCIL DATE: September 7,

2004

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: August 25,
2004

FROM: General Manager,
Engineering FILE: 7802-0358,
3804-551

SUBJECT: 68 Avenue Traffic Calming

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That 68/68A Avenue be opened to Highway 15 (176 Street) to operate as a 2-lane collector road in accordance with the original North Cloverdale West Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP).
2. That traffic calming measures be constructed on 68/68A Avenue as outlined in this report.

INTENT

The intent of this Corporate Report is to:

- provide information to Council regarding existing and potential traffic concerns on 68 Avenue that were raised at the November 17, 2003, public hearing;
- present the results of public consultation carried out in response to those concerns; and
- seek Council approval to implement traffic calming measures on 68 Avenue as per NCP Modified Option 2.

BACKGROUND

At the November 17, 2003, Public Hearing for the Parklane Homes development in North Cloverdale, Council received a petition from residents on 68 Avenue. The petition contained 101 signatures representing 68 households. The petition opposed the extension of 68 Avenue to Highway 15 (176 Street), which would be constructed as part of the development. Council directed staff to “obtain input from the community and the Developer (Parklane) to determine the means to mitigate traffic issues with respect to 68 Avenue”. On June 17, 2004, City Engineering staff held a public open house to present two options for modifying the NCP plan for 68 Avenue to address traffic issues on 68 Avenue. After the public open house, a second petition opposing the extension of 68 Avenue to 176 Street was circulated. This petition offered an additional 119 names representing 89 households. The main reason for the residents' fear of extending 68 Avenue to 176 Street is the concern that an existing speeding problem will worsen with the addition of up to 600 homes with the future development in the NCP. Residents are also concerned that an opened 68 Avenue will be a shortcutting route used by drivers from outside the neighbourhood.

Currently, without the connection to 176 Street, 68 Avenue functions as a local street. As a collector road, the ultimate purpose of 68 Avenue is to distribute traffic between local, collector and arterial roads and provide direct access to homes and businesses. In the neighbourhood of North Cloverdale West, 64 Avenue, Fraser Highway, 184 Street and the Provincial facility of Highway 15 all provide good regional and provincial mobility. In the area bounded by these facilities, 68 Avenue is the only designated collector road. Once 68 Avenue is extended to 176 Street (Highway 15), it will facilitate the movement of traffic from the local streets to 184 Street and 176 Street and other arterials. 68 Avenue will also facilitate the flow of traffic within the neighbourhood to such amenities as the future school and park. The argument that unconnected, dead-end 68 Avenue

satisfies the community needs in its current alignment does not address the future neighbourhood access needs created by the additional 600 households at ultimate build-out of the western lands. Furthermore, with 68 Avenue extended to 176 Street, emergency access to the existing 300 homes and future 900 homes directly served by 68 Avenue can be made from either 176 Street or 184 Street.

DISCUSSION

In July of 1996, City Council approved the North Cloverdale West NCP. Contained within this NCP was the plan for addressing 68 Avenue, particularly near the proposed park and school. According to the NCP, 68 Avenue would continue to function as a 2 lane, collector road and would access the arterial road network via intersections at Highway 15 and at 184 Street. The pavement would be narrowed along the park and school sites to a 9.0m pavement. With the exception of the frontage along the park and school sites where parking would not be permitted, parking along 68 Avenue would be on the north side, only.

The extension of 68 Avenue to intersect with Highway 15 was an important feature of the NCP and was maintained in the options presented to the public. As a major collector, 68 Avenue is meant to serve access and mobility needs of the neighbourhood of North Cloverdale West. During the NCP process, concern was expressed that 68 Avenue would be used as a shortcut to 176 Street (Highway 15). To address this concern, the alignment of 68 Avenue was curved to meet 176 Street at 68A Avenue.

In early 2004, City staff developed two options for modifying the NCP plan for 68 Avenue. Both options maintained the mobility function of 68 Avenue by joining 68 Avenue between 184 Street and Highway 15 but ensured provision of elements intended to address the existing speeding problems as well as access and parking provision. In consideration of the request by Council to participate in the traffic calming work, Parklane Homes has committed to contributing approximately \$10,000 toward the cost of implementing the chosen option. Along with the original NCP option, the two modified options were presented to the public on June 17 at an open house held at Hillcrest Elementary School:

- **Original NCP option** - 12.2m pavement width with curbs, painted centreline, painted bicycle lanes both sides and a parking lane on the north side providing 100 stalls, narrowing near the school and the park, special pavement treatment at 180 Street and the 182 Street pedestrian crossing;
- **Modified NCP Option 1** - with parking on north side: all elements as described in the original NCP option but with curb extensions to provide traffic calming and define the north side only parking (100 stalls) and additional traffic calming, namely, raised intersections at 180, 183 Streets and the 182 Street pedestrian crossing;
- **Modified NCP Option 2** - with parking on alternating sides: all elements as described in the original NCP concept but with curb extensions to provide traffic calming and define parking on alternating sides of 68 Avenue (86 stalls), and additional traffic calming, namely, raised intersections at 180, 183 Streets and the 182 Street pedestrian crossing.

During the open house, City staff displayed a board that indicated upcoming City and MOT projects in the area such as the widening of Fraser Highway and upgrading of Highway 15 as well as timing of the school and park development. City staff discussed the merits of these arterial projects especially with respect to keeping regional through traffic on the arterial networks thereby reducing the likelihood of shortcutting on 68 Avenue. A summary of the open house and the responses to the questions can be found in Appendix A.

It can be seen from the public input that approximately 28 households, who attended the open house meeting, are still opposed to 68 Avenue going through to 176 Street, even with traffic calming being provided. However, this objection has to be seen in the context that the NCP has approximately 300 households now with a further 600 to come. Without 68 Avenue being connected, there will be no internal east-west road to serve the neighbourhood. Additionally, as can be seen on Figure 2, the creek and ravine severely restricts the north-south connections. If 68 Avenue is not connected, all the new development north of the creek/ravine will have to exit out onto Fraser Highway or 176 Street, and go around external roads such as 184 Street and/or 64 Avenue to access the future school and park site for the neighbourhood located on 68 Avenue. If 68 Avenue is extended to allow access to the western lands but does not connect to 176 Street, traffic using the existing portion of 68 Avenue will triple.

68 Avenue is not seen as a desirable shortcut route to 176 Street for residents east of 184 Street as it will be a longer distance for northbound traffic than using 184 Street and Fraser Highway or for southbound traffic using 184 Street and 64 Avenue. The use of 68 Avenue will be even less desirable with the proposed traffic calming.

68 Avenue was identified in the NCP as a through road and the overall transportation needs, including emergency response, of the neighbourhood are best served if the road is constructed through to 176 Street as originally planned.

CONCLUSION

Balancing the wishes of the immediately fronting residents with the overall needs of the neighbourhood, we believe the best option is to open 68 Avenue through to 176 Street but provide appropriate traffic calming.

Based on the public input at the open house, the preferred traffic calming option is Modified NCP Option 2, including parking on both sides of 68 Avenue along with traffic calming consisting of raised intersections, a raised pedestrian crossing and curb extensions which clearly delineate parking. The proposed traffic calming measures will also help mitigate the existing speeding problem on 68 Avenue that the residents have reported.

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PH/AC/rdd
Attachment

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APPENDIX A

Summary of Open House and the Responses to the Questionnaire

- The Engineering Department sent 491 invitations to local businesses and residents served by or affected by 68 Avenue, in this area;
- 53 people signed in at the open house, representing 26 households on 68 Avenue and 15 households on streets other than 68 Avenue;
- Of the 68 households that had signed the petition in November, 15 households attended the open house in June;
- 43 questionnaires were completed at the open house and passed along to staff, an additional 7 questionnaires were mailed in;
- Of the 50 respondents, 36 or 72% lived on 68 Avenue;
- The public indicated that they believed that the most frequent and important traffic problems on 68 Avenue were speeding and too much traffic. Although shortcutting from other neighbourhoods is not a current problem, it was ranked as important to many respondents;
- 36 out of 50 respondents completed the question that requested the respondent rank the NCP option and the two additional options; the preferred option was the modified NCP option that showed parking on alternating sides; the original NCP option was the least preferred option;
- Somewhere on the questionnaire, 28 out of 50 respondents indicated that they preferred the restriction of 68 Avenue and did not wish to see it extended to Highway 15; of these 28 respondents, 21 lived on 68 Avenue;
- The questionnaire contained a general question about alternative travel modes, the results are as follows:
 - Over half of the respondents walk more than 2 blocks, at least four times per week;
 - In this area, bicycling is not a popular mode of travel for either commuting or recreation; and
 - Respondents are equally split in their use of on-street parking or off-street parking.

- Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of various street elements contained in the options, 47 out of 50 respondents completed this section of the questionnaire. The results are as follows:
 - Raising intersections and cross-walks to control speed was the most important element followed by completing the curb and gutter work on the south side of 68 Avenue and using curb extensions to control parking and shorten the crossing distance at intersections;
 - Eight respondents requested additional speed tables; and
 - On-street parking and marked bicycle lanes were important to as many people as they were unimportant, and did not appear to be related to whether or not the respondent lived on 68 Avenue.

- In addition to the request that 68 Avenue not be extended, the following were some of the comments written on the questionnaires:
 - This connection is turning a residential road into a major thoroughfare. This has been developed as a residential neighbourhood not 60 or 64 Avenue[1]
 - Concerned for all children and families in this neighbourhood.
 - It would make sense to have a cul-de-sac at the near end of 68 Avenue.
 - No commercial trucks.
 - I am completely against walkways going over the stream at 182 Street from Parklane Developments[2].
 - Traffic calming is a requirement even if the streets are dead-ended.
 - We need a speed bump at 178B Street.
 - Please have By-law Officers enforce the No Parking signs.
 - Roundabouts would deter people from using the street for racing ...and they usually look nice.[3]
 - Parking needs to be allowed in front of school and playground on 68 Avenue.
 - Many people, seniors, families, young adults walk therefore they interact with each other; this interaction is a strength in our neighbourhood.

FIGURE 1: Original NCP for North Cloverdale West Neighbourhood

FIGURE 2: Modified NCP Option 2 for 68 Avenue Traffic Calming Treatment

[1] Note: 60 and 64 are arterial/major collector and arterial roads, respectively

[2] This resident expressed concern that people using the walkway would litter in the creek; the bridge across the stream was proposed in the NCP as part of the pedestrian walkway to the school.

[3] Note: Roundabouts and traffic circles are often confused. Traffic circles are a popular traffic calming device but they cannot accommodate transit buses and accommodating transit buses are a requirement for major collectors. Roundabouts have some traffic calming potential but they are mainly used as an alternative to four-way stops or signalization- a roundabout would likely require additional ROW than is available on this street.