

Report to Council



Date: October 16, 2017
File: 1840-10
To: City Manager
From: Robert Parlane, Parks and Buildings Planning Manager
Subject: Boyce-Gyro Beach Park - Original Parking Lot Restoration to Recreational Use
Report Prepared by: Lindsay Clement, Park and Landscape Planner

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives for information, the report from the Parks and Buildings Planning Manager dated October 16, 2017, with respect to Boyce-Gyro Beach Park - Original Parking Lot Restoration to Recreational Use;

AND THAT Council directs staff to proceed with the restoration of the original Boyce-Gyro Beach Park small parking lot into recreational grass and volleyball courts as part of the overall scope for the Boyce-Gyro Beach Park and parking lot improvements project.

Purpose:

To provide Council with the rationale for staffs' recommendation to reclaim the original small parking lot into recreational grass and volleyball courts as part of the overall Boyce-Gyro Beach park and parking lot improvements project.

Background:

Construction of a permanent 132 stall parking and drop-off area for Boyce-Gyro is planned this year on part of the site currently being used as a gravel parking lot. The more efficient parking created will also allow for reclamation of the existing parking lot for active recreational use (beach volleyball) and passive greenspace.

During the confidential report to Council dated May 29, 2017, on the partial disposition of the property at 3326 Lakeshore Rd. there was considerable discussion on the restoration of the original small parking lot within Boyce-Gyro to recreational park use, and the loss of parking stalls resulting from this. Council instructed staff to report back on the rationale for their recommendation. This report seeks to provide that rationale.

Planning in balance

In order to serve the highest and best use of the site as it relates to all citizens, planning staff looked to objectives that are defined in the City of Kelowna's Official Community Plan.

Boyce-Gyro meets several of those key objectives for park development: provide waterfront parkland along the Okanagan Lake shoreline; provide active and passive parks for a diversity of people and a variety of uses; and develop parkland to respond to user needs.

Staff recognize beach parks are an important amenity for our residents. In the 2012 Citizen Survey, waterfront and beach parks were the second highest priority, after neighbourhood parks, within the park system. Further, based on data from the 2017 Visitor Intercept Survey by Tourism Kelowna, staff know that beaches, parks and water activities top the list of activities that visitors plan to participate in during their stays in Kelowna. Staff also know that well-maintained, high quality parks and beaches are important to 82% of visitors

Parking summary

Prior to the acquisition of this site, Boyce-Gyro was served by **32 stalls** within the park, and **26 stalls** on the lot opposite on the corner of Richter/Lakeshore.

Recognizing the increasing demand for parking, the City purchased the property at 3326 Lakeshore Road in 2006 for \$2.95 million, with the intention to replace the existing parking lots with a new, larger 100 stall lot, funded through the disposition of part of the site. At the time of acquisition, the lands were used as a mobile home park. Significant funding was further invested to relocate the trailers. In 2008, the City began to explore redevelopment options for the land with the adjacent land owner. The City's interest was in providing a new, much larger parking solution for Boyce-Gyro, reclaiming the smaller parking lot for recreational use, and supporting substantial mixed-use development for the neighborhood to increase the vibrancy of the park space year-round and support the growing town centre.

In 2008, the City established a gravel parking lot under a temporary use permit to support the parking requirements for Boyce-Gyro. This temporary gravel lot was permitted to hold 112 stalls. However due to the lack of defined stalls, the lot typically reaches maximum capacity at **90-100 stalls** on peak days. The temporary permit for this lot expired in 2015.

The original target for the parking lot was 100 stalls minimum. On staff's recommendation this was subsequently increased to **120 stalls**. However, the interim condition which existed for several years with the temporary parking lot in use before the original parking lot was removed, created a temporary condition with 137 stalls, plus an additional 15-18 on-street stalls on Watt Road. For some residents, this temporary provision has become the expected permanent provision.

Through internal work on the partial land disposition, a design for a larger **132 stall** parking lot and informal drop-off area was achieved and presented to Council. The construction of this parking lot is planned for this year on the part of the site currently being used as the temporary gravel parking lot.

Safety

The original parking lot is inefficiently laid out, with a large ratio of area dedicated to the driving aisle. It also exits onto Lakeshore Drive across a multi-use corridor and in close proximity to a busy intersection. During busy periods many vehicles enter the parking lot, do a circuit looking for a space, and then leave back onto Lakeshore Dr, or, idle there waiting for a stall to become free. This increased traffic is a hazard for pedestrians and cyclists on the

multi-use corridor, as well as creating additional noise and fumes for park users. Closing this parking lot will remove these hazards, and direct all park vehicle circulation to the one location away from park users.

Accessibility

The original park was served by two accessible parking stalls within the original parking lot. A further two accessible stalls were added adjacent to the park on Watt Road. The new permanent parking lot will create four accessible stalls immediately adjacent to the main pedestrian path with four drop-off stalls adjacent for those with other physical challenges, or families just with lots of beach gear. Further, the row adjacent to the footpath on the west side of the parking lot may be reserved only for use by young families or seniors.

The relocation of the new parking lot immediately adjacent to the existing park without having to cross either Watt Road or Lakeshore Road greatly improves the accessibility and safety for all park users.

Land disposition

The land disposition agreement currently under contract with ASC Lands includes the dedication and construction of Lanfranco Road within two years and the acquisition of parkland adjacent to Fascieux Creek. The Lanfranco Road extension will greatly improve vehicle circulation in the local vicinity, as well as providing 30 additional on-street stalls, which more than offsets those lost on Watt Road (15-18 stalls).

The additional on-street stalls on Lanfranco Road, less those lost on Watt Road, brings the total provision to 144 stalls. This is **24 stalls greater** than the 120 minimum identified by Council, and **12 stalls more** than the interim condition that exists currently. However, this land disposition is currently under contract, and therefore remains confidential. The public are not aware of the Lanfranco Road extension and the additional on-street parking resulting from it.

Public engagement

A concept design and other planning information was presented to the public during an information session held at Boyce-Gyro on May 18, 2017. Several local residents expressed their concern over the poor vehicular circulation in the area, and the loss of the original parking area, stating that the new paved parking area might not be enough to handle the volume of vehicles that visit this waterfront park on its busiest days. The land disposition was not concluded at the time, and so the public was not aware the Lanfranco Road extension would be brought forward as a result, addressing several of the concerns raised.

Other comments received from the public included support for the extension of the multi-use corridors, and for the public art piece, as well as desires for more volleyball courts, more recreational grass areas, and improvements to the play equipment.

Financial and aesthetic value

Our waterfront within the City is highly valuable and highly desirable land. The City pays significant premiums to acquire additional waterfront. The existing parking lot is 0.41 acres

in size, although not increasing the beach frontage, this design proposal increases the park area available for recreation by 5%. For a theoretical comparison, if the City were to increase Boyce-Gyro by the same area, through purchasing the property to the immediate south which is a similar size (0.37 acres), the current assessed value is \$3 million. This is a very rudimentary method to determine the value of this land, or the cost to provide equivalent amenities on the waterfront.

Perhaps more significantly, the value attached to the site can also be expressed by how the land can allow public access to the waterfront, both visually and physically, and how it can provide active and passive recreational opportunities to its users. South of the City centre Boyce-Gyro and Rotary Beaches provide the only unobstructed and pleasing views down the lake from Lakeshore Road. The removal of parked cars from Boyce-Gyro will greatly enhance this view.

Beach Volleyball

Beach volleyball, as a recreational sport, has been growing in popularity. In the past two years the City of Kelowna's recreational league has seen a growth in number of teams from 89 to 113. An additional two courts at Boyce-Gyro park would mean an increase in play for eight to twelve teams per league night.

For tournament play, the City currently uses five courts at City Park and four at Boyce-Gyro. There are also an additional four courts at Okanagan College's KLO Road Campus nearby. For recreational leagues, just one these sites would typically be used. For smaller tournaments, teams typically play at both parks. Larger tournaments however, typically go elsewhere in the valley. The City hosts several tournaments each season, and both City Park and Boyce-Gyro are completely at their maximum capacities for both recreational and tournament games.

In terms of layout and location of the courts, tournament organizers have a preference for courts which are a little offset from the beach area (as proposed in the layout at Boyce-Gyro). One of the main reasons for this is that water stays off and away from the courts, keeping the sand in good condition. During the flood event of this year, the City lost several beach volleyball tournaments due to courts at City Park being unusable. Two additional volleyball courts at Boyce-Gyro would greatly increase the diversity of options and management of both recreational and competition volleyball, and help Kelowna compete against larger volleyball centres.

Other amenities

In addition to volleyball, the restoration of the original parking lot will be used to create some extra recreational lawn and structure planting. Also, following the success of outdoor table-tennis at Stuart Park this summer, permanent outdoor table-tennis tables are proposed adjacent to the central walkway. Finally, additional bike racks will be added throughout the park, so visitors can keep their bikes close by and within sight.

Phasing and construction costs

The project proposes to complete the original parking lot restoration concurrently with construction of the main parking lot, thereby yielding the cost efficiencies of a larger project.

It is intended for the work to be carried out in early 2018, with completion before the main summer season.

Combining both components within one project will reduce overall construction costs. To tender out just the small parking lot work at a later date would eliminate the opportunity for cost savings that occurs from already having work crews mobilized on site. A separate tender/contract would duplicate the overhead and mobilization costs, and result in an anticipated 30-50% increase in overall cost.

Summary:

The proposed provision of parking at Boyce-Gyro is designed to meet the needs for a park of its' nature and scale. In comparison to parking provisions made at some of the City's other prominent waterfront parks, the amount being proposed is more than reasonable for what is required, and in excess of Council's direction. There will always be weekends during the summer in which no amount of parking space could accommodate the amount of visitors to the park. However, the City would not typically seek to design City infrastructure to a maximum that occurs for such a small window in the year.

Staff therefore consider reasonable parking provision has been made while still planning for all park users through the consideration of other parameters:

- Planning in balance
- Safety concerns
- Accessibility for all
- High value asset
- Aesthetic value
- Beach volleyball needs
- Other amenities
- Phasing and construction costs.

Therefore, it is staff's recommendation to proceed with the reclamation of the original parking lot to recreational use.

Internal Circulation:

Divisional Director, Infrastructure
Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture
Divisional Director, Community Planning & Strategic Investments
Director Strategic Investments
Strategic Land Development Manager
Sports & Events Services Manager
Community Engagement Manager
Infrastructure Delivery Department Manager

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Personnel Implications:

Communications Comments:
Alternate Recommendation:

Submitted by:

Robert Parlane, Parks and Buildings Planning Manager

Approved for inclusion:



Alan Newcombe, Divisional Director, Infrastructure

Attachment: 2017-10-16-Boyce-Gyro Beach Park reclamation-presentation

cc: Divisional Director, Infrastructure
Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture
Divisional Director, Community Planning & Strategic Investments
Director Strategic Investments
Strategic Land Development Manager
Sports & Events Services Manager
Community Engagement Manager
Infrastructure Delivery Department Manager