

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: July 11, 2022

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Anne Berry, Director, Planning & Development Services

SUBJECT: RCMP & Bylaw Officer Bicycle Use on the Waterfront Promenade

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Council authorize RCMP Officers, Community Policing volunteers, and City of White Rock Bylaw Officers to patrol the City's waterfront promenade, and on other City sidewalks, trails, or property on bicycles, despite the restrictions in Street and Traffic Bylaw 1999, No. 1529.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek a Council resolution authorizing RCMP Officers (and representatives) and City of White Rock Bylaw Officers to ride bicycles while patrolling the waterfront promenade and other areas of the City where currently prohibited under the City's Street and Traffic Bylaw.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The City's Street and Traffic Bylaw, 1999, No. 1529 section "21: No person shall cycle upon any sidewalk", prevents Bylaw and RCMP officers from conducting bike patrols along the City's waterfront promenade, and in other areas of the City which is another effective method of patrol. The bylaw does not provide exceptions for police, peace officers, or bylaw enforcement officers. The express reference to such officials in the Highway Use Permit section and the absence of such a reference in the sidewalk section indicates a Council/legislative intent to prohibit these officials on bicycles on sidewalks. Staff believes this to be an unintentional oversight on the part of the bylaw and recommends that Council give direction to staff clarify the City's intent to exempt enforcement officers and RCMP from this prohibition.

The RCMP bike program is a highly visible patrol that covers many areas of the city and allows for greater interaction with pedestrians. The use of bicycles allows officers to efficiently navigate the pier and promenade, contributing to enhanced public safety through increased police visibility and accessibility. The patrols are limited to times when there is enough room to safely operate a bicycle taking into consideration the volume of pedestrians. Recent bike patrols have been well received by the community and have allowed for many general police-community interactions, in addition to operational actions. For example, reports of missing children or individuals with dementia on the promenade/pier can be more effectively searched for by bike patrols than by foot patrols.

The *Motor Vehicle Act* provides exemptions for emergency vehicles on highways, however, there is not a clear exemption in the City's Street and Traffic Bylaw therefore explicit Council direction is necessary for bicycle patrols on the waterfront promenade. This same authorization would also make it possible for community policing volunteers to conduct high visibility bike patrols, and the option of patrolling the promenade and other parts of the community by bicycle will allow for a more efficient use of Bylaw Officers' time, enabling them to cover more ground, more quickly. Safe bicycle operation and road use skills will form part of the basic bylaw training undertaken by City of White Rock Bylaw Enforcement Officers.

Ultimately, in the long term, staff recommend an amendment to the bylaw when the bylaw is due for a general review, while seeking a policy resolution from Council in the interim to permit bicycle patrols to take place during the summer months when the city receives higher volumes of visitors to the waterfront and other areas of the City.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The express reference to such officials in the Highway Use Permit section and the absence of such a reference in the sidewalk section suggests an intent to prohibit these officials on bicycles on sidewalks. The recommended resolution and future bylaw amendment will clarify the City's position regarding enforcement patrols by bicycle in the community.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Bicycle patrols by the RCMP, Bylaw Enforcement Officers, and Community Policing volunteers will enhance the visibility and accessibility of these representatives, supporting a higher level of public safety within the City.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

This report was prepared with the assistance of the White Rock RCMP.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic alignment includes confirmation that the City is following best practices in governance and in management of the delivery of city services efficiently and effectively.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

Without the policy resolution from Council staff anticipate that Bylaw Enforcement Patrols will continue to be lengthier on foot, and that there will be potential for increases in inquiries regarding RCMP bicycle patrols on the City's waterfront promenade and sidewalks.

The following alternate option is available for Council's consideration:

1. Not authorize the RCMP Officers, Community Policing volunteers, and City of White Rock Bylaw Officers to patrol the City's waterfront promenade, and on other City sidewalks, trails or property on bicycles, despite the restrictions in Street and Traffic Bylaw 1999, No. 1529

CONCLUSION

Staff are seeking a Council resolution authorizing RCMP Officers (and representatives) and City of White Rock Bylaw Officers to ride bicycles while patrolling the waterfront promenade and other areas of the City where currently prohibited under the City's Street and Traffic Bylaw. It is

anticipated that these activities will enhance the visibility and accessibility of enforcement officers, supporting a higher level of public safety within the City.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Berry", written over a faint, light-colored signature line.

Anne Berry
Acting Chief Administrative Officer and
Director, Planning & Development Services