



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Municipal Hall
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Esquimalt, B.C. V9A 3P1

Legislation Text

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REQUEST FOR DIRECTION

DATE: June 19, 2017

Report No. EPW-17-027

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Jeff Miller, Director of Engineering and Public Works

SUBJECT:

Concerns of Vehicle and Bicycle Interaction at Intervale Avenue E&N Rail Trail Crossing.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

Which option should be pursued in order to deal with concerns regarding vehicle and bicycle interaction at the Intervale Avenue E&N Rail Trail crossing?

RECOMMENDATION:

That the COTW receive Staff Report EPW-17-027 for information, provide any additional direction to staff as the COTW considers advisable, and direct staff to prepare a report for Council's decision.

BACKGROUND:

The Township has six E&N Rail Trail crossings. These crossings are at Admirals Road/Colville Road, Intervale Avenue, Hutchinson Avenue, Lampson Street, Devonshire Road/Fairview Road, Dominion Road. All the crossings are at grade except Dominion Road which is separated.

At the Intervale Avenue E & N Rail Trail crossing, there are four mature, well established lots (north-west, north-east, south-west, south-east). See Attachment A for overhead view. Both the northern and southern lots include fencing and vegetation to provide enclosure of the lot and to provide privacy. The road grade is rising from Colville Road to Lockley Road. Signage for the E&N Rail Trail is the responsibility of the CRD, while the Township is responsible for road signage. The Township and Rail operator jointly share in the responsibility for rail signage.

ISSUES:

The main concern with this crossing is the obstructed sight lines and ensuring that both vehicles/bicycles have sufficient time to react to each other. On the southern approach, sightlines are sufficient because of the space created by the E & N Railway and the grade falling to the north. On the northern approach several factors affect the sight lines and are:

- The grade is rising from Colville Road to the crossing
- Established vegetation growth
- Fencing
- Location of bicycle trail
- Location of stop bar

These factors contribute to both vehicles and bicycles having little time to react to each others presence. See Attachment B for views of crossing.

ALTERNATIVES:

There are four options for discussion. They are:

1. Do nothing.
2. Remove the vegetation.
3. Installation of speed control devices on the E&N Rail Trail.
4. Close road.

Do Nothing

Under this option, the crossing would remain as is. Vehicles and bicycles will have to realize that there are obstructed sight lines and take precautions before entering the crossing. Vehicles are already stopped due to the presence of stop signs installed on both the north and south approaches. The concern with this option is that the south bound driver must slowly enter into the crossing to ensure that there is no one coming along the bike trail and to give the riders an indication of their presence. Due to the existing vegetation, the vehicle must block the trail in order to determine if there is a rider there. Riders will also need to slow down and stop if a vehicle is in the crossing and forfeit the right of way.

Remove the Vegetation

This option would see the Township issue a directive to the lot owners to remove sufficient vegetation to restore the sight lines. For the north - west lot this would involve the removal of a substantial portion of the hedge and part of the mature growth on the north - east lot. The Township has already requested that the lot owners' voluntary comply with this request. Both owners have not carried out any work. The removal of this vegetation would effectively destroy a significant amount of privacy these lots now enjoy.

Installation of Speed Control Devices on the E&N Rail Trail

Under this option, the Township would request that the CRD install some form of speed control devices on the E&N Rail Trail (i.e. stop sign or barriers). The installation of stop signs on the E&N Rail Trail was proposed at an earlier meeting but was defeated due to concerns raised by the biking community. Subsequently the CRD has installed stop signs on the E & N Rail Trail at various locations. If a stop sign was installed, this would make this crossing a four way stop. Both vehicles and bicycles would have to meet the requirements of coming to a full stop and take turns using the intersection. The Township would also request that the CRD review the signage at all crossings to ensure consistency.

Closure of Intervale Avenue at the E&N Rail Trail Crossing

The last option would see Intervale Avenue closed at the crossing. Concrete barriers would be installed with appropriate signage at the crossing. See Attachment A for barrier location. The pedestrian crossings would remain. By locating the closure at the crossing, residents of the bordering lots would have access to their lots from Intervale Avenue.

This closure would remove the conflict point between the two modes of transportation. Intervale Avenue does experience some degree of usage during the morning and afternoon rush hours. This traffic would then be directed along Colville Road or Hutchinson Avenue and Lockley Road which may have a negative impact on the residents' expectations along these stretches of road. This option was also discussed at the Community Safety Working Group. The feedback from Police and Fire was that the closure would not create a significant impact on response times. However, their preference would be to leave Intervale Avenue open.

1. That the COTW receive Staff Report No. EPW-17-027 for information, provide any additional direction to staff as the COTW considers advisable, and direct staff to prepare a report for Council's consideration.
2. That the COTW provide alternative direction to staff.
3. That the COTW request further information from staff.