



11 October 2011

City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor Canfield & Members of Council

Fr: Karen Brown

Re: STR – Proposed Snowmobile Trails

Recommendation:

Whereas the Sunset Trail Riders (STR) has identified an acceptable through town route for a proposed Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) snowmobile corridor through the City of Kenora; and

Whereas a public consultation session was held on September 26, 2011 with regards to a proposed OFSC snowmobile corridor; and

Whereas all comments received, both at the public consultation session, and subsequent to that session, on this matter have been compiled and provided to the STR for their comment; and

Whereas this route has been adjusted as appropriate to improve the trail based on the comments received from the public and City staff; and

Whereas the Ontario Provincial Police has committed to regular patrols for the purposes on an approved OFSC trail through the City;

Now therefore, let it be resolved that Council hereby approves the Sunset Trail Riders (STR) to implement a through town OFSC snowmobile corridor with the following conditions:

- All costs to be borne by the STR
- Written permission and / or written agreements with all landowners as required, including written approval by Treaty 3 for use of their lands
- The City indemnified against any potential legal action related to this trail
- The use of "tune pipes" prohibited within City limits
- The hours of use for the trail be prohibited between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Background:

At the September 2011 Property & Planning meeting, the matter of a proposed OFSC Trail was discussed. Discussions included the presentation of the proposed trail by the Sunset Trail Riders (STR). The report that brought the

matter forward to that meeting has been attached for your reference, and its contents have not been reiterated here. The STR has been requested to provide comment to the staff concerns as noted within that report. Preliminary comments have been attached to this report for your reference, together with the related staff feedback.

Following this meeting, a public consultation session was held on Monday, September 26th at 6:30 p.m. at the Operations Facility. Comments both from that meeting, and those received following the meeting, have been gathered and the STR will be sent copies of the feedback received and requested to provide comment back for Council information prior to the October Council meeting.

The STR has been requested to provide ensure the proposed route is finalized for the October Council meeting to allow Council the opportunity to review it and make a decision, based on the feedback received both during and following the public consultation session, staff comments received and the final responses by the STR, including the final route.

Anticipating this can be achieved for the October 2011 Council meeting, Council is being requested to determine whether or not they support the through town snowmobile corridor, anticipating the actual route is acceptable and any related issues have been appropriately dealt with, with the following conditions:

- All costs to be borne by the STR
- Written permission and / or written agreements with all landowners as required, including written approval by Treaty 3 for use of their lands
- The City indemnified against any potential legal action related to this trail

Finally, the City did receive feedback with regards to enforcement, period of use, as well as the noise from snowmobiles during the consultation sessions. The Ontario Provincial Police have committed to ensuring that an OFSC trail through the City is regularly patrolled. It is recommended that the use of "tune pipes" be prohibited within City limits and well as a restriction in the hours of operation for the trail be made as part of the approval.

Budget:

n/a – all costs to be borne by the STR.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

The STR will be advised of Council's decision on this matter. Communication plan with regards to the trail approval will be developed.

Initial Staff Comments, STR Response and Operations Manager Feedback

Operations Manager:

Figure 1 – Round Lake area - proposed location is not safe due to curve and lack of street lighting in area. If Council approves the crossing area, letter of authorization required from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for filling of shoreline in order to construct a landing area. Improvements will be required to guard rail systems, at expense of STR. Consultation required with Treaty 3.

There should not be a need to consult DFO, as the shoreline can be filled with snow, and a ramp constructed with the groomer. The sight lines at this point are as good as we get anywhere. Treaty Three have been consulted and are in full support. They are prepared to sign a land owner agreement.

Rick's Comments- It would be much easier if a ramp is not required to get from the roadway to the lake. It will be up to STR to use snow from the lake to build a ramp but an opening in the guard wire post will have to be done before freeze up. The cost for signage and guard wire post relocation will be paid by STR. STR should get a letter from Treaty Three they support the proposed new route.

Figure 2 – Gould Road area – The proposed crossing is too steep and will require too much fill at that location. Recommend crossing on the west side of Hebraic road where the grade change is not as significant and it eliminates one road crossing (Herbacz Road).

Gould Road, After numerous discussions with residents on the south side of Gould Road it appears that we will have to either travel a portion of the road bed as is done now, as we continue discussions with the road owner on the North side of the Road. That means no filling will need to be done in this area.

Rick's Comments- A map should be provided by STR to show exactly where they plan on going with the new route as it is unknown where the route is proposed across the Gould Road.

Figure 3 – No comment – private property

Figure 4 – Anicinabe Park and Fourth – Trail cutting through Anicinabe would serve to provide a base of a walking trail during the other three seasons of the year, however will need to be marked and inspected by the City before proceeding.

If the trail is to be located north of the core library, the neighbor to the north should be consulted.

Recommend alternate route, from Anicinabe Park and into deeper water, away from reefs and bad ice. This would remove the requirement to cut a trail

through the west part of the park and keep snowmobile traffic away from all residences.

Figure 4: Already an issue with boardwalk, dock and campsite damage. Preference is to keep trail to the road and access by boat launch in order to keep sleds away from lawn area and old and new campsites. The private contractor at the park holds the same view.

This is the preferred solution rather than cutting a new trail through the park. If there is to be a trail cut through the park, the public should be consulted.

Anicinabe Park. If the Lakeside option is not available, we will have to revert back to the Golf Course Bay option providing ice conditions are adequate. This would allow us to bring the trail up the concrete boat ramp and along the existing paved road in the park as per the park manager request.

The issue is Golf Course Bay could potentially be the weak link in the entire corridor.

There should be an option considered to reroute this portion of the trail should ice conditions prove unfavorable. Unfortunately when an integral link in a trail system is closed and alternate options are not provided, people tend to take risks. As a community we don't need to be known to have or endorse unsafe trails.

In reality, if we do not get good ice in Golf Course Bay, there is no point in opening this entire in town corridor. As we will be leading people to a dead end.

Rick's Comments- Ice conditions in front of Golf Course Bay have always been bad and unfortunately the conditions can change quickly with the weather and depending what happens with water flows into the Winnipeg River system. STR have not confirmed if they have access from Fourth Avenue South to the lake.

The comment about ice conditions**if we do not get good ice in Golf Course Bay, there is no point in opening this entire in town corridor**you will not know how much ice you will have until the end of the year.

Figure 5 – A&W fields, OPP office etc. area – Please note that this area may be the site of future development as it is located in a prime commercial area. The staging area(s) should be confined to within the ball fields themselves. If improvements are required to the fence, to provide gates, those improvements will be the responsibility of STR.

Both areas will have to be signed indicating parking is at the risk of the owner only. Signs to be provided by STR and approved by the City of Kenora.

Parks Supervisor:

Figure 5: Winter use of the A & W ball fields is appropriate at this time. Signage will be required to indicate that the snowmobiles are parked at the risk of the owners.

There will be some costs involved for signage and direction signs in the area. However we are not sure putting a gate in the fence of the ball diamond would be worth the cost. Certainly our club would have a difficult time coming up with funds for this type of activity anyway. All of our money goes into making the corridor safe, groomed and signed and not for infrastructure costs.

Rick's Comments- If a gate is not required in the ball field the parking lot can only be used for a staging area.