



# A2

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 27, 2012  
Contact: Diane Hiltz  
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Meeting Date: July 24, 2012

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services  
SUBJECT: Street and Traffic By-Law Amendments

### *RECOMMENDATION*

- A. THAT Council amend the parking and stopping regulations in Section 19.1 (f) of the Street and Traffic By-Law 2849 to include fire gates adjacent to premises whose primary access is via the lane, as described in this report.
- B. THAT Council amend the definition for trucks in Section 90B of the Street and Traffic By-law 2849 to better support the enforcement of Truck Route regulations by the Vancouver Police Department, as described in this report.

### *COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS*

March 6, 1990: Amendments to the Street and Traffic Bylaw to regulate where vehicles shall not be stopped or parked

June 10, 2008: Adoption of the EcoDensity Charter and Initial Actions, including directions on laneway housing

### *CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS*

The City Manager recommends acceptance of the recommendations.

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## *REPORT*

### *Background/Context*

#### **A. Fire Exits for Laneway Houses and Lane-Oriented Town homes**

In 1990, Council amended the Street and Traffic By-law to prevent vehicles from parking in front of or on either side of an identified fire door situated in a building abutting a lane, to facilitate egress in the event of an emergency.

With the introduction of laneway housing in 2008 and subsequently lane-oriented town homes whose main access is via the lane, the current wording in the bylaw needs to be amended to accommodate these new housing types, particularly those with front patios or yards.

The primary concern expressed by the home owners / occupants and the Vancouver Fire Department is that if an event should occur that requires the residents to evacuate the premises, they will be unable to leave the property in a timely manner when vehicles are parked in front of their gates.

#### **B. Truck Definition**

As it pertains to the City's Truck Route network, the current definition of a truck is a vehicle with a gross vehicle weight (GVW) over 10,000 kilograms. The GVW is the fully loaded, quantifiable weight of the vehicle on the street.

Section 90B of the Street and Traffic By-Law states that any vehicle with a GVW over 10,000 Kilograms may only travel on designed Truck Routes. For trucks originating from or travelling to destinations not on a truck route, the most direct route between the origin/destination and the closest truck route must be used. The objective behind these truck routing restrictions is to minimize the impact of trucks on local streets while providing an effective network to facilitate necessary truck traffic.

The current wording in the Street and Traffic By-law refers to the gross vehicle weight, which can only be determined through the use of a vehicle weigh scale. This poses a challenge for enforcement as access to vehicle weigh scales are limited. In addition, vehicles that are near 10,000 kg may be below the weight limit when traveling without a full load. As a result, these vehicles would not fall under the definition of a truck and would not be required to follow the truck route regulations under the Street and Traffic By-Law.

Other definitions which relate to the weight a vehicle, including the Licensed Gross Vehicle Weight (LGVW) and Gross Vehicle Weight Rate (GVWR).

- The Licensed Gross Vehicle Weight (LGVW) refers to the maximum weight which the vehicle has been licensed for insurable transport. The LGVW information can be found on the Owner's Certificate of Insurance or Registration documents and does not include the weight of passengers, fuels and cargo.

- Gross Vehicle Weight Rate (GVWR) refers to the maximum weight a vehicle is designed to carry including the net weight of the vehicle with accessories, plus the weight of passengers, fuels, and cargo. Manufacturers set the GVWR based on requirements set by Transport Canada. The maximum GVWR is affixed to the driver's door post.

### *Strategic Analysis*

#### **A. Fire Exits from Laneway Houses and Lane-Oriented Town homes**

Some laneway houses and lane-oriented town homes do not have doors that abut the lane but instead have small patios or gardens with gates that border the lane therefore when vehicles park in front of the gates they restrict egress in the event of an emergency. The current wording of Section 19.1 (f) in the Street and Traffic By-law 2849 does not allow for the enforcement of vehicles stopping or parking in front of these accesses. This change addresses the concerns expressed by the occupants of these dwellings with regards to egress in the event of an emergency.

Section 19.1 of the Street and Traffic By-law currently reads as follows:

19.1 An owner, registered owner, lessee or operator of a vehicle must not cause, allow or permit that vehicle to stop on a lane:

- (f) Within an area extending 0.5 metres from either side of and 3 metres directly in front of an identified fire door situated in a building abutting such lane;

It is recommended that Section 19.1 (f) be amended to include identified fire gates adjacent to premises whose primary access is via the lane.

Gates to such properties must have a sign identifying it as a "Fire Gate" to facilitate enforcement.

#### **B. Truck Definition**

To facilitate the enforcement of Truck Route regulations, it is recommended that Section 90B of the Street and Traffic By-law 2849 be amended such that trucks in violation of the regulation can be identified without the use of a scale. The change to the By-Law is supported by the Vancouver Police Department.

Section 90B of the Street and Traffic By-law currently reads as follows:

90B. Areas Outside the Area Described in Section 90A: A vehicle or combination of vehicles having a gross vehicle weight in excess of 10,000 kilograms may only travel on designated Truck Routes, as set out in Schedule B of this By-law, and on any other street being the most direct route between a truck route and points of origin or destination. This section 90B shall not apply to transit vehicles when on approved transit routes.

It is recommended that Section 90B be amended to replace the reference to gross vehicle weight with Gross Vehicle Weight Rating or Licensed gross vehicle weight.

As per the Motor Vehicle Safety Regulations set by Transport Canada, the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating must be displayed on the door of the vehicle. This amendment would enable visual identification of trucks in excess of 10,000 kilograms and facilitate enforcement of the City's Truck Route regulations.

*Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)*

*Financial*

There are no financial implications.

*Legal*

Recommendation A addresses safety and liability concerns expressed by some owners / occupants regarding their possible inability to evacuate in the case of an emergency or a life safety situation.

**CONCLUSION**

The recommendations coming out of this report are in direct response to concerns raised by the Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver Fire Department and the residents who reside within lane-oriented housing units.

Changing the wording in sections 19.1 (f) and 90B of the Street and Traffic By-law 2849 will facilitate enforcement of parking in laneways and provide a way of enforcing truck weight restrictions without the use of a vehicle weigh scale.

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