
TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS

WARD: ALL WARDS

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SUBMITTED BY: D. FRIARY
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GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: R. J. FORWARD, MBA, M.Sc., P. Eng.
GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: C. LADD,
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That Staff Report RPF009-15 be received for information purposes and that in the event Council wishes to proceed with implementation of a School Crossing Guard Program, the following be approved:
 - a) That a School Crossing Guard Program at elementary schools within the City of Barrie commence September 2017 at an estimated annual cost of \$650,000 and subject to approval of a Supervisor of Crossing Guards within the 2016 Business Plan.
 - b) That Roads, Parks & Fleet report back to Council in early 2016 with the technical warrant criteria for the determination of crossing guards locations.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

2. On April 20, 2015 Council passed motion 15-G-077 which states "That staff investigate the feasibility of implementing a School Crossing Guard Program in the City of Barrie and report back to General Committee before September 2015 with information regarding the following:
 - a) Comparable municipalities' experiences and costs associated with the provision of school crossing guard programs;
 - b) Alternatives for the delivery of a school crossing guard program including the financial implications and risk for the City of Barrie;
 - c) The feasibility of a volunteer based school crossing guard program; and
 - d) Opportunities for the School Boards to contribute to the delivery of a school crossing guard program.
3. As per the Highway Traffic Act - School Crossing Guards are defined as a person sixteen (16) years of age or older who is directing the movement of persons across a highway and who is:
 - a) Employed by a Municipality, or

- b) Employed by a Corporation under contract with a municipality to provide the services of a school crossing guard.

ANALYSIS

Comparable Municipal Experiences

4. Staff contacted similar sized municipalities to determine their experiences and costs associated with the provision of school crossing guard program. Please refer to Appendix "A" for a table of the results. The table also identifies the number of crossing guards, rates of pay and a dedicated supervisor and coordinator to administer the municipality's program.
5. It was noted that if a crossing guard is unable to attend their designated crossing area and a spare guard was not available, municipalities are required to staff the crossings with internal staff i.e. traffic staff, road patrol etc.
6. In addition to contacting municipalities, staff has obtained the School Crossing Guard Guide published by The Ontario Traffic Council (OTC). The guide attempts to establish a logical process for the identification, justification, installation and operation of school crossings and school crossing guard programs.
7. The guide identifies that a survey was sent to 420 Ontario Municipalities and Towns and 182 surveys were returned with the following highlights:
 - a) 63% of Municipalities have a crossing guard program
 - b) 83% do not use crossing guards for High School Students
8. Most municipalities do not include crossing guards at high school locations as the students are older and have the cognitive ability to assess safe gaps in traffic. The guide identifies that high school students tend to avoid crossing at a location with a crossing guard and cross elsewhere which may be more dangerous.

Alternatives for Delivery

9. Motion 99-G-399 states "That one mid-block signal or intersection pedestrian signal be considered for installation at the City's expense on arterial or collector streets in the vicinity of existing elementary schools when the crossing requirements meets the Provincial technical warrants. This signal is to be a minimum of 215 metres (705 feet) away from any existing traffic control signal and that School Parent Councils be reimbursed for their past contributions for pedestrian signals in front of their schools in accordance with past practice."
10. The City of Barrie currently has 34 midblock or intersection pedestrian signals located throughout the City in the vicinity of elementary schools.
11. The cost to install mid-block/intersection pedestrian signals is currently \$65,000 per location and developers have been contributing as part of sub division agreements when a school block has been identified and meets motion 99-G-399 criteria.
12. Barrie Police administers the existing Student Crossing Patrol program at elementary schools. The program budgets \$40,000 annually to supply the students with safety vests, traffic cones. Traffic staff installs and maintains the appropriate traffic signage and pavement markings at the crossing locations.

13. The student patrollers are volunteers from the school who are trained by Barrie Police to assist their school mates in safely crossing the road without the patroller entering the roadway. The student patrollers are within visual distance of the school.
14. All adjacent roadways within 250 metres of existing elementary schools are posted as community safety zones and a 40 km/hr posted speed limit. Elementary schools with direct access to roadways carrying a minimum of 5,000 vehicles per day are equipped with variable timed flashing 40 km/hr speed zones to minimize disruption to area traffic during no peak times of the day.

Feasibility of Volunteer Based Program

15. As the Highway Traffic Act designates that a crossing guard has to be employed by the City of Barrie, a volunteer based program would not be permitted.

School Board Opportunities

16. At the time of writing the staff report, comments have not been received from the Simcoe County District School Board.
17. The Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board (SMCDSB) supports municipalities in implementing Crossing Guard programs and within our school board jurisdiction of Simcoe County and the District of Muskoka there are a number of municipalities that operate Crossing Guard programs. The Board does not financially support these operations. The City of Barrie's Crossing Guard program would also be outside of the Board's mandate and they have advised they would not be able to contribute financially to the program.
18. If approved the SMCDSB could work with staff to communicate the Crossing Guard program with our school communities and could help with identifying the best locations for the guards.

Analysis

19. Staff currently respond to several calls from residents regarding children safety around schools and on our road network. A crossing guard program has the potential to reduce the number of pedestrian concerns we would receive for all-way stops or pedestrian related inquiries in the vicinity of schools.
20. A school crossing guard program would connect with the active transportation principles within the City as it promotes walkability and healthy living with transportation choices on our roadways.
21. As the majority of similar sized municipalities within Ontario have a crossing guard program and Council's strategic priority to improve road safety, staff recommends that a crossing guard program be implemented for elementary schools commencing September 2017.
22. September 2017 was selected as the preferred start date to provide staff with the ability to:
 - a) Develop the warrant criteria and select the locations.
 - b) Prepare an implementation plan for the crossing guard locations including any pavement markings and traffic signage required.
 - c) Develop job descriptions and recruit staff, potential 60 staff depending on warrant criteria.
 - d) Develop training manuals and procedures for crossing guards.
 - e) Provide training, health checks (hearing/sight) and police background checks.

- f) Develop a communication strategy to notify residents.
23. The Ontario Traffic Council (OTC) has prepared a School Crossing Guard Guide which outlines warrants for use in developing a crossing guard program. The warrant uses several factors such as safe gap calculations, vehicle speeds, pedestrian and vehicle volumes, roadway geometrics, driver and pedestrian behaviour.
24. The OTC Guide also identifies that high school students tend to avoid crossing at crossing guard locations as they do not want to be perceived as needing help to cross the road and instead cross mid-block creating unsafe crossing situations.
25. Staff are currently investigating over 150 locations throughout the City, using the above criteria, to determine the exact number of crossing guards that would be required and to develop a City of Barrie policy for determining the locations for a program. The report would be ready in early 2016.
26. In discussions with Legal, there are no items within the Municipal Act that requires a municipality to have a crossing guard program. Liability would likely arise if a municipality decides to create a program and then is negligent in implementing it.
27. Barrie Police are in support of the proposed recommendation that the City of Barrie implement a crossing guard program.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

28. There are no environmental matters related to the recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES

29. There is one alternative available for consideration by General Committee:

Alternative #1 General Committee could decide not to implement a crossing guard program and continue with the existing alternate delivery of school measures.

This alternative is not recommended as a school crossing guard program will provide additional measures to improve the crossing safety of school aged children in the vicinity of busy intersections around elementary schools.

FINANCIAL

30. The City of Barrie currently has 39 elementary schools within our boundaries and an additional 10 schools are planned for the annexation lands. Using an average of 1.5 guards from similar sized municipal programs in Appendix A, staff project that a crossing guard program consisting of approximately 60 Crossing Guards, Supervisor of Crossing Guards and Crossing Guard Coordinator at an approximate annual cost of \$650,000. This cost also includes additional pavement markings, traffic signage, uniforms and equipment.
31. Staff recommends that a Supervisor of Crossing Guards position be created within the 2016 Business Plan to develop the policies, job descriptions and training requirements and to administer the program. The 2017 Business Plan will identify the additional staff required to administer the program including the Crossing Guard Coordinator and Crossing Guards.

LINKAGE TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

32. The recommendations included in this Staff Report are specifically related to goals identified in the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan.
 - a) Improved Road Safety

33. The proposed recommendation will enhance pedestrian safety in the vicinity of elementary schools allowing large groups of elementary aged children to cross the roadway under the supervision of a crossing guard during school arrival and dismissal times.

APPENDIX "A"

Municipality	Kingston	Oakville	Burlington	Kitchener
Population	117,210	182,520	175,000 +	205,000
Administered by	City of Kingston	Town of Oakville	City of Burlington	City of Kitchener
Annual Budget	\$379,000	\$1,000,000	\$931,000	\$600,000
Years program in place	Over 30 years	Over 40 years	Over 40 years	Over 40 years
Total No. of Guards	25	101 guards	120	85
Total No. of Spare Guards	3 and hiring 3 more	10 (included in 101 total)	12 (included in the 120)	4-6 (included in the 85)
Rate of pay	\$15.12	\$12.45, \$13.13, \$13.75	\$11 to \$13.40	\$11.75, \$12.25, \$12.75 (Annual steps)
Program Supervisor / Coordinator	Supervisor of School Crossing	One Supervisor 2 Coordinators	Supervisor of School Crossing	Supervisor of School Crossing
Guards at High Schools	No	No	No	1 location for Region of Waterloo
Number of Guards/Schools	33 or .73 guards/school	45 or 2 guards/school	46 or 2.6 guards/school	62 or 1.3 guards/school

APPENDIX "B"

Name	Type	Population (2011 Census)	Crossing Guard Program
Ajax	Town	109,600	Yes
Amherstburg	Town	21,556	Yes
Aurora	Town	53,203	Yes
Barrie	City	135,711	No
Belleville	City	49,454	Yes
Bracebridge	Town	15,409	Yes
Bradford West Gwillimbury	Town	28,077	Yes
Brampton	City	523,911	Yes
Brant (Paris)	City	35,638	Yes
Brantford	City	93,650	Yes
Brockville	City	21,870	Yes
Burlington	City	175,779	Yes
Caledon (Bolton)	Town	59,460	Yes
Cambridge	City	126,748	Yes
Chatham-Kent	Com	103,671	Yes
Clarence-Rockland	City	23,185	Yes
Clarington (Bowmanville - Newcastle)	Com	84,548	Yes
Cobourg	Town	18,519	Yes
Collingwood	Town	19,241	Yes
Cornwall	City	46,340	Yes
East Gwillimbury (Holland Landing - Sharon)	Town	22,473	Yes
Elliot Lake	City	11,348	Yes
Erin	Town	10,770	Yes
Essex	Town	19,600	Yes
Fort Erie	Town	29,960	Yes
Georgina (Keswick)	Town	43,517	Yes
Gravenhurst	Town	11,640	No
Greater Sudbury (Grand Sudbury)	City	160,274	Yes
Grimsby	Town	25,325	Yes
Guelph	City	121,688	Yes
Haldimand (Cayuga - Caledonia - Hagersville)	City	44,876	Yes
Halton Hills (Georgetown)	Town	59,008	Yes
Hamilton	City	519,949	Yes
Hawkesbury	Town	10,551	No
Huntsville	Town	19,056	Yes
Ingersoll	Town	12,146	No
Innisfil (Alcona - Lefroy - Gilford)	Town	33,079	No
Kawartha Lakes (Lindsay)	City	73,214	Yes
Kenora	City	15,348	Yes
Kingston	City	123,363	Yes

<u>Kingsville</u>	Town	21,362	Yes
<u>Kitchener</u>	City	219,153	Yes
<u>Lakeshore (Belle River - Tilbury)</u>	Town	34,546	Yes
<u>LaSalle</u>	Town	28,643	Yes
<u>Leamington</u>	Town	28,403	Yes
<u>Lincoln (Beamsville)</u>	Town	22,487	Yes
<u>London</u>	City	366,151	Yes
<u>Markham</u>	Town	301,709	Yes
<u>Midland</u>	Town	16,572	No
<u>Milton</u>	Town	84,362	Yes
<u>Mississauga</u>	City	713,443	Yes
<u>Mississippi Mills (Almonte)</u>	Town	12,385	Yes
<u>Napanee (Greater Napanee)</u>	Town	15,511	Yes
<u>New Tecumseth (Alliston)</u>	Town	30,234	Yes
<u>Newmarket</u>	Town	79,978	Yes
<u>Niagara Falls</u>	City	82,997	Yes
<u>Niagara-on-the-Lake</u>	Town	15,400	Yes
<u>Norfolk (Simcoe)</u>	City	63,175	Yes
<u>North Bay</u>	City	53,651	Yes
<u>Oakville</u>	Town	182,520	Yes
<u>Orangeville</u>	Town	27,975	Yes
<u>Orillia</u>	City	30,586	Yes
<u>Oshawa</u>	City	149,607	Yes
<u>Ottawa</u>	City	883,391	Yes
<u>Owen Sound</u>	City	21,688	Yes
<u>Pelham</u>	Town	16,598	Yes
<u>Pembroke</u>	City	14,360	No
<u>Petawawa</u>	Town	15,988	Yes
<u>Peterborough</u>	City	78,698	Yes
<u>Pickering</u>	City	88,721	Yes
<u>Port Colborne</u>	City	18,424	No
<u>Port Hope</u>	Town	16,214	Yes
<u>Prince Edward (Picton)</u>	City	25,258	Yes
<u>Quinte West (Trenton)</u>	City	43,086	No
<u>Richmond Hill</u>	Town	185,541	Yes
<u>Sarnia</u>	City	72,366	Yes
<u>Saugeen Shores (Port Elgin - Southampton)</u>	Town	12,661	Yes
<u>Sault Ste. Marie</u>	City	75,141	Yes
<u>St. Catharines</u>	City	131,400	Yes
<u>St. Thomas</u>	City	37,905	Yes
<u>Stratford</u>	City	30,886	Yes
<u>Tecumseh</u>	Town	23,610	Yes

<u>Temiskaming Shores (Haileybury - New Liskeard)</u>	City	10,400	No
<u>Thorold</u>	City	17,931	Yes
<u>Thunder Bay</u>	City	108,359	Yes
<u>Tillsonburg</u>	Town	15,301	Yes
<u>Timmins</u>	City	43,165	No
<u>Toronto</u>	City	2,615,060	Yes
<u>Vaughan</u>	City	288,301	Yes
<u>Wasaga Beach</u>	Town	17,537	No
<u>Waterloo</u>	City	98,780	Yes
<u>Welland</u>	City	50,631	Yes
<u>Whitby</u>	Town	122,022	Yes
<u>Whitchurch-Stouffville</u>	Town	37,628	Yes
<u>Windsor</u>	City	210,891	Yes
<u>Woodstock</u>	City	37,754	Yes