TORONTO

STAFF REPORT
INFORMATION ONLY

Toronto Police Service – Response to a City of Toronto Request for a Report – Status of the Implementation of the Hand-Held Parking Devices Project – Financial and Operational Updates

Date:	November 7, 2007
To:	Budget Committee, City of Toronto; and Executive Committee, City of Toronto
From:	Alok Mukherjee, Chair, Toronto Police Services Board

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Budget Committee and the Executive Committee with the Toronto Police Service's (TPS) response to City Council's request for a report on the status of the implementation of the hand-held parking devices project.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications in regard to the receipt of this report.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on October 18, 2007, the Toronto Police Services Board (the Board) was in receipt of a report, dated August 20, 2007, from Chief of Police William Blair regarding the TPS's response to City Council's request that the TPS report on the status of the implementation of the hand-held parking devices.

COMMENTS

Superintendent Wes Ryan and Mr. Maghfoor Chaudhry, of the TPS Parking Enforcement Unit, were in attendance and responded to questions about this report.

The Board inquired whether or not the hand-held parking devices contained technology that could be expanded to permit parking enforcement officers to electronically record other reportable City maintenance issues, such as light standards that are not working.

The Board noted that a broader examination of the use and infrastructure of the hand-held parking devices in relation to other on-going City maintenance programs might provide the potential for further cost-recovery.

The Board received the foregoing and requested the Chief to provide a further report on the feasibility of broadening the use of the hand-held parking devices. The Board also agreed to forward copies of the foregoing report, and a note that the Chief has been asked to provide a further report, to the City of Toronto Executive Committee and the City of Toronto Budget Committee for information.

CONCLUSION

The Board would like to emphasize that it has requested the Chief of Police to provide a further report on the feasibility of broadening the use of hand-held parking devices to the Budget Committee and to the Executive Committee which may provide further information about these devices.

A copy of Board Minute No. P334/07, in the form attached as Appendix "A", regarding this matter is provided for information.

CONTACT

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Toronto Police Service
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SIGNATURE

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Alok Mukherjee
Chair, Toronto Police Services Board

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A – Board Minute No. P334/07

A:city_rprt_parking_devices.doc

Staff report for information on hand-held parking devices

APPENDIX "A"

THIS IS AN EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING OF THE TORONTO POLICE SERVICES BOARD HELD ON OCTOBER 18, 2007

#P334. RESPONSE TO A CITY OF TORONTO REQUEST FOR A REPORT - STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HAND-HELD PARKING DEVICES PROJECT – FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL UPDATES

The Board was in receipt of the following report August 20, 2007 from William Blair, Chief of Police:

Subject: STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HAND HELD PARKING DEVICES PROJECT - FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

(1) the Board receive the following report; and
(2) the Board forward a copy of this report to the City of Toronto Executive Committee and the City of Toronto Budget Committee for their information.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications relating to the recommendations contained within this report.

This report provides the Board with an update on the approved capital project: Hand Held Parking Ticket Issuance Devices. The capital plan for this project was $4.1M and the project was completed not only within the set budget, but below budget. The unused funds in the amount of $0.31M were returned to the City of Toronto.

Background/Purpose:

At its meeting of December 8, 9 and 12, 2005, City Council made the following request to the Chief of Police.

Toronto Parking Enforcement Unit:

(180) the Police Chief, in consultation with the Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer, report to the Administration Committee in 2006 on the status of the implementation of the Handheld Parking Devices Project.

Further at its meeting on April 20 and 23, 2007, the Council of the City of Toronto made the following request:

Parking Tag Enforcement and Operations:

(74) The Chair of Toronto Police Services Board, in consultation with the Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer, report to the Budget Committee prior to the 2008 Operating Budget process on the operational and financial impacts of implementing the handheld parking devices.

At its meeting of September 26, 2006, the Board was in receipt of a status report providing information on the progress of implementing the Handheld Parking Devices Project. A copy of this report was forwarded to the City of Toronto – Administration Committee for their information (Min. No. P299/06 refers).

The purpose of this report is to provide additional information regarding the operational and financial impacts of implementing the handheld parking devices, pursuant to the above request from Toronto City Council.

Discussion:

At its meeting of March 8, 2005, the Board approved the acquisition of a Wireless Parking Ticket Issuance solution from Epic Data Inc. for the Toronto Police Service (TPS) - Parking Enforcement Unit (Min. No. P81/05 refers). Upon receiving this approval, the TPS acting on behalf of the Board and Epic Data Inc. engaged in contract negotiations. On December 21, 2005, an agreement was endorsed.

The project commenced in January 2006 and the delivery of project related hardware began at that time. As part of the assessment, planning and customization of the end-to-end solution, discussions occurred between the City of Toronto Revenue Services Division and the City's contracted banking services provider. Significant testing was undertaken with samples of the thermal print stock used to print the electronic Parking Infraction Notices. The print stock was found incompatible with bank processing, therefore the new electronic parking tickets would not be payable at financial institutions. As a result of this modification to the payment options available to customers, the City of Toronto introduced an on-line-web-payment portal while maintaining the existing payment options including; telephone payments, payments by mail or in person at Parking Tag First Appearance Facilities. These steps were undertaken to ensure that the previous levels of customer service delivery were maintained. A media release advising of this change in the payment options was prepared and released through the media.

The electronic ticketing solution "went live" for the first time on July 24, 2006, as a pilot initiative for a three week period with forty (40) front line officers assigned the handheld equipment and software to issue Parking Infraction Notices. At the conclusion of the documented field trial, these forty (40) officers continued to use the ticketing solution. This approach allowed them to gain greater experience in preparation for full implementation and to ensure knowledgeable peer assistance was available for new users during full implementation rollout, which was completed in October 2006. The system has a five (5) year hardware and software maintenance agreement that will expire on August 28, 2011. The maintenance

agreement covers regular wear and tear of hand held devices and printers including officer-induced damage. The warranty does not include hardware that is damaged beyond economical repair.

For reference purposes the solution has been named WiPS, the Wireless Parking System.

Financial and Operational Benefits

The City of Toronto Revenue Services staff have provided a preliminary report on the following three important benefits associated with the implementation of the hand held technology:

1. Budget Savings Through the Redeployment of Data-Entry Staff:

The implementation of wireless hand-held parking ticket issuance devices reduced the City's reliance on manual data entry resources. At present, 93% of the tickets issued are sent electronically to the city's Parking Tag Management System (PTMS). Traditional parking infraction books account for 7% of ticket issuance and are used by police officers and municipal law enforcement officers. In accordance with the initial business plan for this project, the reduction of ten data entry staff was achieved through a combination of staff attrition and re-deployment which realized a budget savings to the City of Toronto Parking Tag Operations budget in the amount of $458,000.

2. Expedient Transfer of Data from TPS to the City's Parking Tag Management System:

Under the hand-written approach to ticket issuance, data entry staff are required to enter ticket information onto the City's Parking Tag Management System manually. With the manual process, City staff experienced a delay of three to five business days to receive the parking tag information. The electronic data transfer system provides updates to the data on an hourly basis, thereby providing the City of Toronto with the opportunity to respond to customer inquiries in a timely manner, resulting in higher levels of customer service and satisfaction.

3. Increased Processability of Parking Tickets:

Currently a small percentage (less than 1%) of all hand-written parking tickets cannot be processed due to the ticket being illegible or because of errors in the date, time or street address. As a result, these tickets are subsequently cancelled. The introduction of computerized, hand-held parking ticket issuance devices has eliminated these errors and has also eliminated illegible parking tickets; given that the hand-held devices:

- print the ticket in a computerized format;
- have an automatic date and time feature; and
- are pre-loaded with all City of Toronto street names and bylaws.

The implementation of these devices has increased the processability level for all parking infractions creating the potential for increased revenue through the payment of fines for offences for which the tickets would have previously been cancelled.

The City of Toronto Revenue Services - Parking Tag Operations will provide further information on the financial benefits and impacts of the implementation of the hand held technology in their Parking Tag Issuance Report at the end of 2007.

In addition to the benefits outlined above, the following are additional key operational benefits associated with the implementation of the hand held technology:

4. Increase In the Number of Stolen Vehicles Recovered:

The hand held system checks every vehicle licence plate which is entered for tag issuance against a stolen vehicles list. Other important information such as Amber Alerts can also be entered on a separate module within the system. During the period January 1 to July 31, 2006, a total of 373 stolen vehicles were recovered. During the same time period in 2007, the number increased to 457. This additional 84* vehicles recovered represents an increase of 22.5% in the number of stolen vehicles recovered.

** Project Streetsweeper, which is staffed by Parking Enforcement Officers and utilizes dedicated vehicles equipped with the AutoVu software, not the hand held system, is also contributing significantly to the number of stolen vehicles recovered. In order to fairly represent the impact of the hand held system on the recovery of stolen vehicles, the number of stolen vehicles recovered as a result of Project Streetsweeper has not been included in this figure.*

It is also worth noting that officers are locating stolen vehicles more quickly and are helping to generate arrests because stolen vehicles are being identified before they can be disposed of or abandoned. The hand held technology has enhanced the ability of parking enforcement officers to locate stolen and wanted vehicles; thereby contributing towards public safety.

5. Electronic Interface between the TPS and City of Toronto Revenue Services:

The hand held system interfaces with the City of Toronto Revenue Services to transmit and receive data. This includes the transfer of ticket data to the City's Parking Tag Management System (PTMS), the return of updates to parking ticket status and the transfer of copies of the Certificate of Parking Infraction (CPI) for court processing purposes. This process enhances the level of customer service to members of the public. Since its inception thirteen months ago, approximately 2.2 million parking tickets have been issued from the hand held system.

6. Electronic Interface between the TPS and the City of Toronto Transportation Services:

The hand held system also interfaces with the City of Toronto Transportation Services Residential and Temporary Parking Permit systems. Once a permit is issued, both over the counter and through city's web site, the permit data transfers into the hand held system at set time intervals throughout the day. Each time an officer enters a licence plate for tag issuance, a

database check is conducted to verify if a valid permit has been issued to the licence plate for the zone or street in which the vehicle is parked. Officers may also search permits by entering the permit number in the "Parking Permits" module of the system. This feature enhances service delivery in relation to parking permits that are not properly displayed or completely visible.

7. Real Time Information Management – Reporting:

With the implementation of the hand held system, supervisors have access to real-time reporting for their officers, providing management staff with an additional tool to monitor staff deployment, performance and activities.

8. Asset Maintenance Reporting from the Field:

The hand held devices allow officers on patrol to send electronic messages to Parking Enforcement Customer Service regarding asset maintenance. This includes reporting maintenance issues associated to pay and display machines and parking meters as well as missing, damaged, obstructed or missing signage. When a message is received in the system, it is automatically logged and TPS Parking Enforcement Customer Service personnel print a report and fax it to the appropriate city department or agency for action. Once the problem has been addressed the issue is closed in the system and the reporting officer is notified of the action taken.

Conclusion:

The introduction of the hand held technology has been extremely well received by the personnel assigned to the Parking Enforcement Unit. This technology has greatly improved the exchange of data between the TPS and the City's Parking Management System, resulting in a higher level of processability for all parking infraction notices as well as achieving the additional goal of providing enhanced service to the customer.

Deputy Chief A.J. (Tony) Warr, Specialized Operations Command, will be in attendance to answer any questions that the Board may have regarding this report.

Superintendent Wes Ryan and Mr. Maghfoor Chaudhry, Parking Enforcement Unit, were in attendance and responded to questions about this report.

The Board inquired whether or not the hand-held parking devices contained technology that could be expanded to permit parking enforcement officers to electronically record other reportable City maintenance issues, such as light standards that are not working.

The Board noted that a broader examination of the use and infrastructure of the hand-held parking devices in relation to other on-going City maintenance programs might provide the potential for further cost-recovery.

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