



REPORT FOR ACTION

School Crossing Guard Program Update

Date: September 20, 2019

To: City Council

From: General Manager, Transportation Services

Wards: All

SUMMARY

In November 2017, City Council approved the transfer of the School Crossing Guard Program from Toronto Police Service (TPS) to Transportation Services, with long-term services to be provided through a third-party service provider starting August 1, 2019. The transition of the program to Transportation Services represents an opportunity for more oversight of the School Crossing Guard Program, its reliability and its positioning within Vision Zero activities focused on the safety of children.

Following the award of the School Crossing Guard program to Carraway Inc. and ASP Inc., Council requested that Transportation Services report back on the transition of the program, including the number of existing TPS school crossing guards who were hired and remained at their previous locations.

City staff have been working closely with the two contracted vendors, Carraway Inc. and ASP Inc. to provide the existing school crossing guards the first opportunity to be hired.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the program rollout at the start of school, outlining the vendors' process for hiring existing school crossing guards and the number of school guards that were retained, as well as the vendors' process for ensuring 100% coverage at all locations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on July 12, 13, 14, 15, 2016, City Council directed the City Manager to report to the Executive Committee on the feasibility of, and a strategic path for, transferring the School Crossing Guard Program from the Toronto Police Service to Transportation Services. The Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.PW14.1>

At its meeting on November 7, 8 and 9, 2017, City Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to contract out the School Crossing Guard Program with a third-party service provider starting August 1, 2019. The Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX28.5>

At its meeting on January 31, 2018, City Council adopted the TO Prosperity: Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy 2018 Annual Work Plan for implementation with approval to pilot-test standards in City contracts and procurement documents related to advance notice of scheduling. The Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX29.12>

At its meeting on June 18, 2019, City Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to award the Request for Proposal 9148-19-0114 for the Provision of School Crossing Guard Service to two vendors, A.S.P. Inc. and Carraway Inc. and to report to the October Council meeting on an update of the program. The Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.IE5.5>

COMMENTS

School crossing guards help improve the safety and comfort of children and their parents who walk or bike to school. They help children safely cross the street and also remind drivers of the presence of pedestrians at key intersections. The School Crossing Guard Program is one of the many countermeasures identified in Toronto's Vision Zero Road Safety Plan to improve safety around schools.

In Toronto, the School Crossing Guard Program has been operated by Toronto Police Service (TPS) since 1947. In January 2017, Toronto Police Service's Transformational Task Force released a report called: *Action Plan: The Way Forward*, which

recommended that the School Crossing Guard program be transferred to the City of Toronto so that the police could focus on their core policing duties. As of August 1, 2019, Transportation Services became fully responsible for operating the School Crossing Guard Program.

The City of Toronto's School Crossing Guard Program is the largest in Canada. As of September 2019, 704 locations are to be served. The program is more than three times larger than the next largest program in the cities of Hamilton and Ottawa (roughly 200 school crossing guard locations each). These 704 locations are served by 706 school crossing guards (two locations each have two crossing guards). The City awarded the contract to provide school crossing guard services throughout the city to Carraway Inc. and ASP Inc.

Process of Hiring of Existing Guards

Following the award of the contract, the contact information of the 689 existing school crossing guards from Toronto Police Service was shared with Carraway Inc. and ASP Inc. The vendors immediately made multiple efforts to contact the existing school crossing guards to make arrangements for them to attend the three-step hiring process in July and August:

- **Attend an Information Session** - Guards were provided an overview of the company and the new program. The existing guards were provided the first opportunity to be hired as a school crossing guard with the relevant vendor.
- **Attend a Training Session** - All interested school crossing guards were then required to attend a mandatory training session to ensure that they would be able to fulfill their duties for the start of school (including Occupational Health & Safety training and understanding the roles and responsibilities of a crossing guard). In addition, they were also provided with training on how to use a mobile application to view their schedules, and sign in and out of their shifts.
- **Attend an Equipment Pick-up Session** - Hired school crossing guards were then scheduled to pick-up their equipment. Additional training on the mobile application was provided to the school crossing guards who required more training.

As of August 30, 2019, 70% of the existing school crossing guards were either hired or conditionally hired by the vendors for the new program. This included 468 existing guards who were hired, and 15 guards who were identified to be on vacation during the July and August months and were hired conditionally by the vendors. The vendors made arrangements with these individuals to proceed through the hiring process within the first two weeks of September 2019.

There were 132 guards who indicated that they were no longer interested in participating in the school crossing guard program. There remained 74 who the vendors were unable to contact after multiple attempts. The vendors left multiple voicemails, sent registered letters and tried to visit those guards in person at the addresses provided by the Toronto Police Service.

Table 1. Summary of School Crossing Guard Employment Status

Permanent Guards Required	706
Backfill Guards (10% Overcapacity)	70
Total Number of Guards Required for September 2019	776
Existing Guards Hired	468
Existing Guards Hired Conditionally (On Vacation)	15
Existing Guard Not Interested	132
Existing Guards Unable to Contact After Multiple Attempts	74
Total Number of Existing Guards	689
New Guards Hired (Permanently)	293
New Guards Hired (Temporarily to cover existing guards on vacation)	15
Total Number of New Guards Hired	308

In addition to reaching out to the guards, the vendors made every effort for the hired existing school crossing guards to remain at their current locations, to ensure maximum continuity in September 2019.

The vendors used a comprehensive, yet accommodating approach to ensure that as many of the existing guards were hired and remained at their existing locations. Out of the 468 existing guards who were hired, 331 existing guards remained at their existing locations. 71% of the existing guards remained at their location because:

- Some existing guards requested to be at a different location;
- Some existing guards who were hired were previously backfill guards and did not have permanent location; or
- Some existing guards requested to be part-time rather than a full-time guard. In order to accommodate this request, the vendors made every effort to place them at the same location but required that they also service other locations in the area if a vacancy comes up.

A total of 791 school crossing guards have been hired. An additional 15 new guards were hired temporarily to cover the locations served by the 15 existing guards that were hired conditionally. Once the 15 existing guards have returned and confirmed their employment, the 15 temporary new guards will continue to serve as backfill guards.

Ensuring 100% Coverage of all Locations

The main requirement of the contract is to ensure 100% coverage at all crossing guard locations. The vendors are ensuring 100% coverage by providing:

- **Emergency Backfill** - Both vendors have a 10% overcapacity in the number of school crossing guards hired to ensure that when school crossing guards are absent, there are additional guards available to cover locations.
- **Mobile Supervisors** - Both vendors have a team of mobile supervisors patrolling all locations once per week to ensure school crossing guards are present.
- **Monitoring System** - Each vendor has a monitoring system that confirms school crossing guard attendance at each location. Guards are required to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the shift and to sign in and out for each shift using the mobile application provided by the vendors. This monitoring system alerts the supervisors if a school crossing guard does not show up and allows for a backfill school crossing guard to be deployed and to arrive to the location on time.

In conclusion, many efforts were made by the vendors to ensure existing school crossing guards had the first opportunity to continue their role as a school crossing guard and also remain in their same locations. The vendors were able to hire 70% of the existing school crossing guards and placed them in the same locations.

School Crossing Guard Coverage during the First Two Weeks of School

Overall, there was a 95.8% coverage rate for the first week of school and a 98.8% coverage rate for the second week. During week 1 there were an average of 88 shifts out of 2097 shifts missed by crossing guards due to no-shows or illness each day. During week 2, this number was reduced to an average of 24 shifts missed. The number of shifts where guards were late or did not show up reduced significantly by week 2 and staff continue to work with the vendors to ensure coverage.

Week 1:

- Tuesday: 93 shifts at 32 locations – 1 location had same day coverage
- Wednesday: 95 shifts at 32 locations - 1 location had same day coverage
- Thursday: 83 shifts at 28 locations - 1 location had same day coverage
- Friday: 82 shifts at 31 locations – 5 locations had same day coverage

Week 2:

- Monday: 35 shifts at 12 locations – 2 locations had same day coverage
- Tuesday: 37 shifts at 13 locations – 2 locations had same day coverage
- Wednesday: 22 shifts at 8 locations – 1 location had same day coverage
- Thursday: 13 shifts at 5 locations – 1 location had same day coverage
- Friday: 15 shifts at 5 locations – no locations had same day coverage

When a guard was absent, the City immediately reached out to the vendors to assign a backfill guard to the location. Although 100% of the locations had a school crossing guard assigned for every day of the first week of school, some of the assigned guards did not show up and the vendors attempted to backfill the locations by the next shift. Due to challenges in double/triple booking guards to the same location, same day coverage was lower at the beginning of the first week. By the end of the first week, there was improvement in having a guard present by the next shift (same day).

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SIGNATURE

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