

Supplementary Report - School Crossing Guard Program Update and Results of the Request for Proposal 9148-19-0114 for the Provision of School Crossing Guard Services

Date: June 14, 2019
To: City Council
From: General Manager, Transportation Services
Wards: All

SUMMARY

At its meeting on May 23, 2019, the Infrastructure and Environment Committee adopted, as amended, *IE5.5 School Crossing Guard Program Updated and Results of the Request for Proposal 9148-19-0114 for the Provision of School Crossing Guard Services*. The Committee directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to report directly to City Council on the "true costs" of the School Crossing Guard Program and transferring the budget for the program from the Toronto Police Service's budget to the Transportation Services budget, and to report directly to City Council on a cost sharing arrangement with the local school boards in providing new or enhanced school crossing guard services.

This supplementary report provides City Council with further information regarding the "true costs" of the School Crossing Guard Program and the investigation on a cost sharing arrangement with the local school boards in providing new or enhanced school crossing guard services.

This report was prepared in consultation with Toronto Police Service and the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial impacts to the City of Toronto as a result of the receipt of 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 May 23, 2019, Infrastructure and Environment Committee considered IE5.5 School Crossing Guard Program Update and Results of the Request for Proposal 9148-19-0114 for the Provision of School Crossing Guard Service and was requested to report directly to City Council at its meeting on June 18 and 19, 2019 regarding the "true costs" of the School Crossing Guard Program and a cost sharing arrangement with the local school boards in providing a new or enhanced school crossing guard services. The Committee decision can be found at:

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

COMMENTS

As directed by Infrastructure and Environment Committee, Transportation Services conducted an in-depth analysis on the "true costs" of the School Crossing Guard Program and an investigation on a cost sharing arrangement with the local school boards in providing new or enhanced school crossing guard services. Summarized below are the results of the cost analysis of the program and progress of the cost sharing investigation.

Analysis of the Cost of the School Crossing Guard Program

A cost comparison between Toronto Police Service (TPS) management of the program at 601 locations for a total of \$9.783M versus the City managing the program through third-party contractors at 710 locations for a total of \$24.984M is provided in Attachment 1 of this report.

The cost difference of \$15.201M provides enhanced school crossing guard services throughout the city and is primarily attributed to:

- An additional 109 school crossing guard locations approved during the period September 2017 to April 2019, based on requests received by the TPS. These locations are in addition to the 601 locations the TPS was operating in 2017, when the original estimate was developed.
- Increased hourly wage for the school crossing guards from the TPS weighted average rate of \$16.00/hour (including benefits, vacation pay, travel allowance, etc.) to City's proposed vendors' average rate of \$19.00/hour (including benefits, vacation pay, etc.)
- Increased number of hours compensated for each shift from TPS's average rate of 1.2 hours/shift to City's proposed vendors' average rate of 2.3 hours/shift to ensure 100% coverage for all shifts. There are 3 shifts per day and each shift is typically 1 to 1.5 hours long. The vendors will be requiring the normal guards to arrive in advance of each shift by adding a buffer time at the beginning of each shift to allow time to arrange for a backfill guard if the normal guard does not show up in time.
- Continuous training and retraining for the City's proposed vendor's guards to ensure quality assurance of guard performance while TPS only provided training to crossing guards when they are first hired. TPS does not provide retraining to any guards until a number of complaints have been received and additional training is required for the specific guard.
- Use of a GPS system by the City's proposed vendors to ensure accountability for the presence of a guard at each location, while TPS did not have such system
- City's proposed vendors are establishing a comprehensive, year-round employee recognition program to motivate guards and show appreciation for their work. TPS has an annual recognition program at the end of the school year, which is not accounted for in this breakdown as funding is accounted for in the TPS-wide program to recognize all employees.
- The City's proposed vendors are establishing consistent services and communications to the schools and community. The TPS operated the school crossing guard program under a decentralized model.

The additional cost provides many value-added services to the School Crossing Guard Program to ensure consistent service across the city and 100% coverage at all school crossing guard locations.

Table 1 outlines the detailed difference between TPS and the City's model of operating the school crossing guard program for the cost comparison table in Attachment 1. The City's proposed vendors provided the City with a high level breakdown of the total cost of their contracts. The cost breakdown in Attachment 1 is the City's analysis of the high level breakdown from the proposed vendors.

Table 1. Detailed Comparison: TPS vs. City Cost Considerations

	TPS	City
Number of Locations	601 locations	710 locations
Crossing Guard Compensation (Regular Program)	3 shifts per day. Compensated for 1.2 hours/shift. Average of \$16.00/hour (including vacation pay, fringe benefits, travel allowance, etc.).	3 shifts per day. Compensated for 2.3 hours/day. Average of \$19.00/hour (including vacation pay, fringe benefits, etc.).
Crossing Guard Equipment	Basic equipment (stop sign, whistle, vest) plus an overcoat and some additional equipment, no ID badge.	Basic equipment (stop sign, whistle, stop sign, ID badge) plus additional equipment to ensure the health and safety of the guards working outside, such as winter coats, rain coats, shirts, hats, etc.
Crossing Guard Backfill Program	Only accounts for the police officers who assist with backfilling the guard vacancies. Does not include the spare guards that are part of the Regular Program, as these spares guards are only paid when they perform a backfill. Average pay for police officers at \$54/hour (including vacation pay, fringe benefits).	A standby rate paid to ensure 100% coverage is achieved. Backfill shift is same as regular shift.
Management/Supervision	Each coordinator has varying span of control ranging from 20:1 to 100:1 ratio of crossing guards to supervisors.	Consistent span of control at an average 20:1 ratio of crossing guards to supervisors.
Training	Provides training to new guards at the start of their work for 1 hour. No retraining offered. Retraining on a request basis if a number of complaints have been received regarding the specific guard.	Provides annual training to ensure quality assurance of guard performance and conduct.

	TPS	City
Employee Recognition	Not accounted for in this breakdown. Funding accounted for in the TPS-wide program to recognize all employees.	Robust employee recognition program to motivate guards and show appreciation.
GPS System	N/A	Ensures accountability of guard presence at each location.
Administration and HR	Includes police check, recruitment, and payroll.	Includes, but not limited to police check, recruitment, and payroll. Includes establishment of consistent services and communications to the schools and community.
Estimated Cost	\$9.783 M	\$24.984 M

Transfer of Budget from Toronto Police Service

In 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 with the Toronto Police Service continuing to provide the school crossing guard program until July 31, 2019. TPS transferred \$7.524M in operating budget to Transportation Services. However, it was determined that the "true cost" of operating the program at 601 locations, was actually \$9.783M, which includes indirect costs/overhead (as outlined in Attachment 1). The budget transferred from TPS to Transportation Services was to provide oversight and fund program delivery by a City hired third-party service provider starting August 1, 2019. The difference of \$2.259M were costs absorbed by TPS and cannot be transferred as they are sunk costs.

Cost Sharing Arrangement with the Local School Boards

On May 29, 2019, a letter was sent to Dr. John Malloy, Director of Education for the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and a letter was sent to Mr. Rory McGuckin, Director of Education for the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) to seek advice from the local school boards on the feasibility of a cost sharing arrangement for the School Crossing Guard Program (see letters in Attachment 2). Since the issuance of the letter, Transportation Services staff have been in touch with TDSB and TCDSB staff respectively to continue discussions on this topic.

TDSB is still investigating this matter.

TCDSB has advised that the Board currently lacks the appropriate financial resources to enter into an immediate cost sharing arrangement for the program and will be presenting their recommendation on this matter at their [Board Meeting](#) on Thursday June 13, 2019. The TCDSB Director of Education will be officially responding to the City of Toronto inquiry following their Board Meeting, if the recommendations are adopted. However, discussions may continue forward on potential efficiencies that could be created to provide funding in the future.

In addition, a jurisdictional scan was conducted regarding a cost sharing model for school crossing guard programs and it was found that these programs are fully funded by the local municipalities. We understand that where municipalities, such as the City of Orillia, have requested funding assistance from their Boards of Education, funding assistance was not provided.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Cost Comparison: Toronto Police Service (TPS) vs. City of Toronto
Attachment 2: Letters to the TDSB and TCDSB Directors of Education