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ROAD WATCH PROGRAM UPDATE

The Transportation Services Committee recommends:

- 1. Receipt of the presentation by Nelson Costa, Manager, Road Safety & Traffic Data Management and Staff Sergeant Brad Bulmer, York Regional Police; and**
- 2. Adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated April 4, 2012, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Community Planning.**

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Clerks of the local municipalities.

2. PURPOSE

In response to a November 2, 2011 request from the Transportation Services Committee, this report provides information regarding York Region's Road Watch Program.

3. BACKGROUND

On May 9, 1993, a multi-vehicle collision occurred in Caledon, Ontario, resulting in the death of eight high school students. This incident mobilized the community to take action targeting aggressive driving in order to reduce collisions and fatalities

A multi-vehicle collision in Caledon, Ontario triggered the desire for local residents to take action against aggressive driving.

On January 18, 1995, Road Watch was launched by a group of concerned citizens in the community of Caledon and with the support of Peel Regional Police and the Town of Caledon in response to aggressive driving in their community

Road Watch is a community-based program that gives residents an opportunity to report aggressive driving. The objective of Road Watch is to reduce automotive collisions through awareness, enforcement and education.

On June 26, 2003, Council advised staff to support the York Regional Road Watch Committee through the provision of expertise in areas of traffic safety, administrative support, and financial aid

On June 26, 2003, Council adopted a report recommending an increase in Regional staff involvement with the York Region Road Watch Committee through the provision of expertise in areas of traffic safety, administrative support, and financial aid. This commitment included the consideration of future financial contributions in the areas of publishing, marketing, and education.

At the November 2, 2011 Transportation Services Committee, staff was requested to report back regarding the Road Watch Program

In response to a November 2, 2011 report and presentation on Safety Performance on the Regional Road Network, Transportation Services Committee requested staff report back in April 2012 regarding the Road Watch Program.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Road Watch mandate is to reduce collisions and fatalities using a three-pronged approach; awareness, education and enforcement

The York Region Road Watch Committee is comprised of representatives from each local municipality, York Regional Police, Ontario Provincial Police and Regional staff. The committee meets on a bi-monthly basis as required and follows the philosophy of the Road Watch Program. The York Region Road Watch Committee assists municipal Road Watch Committee members by sharing information, promotional material, educational material and standardizing forms.

The objective of the program is to make roads safe for everyone using a three-pronged approach; awareness, education and enforcement.

- **Awareness** of unsafe driving practices and promoting general road safety is accomplished through media coverage, including social media networks, advertising, public speaking engagements and promotional material made available to community members.
- **Education** is promoted at several levels, including newspaper and bus shelter advertising, street signage, participation at key events, high school presentations and other engagement activities.

- **Enforcement** of safety on roads through Road Watch assists York Regional Police in identification of aggressive driving and traffic problem areas. The Road Watch incident form is a tool for the community to report acts of aggressive driving.

The Road Watch Program is driven by community participation

Community members are encouraged to complete a Road Watch incident form when they observe a motorist demonstrating aggressive driving. A Road Watch incident form can be used in instances of aggressive driving where:

- No collision has occurred
- The suspect driver is unknown
- The suspect's licence plate number was obtained (A brief description of the vehicle is also needed to validate the licence plate information)

Residents can report aggressive driving by completing a Road Watch incident form electronically through the York Regional Police website <http://yrp.ca/roadwatch.aspx>, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1
On-line Road Watch incident form

The screenshot shows the 'My Personal Information' section of the online Road Watch incident form. The header includes the York Regional Police logo and the slogan 'MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY'. A navigation bar at the top indicates the current step is 'Youself', with other steps being 'Start', 'Incident', 'Vehicle', 'Review', and 'Finish'. A 'CALL 9-1-1 EMERGENCY' button is also present. The form fields include: First Name, Last Name, Country (set to Canada), Home Address (with separate fields for Number and Apt/Unit), City / Prov / Postal Code (set to Ontario), Home Phone, Mobile Phone, Email, Confirm Email, Business Phone, Sex (Please Select), and DOB (Month, Day, Year). A copyright notice at the bottom reads 'Copyright © 2009 Coplogic, Inc. All Rights Reserved.' Navigation buttons at the bottom left are '<<<< Back' and 'Continue >'.

This electronic process has the following benefits:

- Gives residents a sense of ownership over road safety
- Information is searchable, queried, and easily retrievable
- Reports are validated by application and automatically approved

- Processing time reduced to one or two days
- The time lapse to complete the submission to sending out the letter is approximately one week

The Road Watch Program consists of a three-step process in reporting aggressive driving to vehicle owners which can lead to targeted enforcement and charges laid

Once an initial submission is received by York Regional Police, the information will be reviewed by an officer. Once verified, a cautionary letter will be issued to the registered vehicle owner outlining the particular aggressive driving action observed at a specific time and location. The letter encourages the driver to voluntarily co-operate and adopt a more defensive driving approach. An opportunity is also given for the vehicle owner to provide their feedback. In 2011, approximately 2,300 forms were received by York Regional Police.

Upon receiving a second Road Watch incident form for the same licence plate holder, York Regional Police will issue a repeat cautionary letter with a follow-up phone call to clarify and establish personal contact for a resolution to the problem.

Upon receiving a third Road Watch incident form for the same licence plate holder, York Regional Police will hand-deliver a third letter to the vehicle owner regarding the problem.

There have been rare occasions where residents continue to observe the same aggressive driving behaviour after a third cautionary letter was hand-delivered to that particular vehicle owner. In such case, York Regional Police will provide targeted enforcement at a particular location to monitor the situation, and lay charges to that particular driver if any traffic violation is observed.

Road Watch statistics show that the number of reports received has increased over the last three years

A review of the Region's Road Watch statistics shows that the number of Road Watch reports received is increasing year after year (See Table 1). Possible factors include the public's awareness of the Road Watch Program, increased number of road users, and population, as well as the switch from paper submission to on-line reporting.

Table 1
Number of Road Watch incident forms received between 2009 and 2011

Municipality	2009	2010	2011	% Change between 2009 & 2011
Aurora	77	98	90	17%
East Gwillimbury	71	93	101	42%
Georgina	31	31	55	77%
King	51	65	79	55%
Markham	396	518	641	62%
Newmarket	102	92	160	57%
Richmond Hill	437	434	508	16%
Vaughan	352	408	443	26%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	127	164	171	35%
Total	1644	1903	2248	37%

The summary of Road Watch incident forms identified, by municipality, is based on the location where the aggressive driving action was witnessed.

York Region is actively promoting the Road Watch Program in partnership with York Regional Police and local municipalities

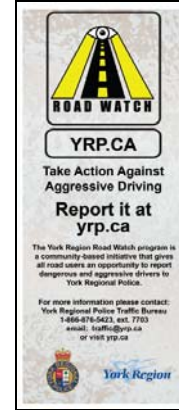
York Region is actively promoting the Road Watch Program on a Regional level. The following is a list of promotional items that either have been implemented, or are currently underway:

- Install Road Watch and “YRP.CA” signs (see Figure 2)
- Market the Road Watch Program through newspaper advertisements (see Figure 3)
- Market the Road Watch Program through bus shelters advertisements
- Promote the Road Watch Program through other promotional materials such as magnets, pens and note pads at key community events

Figure 2
Road Watch Sign



Figure 3
Road Watch Newspaper Ads



Social media will be used to promote Road Watch initiatives and events

In 2011, the Region launched its Twitter page and Facebook page, which is designed to complement the existing communication outreach, and offering residents a new way to obtain information, provide feedback, and connect with their community.

Through this interactive platform, Regional staff will provide residents with Road Watch initiatives and event, which enhance public awareness of the program.

Local municipalities are actively promoting the Road Watch Program at key community events

Local municipalities are actively promoting the Road Watch Program to residents through their active participation at key community events, such as Canada Day celebrations, Santa Claus Parade, Heritage Village Day and the Winter Carnival (see Figure 4). Active marketing and promotion of Road Watch enhances public awareness of the program and builds two-way communication between the municipalities and residents.

Figure 4
Promoting the Road Watch Program at a community event in Richmond Hill



York Regional Police has designated the third week of May as Road Watch week

The goal of Road Watch week is to promote Road Watch. Prior to the May long weekend, each local municipality is encouraged to conduct their individual promotion of Road Watch during the Road Watch week, such as providing education in schools or marketing at municipal events. The Region will provide necessary assistance including posters and other promotional materials. York Regional Police is also available to speak with the media to promote the Road Watch Program in partnership with each municipality.

Link to Key Council-approved Plans

Vision 2026 – promoting safety on York Region roads through effective policing, education and sensitive design, enhancing two-way communication with citizens, including the use of technology to exchange information.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated with the York Region Road Watch Program are included in the 2012 Transportation and Community Planning budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

As noted, local municipalities are requested to designate the third week of May as Road Watch week to promote Road Watch.

The Region will continue to support the Road Watch Program at the local municipal level through the provision of expertise in areas of traffic safety, administrative support, and financial aid. This commitment includes the consideration of future financial contributions in the areas of publishing, marketing, and education.

7. CONCLUSION

Road Watch is a community-based partnership between the Region, local municipalities, York Regional Police, and citizens that gives residents an opportunity to participate and report aggressive driving. From a Regional perspective, it is recommended that Regional staff continue to support the York Region Road Watch Committee through provision of expertise in areas of traffic safety and administrative support.

For more information on this report, please contact Steven Kemp, Director, Traffic Management and Intelligent Transportation Systems at Ext. 5226.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

Road Watch Program

Presentation to
Transportation Services Committee

Nelson Costa
Staff Sergeant Brad Bulmer
April 4, 2012

Outline

- ❑ What is Road Watch
- ❑ Program Origins
- ❑ York Region Road Watch Committee
- ❑ How the Program Works
- ❑ York Region's Road Watch Statistics
- ❑ Marketing Road Watch
- ❑ How can you help?
- ❑ Questions

Road Watch Targets Aggressive Driving

- ❑ Community-based program
- ❑ Designed to give residents an opportunity to report aggressive driving
- ❑ Improves road safety through a community partnership



***Target aggressive driving through
“Awareness, Education & Enforcement”***

Launched by a Group of Concerned Residents

- ❑ On Mother's Day May 9th, 1993. 8 high school students lost their lives in a multi-vehicle collision that occurred in Caledon
- ❑ A few months later, 3 additional lives were lost devastating the Caledon community
- ❑ In 1995, Caledon residents launched Road Watch



Developing Consistency Across the Region

- ❑ The mandate of York Region Road Watch Committee is to assist municipal Road Watch Committee members by sharing information, promotion material, educational material and standardizing forms
- ❑ Members consist of representatives from all nine local municipalities, York Regional Police, and Regional staff



Reports are Completed On-line

The screenshot shows the York Regional Police online reporting interface. At the top, the York Regional Police logo is on the left, the text "YORK REGIONAL POLICE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY" is in the center, and a red "CALL 9-1-1 EMERGENCY" button is on the right. Below this is a navigation bar with links: "Start", "Yourself", "Incident", "Vehicle", "Review", and "Finish". The "Yourself" link is highlighted. The main section is titled "Road Watch:" and "My Personal Information". It contains a yellow box with instructions: "Please enter your information as completely as possible. You may be contacted regarding this incident. An email address is required if you would like to be notified when this report is received and approved." Below this are input fields for "First Name", "Last Name", and "Country" (with "Canada" selected). There are also dropdown menus for "Province" and "City", and a text field for "Apt/Unit".

Citizen
Submits
Electronic
Form from
yrp.ca
website

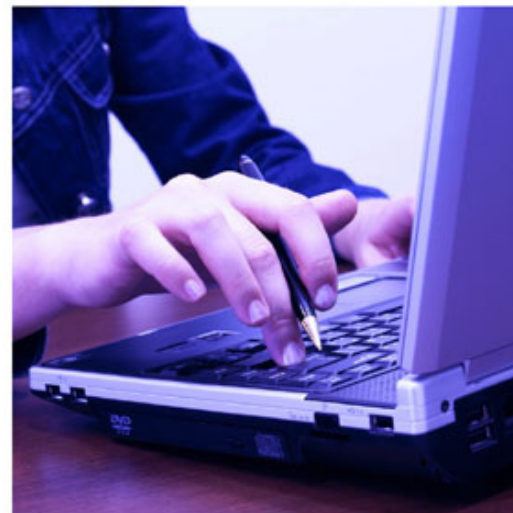
Incident is
entered
into YRP
records

Information
is verified

Warning letter is
mailed or hand
delivered to the
registered
vehicle owner

Benefits of New Process

- Convenient
- Efficient
- Information Management



The Number of Incident Forms Received is on the Rise

Municipality	2009	2010	2011	% Change 2009 to 2011
Aurora	77	98	90	17%
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Georgina	31	31	55	77%
King	51	65	79	55%
Markham	396	518	641	62%
Newmarket	102	92	160	57%
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Vaughan	352	408	443	26%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	127	164	171	35%
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Creating Awareness with a Consistent Marketing Approach

- ❑ Increase Road Watch signs
- ❑ Install “YRP.CA” tabs
- ❑ Community events
- ❑ Newspaper advertisement
- ❑ Bus shelter posters
- ❑ Promotional materials:
 - ❑ brochures, ice scrapers,
 - ❑ key chains, flashlights, and magnets



Participation will Help with Continued Success

- ❑ Use the Road Watch online reporting system
- ❑ Encourage others to use the system
- ❑ Market the program within your municipalities
- ❑ Use the program to respond to complaints
- ❑ Designate a municipal liaison person
- ❑ Endorse Road Watch Week May 13 to 19



Take action against aggressive driving.....

Report it!

Questions?