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PEDESTRIAN COUNTDOWN SIGNAL DISPLAY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, March 18, 2005, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The implementation program identified for pedestrian countdown signal display (PCSD) associated in this report be approved.
2. The Regional Clerk forwards a copy of this report to the Clerks of local municipalities.

2. PURPOSE

This report identifies a pedestrian countdown signal display (PCSD) implementation program for 25 signalized intersections within The Regional Municipality of York.

3. BACKGROUND

At the Regional Council meeting of November 8, 2001, a recommendation was adopted directing staff to conduct a one-year implementation and evaluation of the PCSD at three intersections. Since the one-year evaluation, Regional Council at its meeting held December 19, 2002, Regional Council adopted a policy, Clause 5, embodied in Report No. 11, to outline a criteria for the installation of PCSD. The criteria are as follows:

- Intersections characterized with wide intersection pedestrian crossings distances.
- Proximity to schools.
- Proximity to senior centres having a high percentage of pedestrian usage.

The Region uses standard pedestrian crosswalk displays at signalized intersections. The standard pedestrian signal indications provide a symbolic display that consists of a walking man silhouette, a flashing hand and a solid hand indication. These displays convey to the pedestrian when to walk (walking man), when not to start walking (flashing hand) and when not to walk (solid hand) across the road. By comparison, pedestrian countdown signal displays (PCSD) operate using the standard signal indications with an additional indication showing a descending numerical countdown of the duration of time for each symbolic display in seconds.

During this past winter, Regional staff received several request from local staff and elected officials at municipalities for the installation of PCSD. As a result of these specific requests all local municipalities were requested to submit a list of potential locations for PCSD.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The locations for PCSD are reviewed by staff and assessed in accordance with the policy. Staff has received requests to install PCSD at 42 intersections from all local municipalities.

4.1 PCSD Benefits

PCSD provide pedestrians a better comprehension of the misunderstood "flashing hand" by counting down exactly how much time is left to cross the street. Because of the safety benefit, PCSD are considered at distinct locations in accordance with the Region's policy.

Attachment 1 identifies PCSD candidate locations. Regional staff identified 25 intersections satisfying the PCSD requirements and having 100 pedestrians crossing the major road within an eight-hour period. As a result it is proposed, 25 PCSD be implemented during 2005. Future PCSD will be considered at new traffic control signal intersections or when pedestrian patterns change significantly at existing signalized intersections.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost(s) to retrofit a pedestrian signal with a countdown device is typically approximately \$4,000 per intersection. The costs associated with 25 PCSD implementing is approximately \$100,000. The cost for this program is included within the Region's 2005 Capital Signal Improvement Program Budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The proposed PCSD locations have been identified by the local staff and elected officials at municipalities for the Region's consideration. Based on our analysis, there are 25 intersections satisfying the required criteria.

7. CONCLUSION

Based upon all nine local municipalities staff input and Regional staff review, it is recommended the proposed PCSD implementation program be adopted. The

implementation program has been prioritized based upon a minimum 100 pedestrians crossing the major road and complying with the Regional Council approved guidelines.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)