



CITY OF RICHMOND

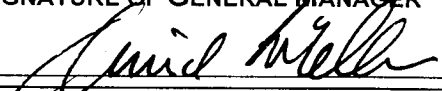
REPORT TO COMMITTEE

TO: Public Works and Transportation Committee **DATE:** February 8, 2001
FROM: Gordon Chan, P. Eng.
 Manager, Transportation **FILE:** 6450-09
RE: TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK (MARCH 5 – 9, 2001)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council support the 2001 Traffic Safety Awareness Week (March 5 – 9, 2001) activities initiated by the Richmond District Parents Association, with the sponsorship of ICBC Loss Prevention and the RoadSense Team and the participation of the *Way to Go!* School Program, and endorse staff involvement as part of the City's on-going traffic safety education strategy; and
2. That Council officially proclaim March 5 – 9, 2001 as "Traffic Safety Awareness Week."


for Gordon Chan, P. Eng.
Manager, Transportation

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY
SIGNATURE OF GENERAL MANAGER


STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

Traffic Safety Awareness Week is an annual campaign held by the Richmond District Parents Association (RDPA) with the involvement of the City to promote traffic safety for students and parents and to encourage the use of alternative travel methods to and from school. This event is sponsored by ICBC Loss Prevention and the RoadSense Team and also has the participation of the Richmond *Way to Go!* School Program. This year marks the fifth anniversary of the event and, as in previous years, it will again involve all Richmond schools. The Richmond District Parents Association has requested that the City officially proclaim the week of March 5 – 9, 2001 as “Traffic Safety Awareness Week.”

ANALYSIS

1. Purpose of the Event

The annual number of reported traffic collisions in Richmond has steadily decreased from an average of 3,000 – 4,000 incidents over the 1994-1996 period to 2,000 – 2,200 incidents over the 1997-2000 period. The collective efforts of the City (traffic education and engineering initiatives), ICBC (Road Safety Improvement and RoadSense programs), the RCMP (Speed Watch and corridor enforcement programs), and other community traffic safety initiatives, such as Traffic Safety Awareness Week, have been key factors in achieving this substantial reduction in traffic incidents.

Traffic Safety Awareness Week has been an important contributor to this enhanced level of traffic safety within the community, particularly around school zones. The event is a key component of the City’s traffic safety *education* strategy which, together with *enforcement* and *engineering* strategies, comprise the multi-faceted “3 E’s” Program for enhancing traffic safety in the City. The education initiatives seek to address the traffic safety problem at the source by changing driver behaviour and encouraging alternative modes of transportation.

Traffic Safety Awareness Week is a proactive campaign aimed at educating the public on traffic safety, particularly at and in the vicinity of school sites, and promoting alternative transportation modes for travelling to and from school. The primary purposes of this event are to:

- educate students about traffic safety at an early age;
- raise the awareness of traffic safety among elementary and secondary school students;
- educate all drivers, including parents who drive their children to and from school, of the importance of respecting school zone traffic regulations, such as no stopping areas and the reduced speed limit of 30 km/hr; and
- encourage the use of alternative travel methods (walking, public transit and cycling) for the trip between home and school.

2. Past Year Event Activities

A number of special events were organized at Richmond schools during the 2000 Traffic Safety Awareness Week, held March 6 – 10, 2000. Highlights of the campaign are described below.

School Activities

- Distribution of representative “parking tickets” hand-made by students to drivers violating “No Stopping” and “No Parking” regulations within school zones.

- Intra-school class challenges and incentives for students to walk, cycle or take public transit to and from school over the entire week.
- Poster contests and signage displays inside and outside schools, and various classroom activities related to raising awareness of traffic safety.

Way to Go! Program

- Decoration of telephone poles and sign posts in the vicinity of schools with yellow RoadSense Team tape and yellow balloons to serve as visual reminders and warnings to drivers of the presence of pedestrians and schoolchildren.
- Kick-off day at Tait Elementary School to coincide with the inauguration of a Way to Go! Program at the school. This program has been very successful over the past year with up to 100 students involved on five different walking routes.
- Participation of 16 elementary schools on "Walking Yellow Wednesday," with General Currie Elementary School the winner, at 95 percent, of an inter-school challenge for the highest student participation rate. The school was awarded a bronzed shoe donated by Councillor Lyn Greenhill for their efforts.

Enforcement and Education

- Presentations to school assemblies by RCMP School Liaison Officers on traffic safety.
- Increased presence and traffic regulation enforcement by RCMP and City Bylaw Enforcement in school zones.

Publicity and Participation

- Local newspaper coverage of Traffic Safety Awareness Week, including the *Way to Go!* Program at Tait Elementary School and the district-wide "Walking Yellow Wednesday" inter-school challenge.
- Press release to local papers from Richmond District Parents Association announcing the event. The RDPA also contacted all reader boards in Richmond to help advertise the event.
- Participation of RDPA representatives, Councillor Greenhill, City of Richmond staff, RCMP and the RCMP Safety Bear mascot on "Walking Yellow Wednesday" at Tait Elementary School.

3. Planned Activities for 2001

The goal of the RDPA during Traffic Safety Awareness Week is to raise awareness of traffic issues among both drivers and students and create safer traffic environments at schools. The main activities for this year's campaign are described below.

School Activities

- Distribution of Traffic Safety Awareness Week resource kits (sponsored by ICBC Loss Prevention and the RoadSense Team) to all elementary and secondary schools.
- Elementary school packages include posters on traffic safety themes, yellow RoadSense Team tape to be tied along walking routes to schools, traffic safety pamphlets and brochures, and suggested classroom exercises that promote safe pedestrian practices that can be implemented by individual schools.
- Secondary school packages will also focus on cycling as an alternative transportation mode and include City of Richmond cycling maps and bicycle safety brochures.
- Classrooms that undertake the suggested exercises will be eligible for prizes from the RoadSense Team.

Way to Go! Program

- Encouragement of schools to participate in the *Way to Go!* Program, which is aimed at reducing the number of vehicle trips to and from school, by organizing a "Walking Yellow Wednesday."
- Kick-off day at Tait Elementary School to celebrate the first anniversary of its *Way to Go!* Program at the school.
- The event will feature the ICBC Road Safety mascot and the possible participation of a RoadSense Team Community Partner representative(s) from the BC Lions football team, who will walk with the schoolchildren to school.
- Inter-school challenge to achieve the highest student participation rate on "Walking Yellow Wednesday." All participating schools will receive a *Way to Go!* Certificate of Achievement and Mayor Halsey-Brandt has donated a shoe that will be bronzed and mounted to become a trophy to be awarded to the annual winner.

Enforcement and Education

- Increased RCMP presence along corridors in the vicinity of schools and increased RCMP and City Bylaw enforcement of school zone traffic regulations.
- Participation of local Speed Watch groups who will monitor and display traffic speeds in the vicinity of schools.
- Distribution by the Richmond School District of the Chinese language version of the second edition of the "*Traffic Safety Around Schools and Playgrounds*" brochure to coincide with the campaign.

Publicity and Participation

- Separate press releases by the RDP and ICBC to advertise and raise awareness of the event. ICBC's Marketing and Communications Department will endeavour to ensure television and radio coverage of the kick-off day at Tait Elementary School.
- Official proclamation by City of March 5 – 9, 2001 as "Traffic Safety Awareness Week" (subject to Mayor's approval).
- Invitations to Mayor and Council to participate in "Walking Yellow Wednesday" at Tait Elementary School.
- Photograph and autograph sessions with the RoadSense Team Community Partner representative(s) from the BC Lions football team.


FINANCIAL IMPACT

Staff provide organizers of the annual Traffic Safety Awareness Week with time, resources and technical support as part of the City's on-going traffic safety education initiatives. The activities have no direct financial impact on the City.

CONCLUSION

Traffic safety education is a cornerstone of the City's strategy to enhance traffic safety around schools. The 2001 Traffic Safety Awareness Week campaign (March 5 – 9, 2001) is a proactive program intended to educate elementary and secondary school students on traffic safety, raise the awareness of parents and other motorists on the importance of observing traffic control devices and regulations particularly at and around school sites, and encourage alternative travel modes to and from school. Staff therefore request that the City endorse the campaign and officially proclaim March 5 – 9, 2001 as "Traffic Safety Awareness Week."


Joan Caravan
Transportation Planner I


FOR Carlos Rocha
Traffic Technician II

WHEREAS, Traffic Safety Awareness Week is an annual campaign that has been an important contributor to an enhanced level of traffic safety within the community, particularly around school zones; and

WHEREAS, the 5th annual Traffic Safety Awareness Week will be held in Richmond from March 5th to the 9th, 2001;

WHEREAS, Many of our schools will be involved in the organization of special events and activities to promote traffic safety awareness and to encourage the use of alternative travel modes to and from school,

NOW THEREFORE, I, Greg Halsey-Brandt, as MAYOR of the City of Richmond, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM the week of March 5th to 9th, 2001, as,

"TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK"

in the City of Richmond

Greg Halsey-Brandt
MAYOR