



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee *to Public Works & Transportation - Feb 18, 2004* Date: January 26, 2004
From: Gordon Chan, P. Eng. File: 6450-09
Director, Transportation
Re: **TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK – MARCH 1-5, 2004**

Staff Recommendation

That Council endorse the 2004 Traffic Safety Awareness Week (March 1-5, 2004) activities initiated by the Richmond District Parents Association, sponsored by ICBC, the Autoplan Broker Road Safety Program and the Richmond School Board with the participation of the *Way to Go!* School Program, CARS BC and the *Off Ramp* Program of Better Environmentally Sound Transportation, as outlined in the attached report, and endorse staff involvement as part of the City's on-going traffic safety education strategy.

Gordon Chan, P. Eng.
Director, Transportation
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CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER

Staff Report

Origin

Since 1996, the Richmond District Parents Association (RDPA), with the involvement of the City, has held an annual campaign to promote traffic safety for students and parents and to encourage the use of alternative travel methods to and from school. This year's event, which again involves all Richmond schools, is sponsored by ICBC Loss Prevention, the Autoplan Broker Road Safety Program and the Richmond School Board and also has the participation of the City, the *Way to Go!* School Program, CARS BC, and the *Off Ramp* Program of Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST).

This report provides highlights of the 2003 Traffic Safety Awareness Week campaign and describes the planned activities for the 2004 event. This event is an important element of the City's overall traffic safety enhancement initiatives. Council endorsement of this event will help publicize and raise awareness of the campaign and traffic safety within the community.

Analysis

1. Purpose of Traffic Safety Awareness Week

Traffic Safety Awareness Week has contributed greatly to an enhanced level of traffic safety within the community, particularly around school zones. This annual event is a proactive campaign aimed at educating the public on traffic safety, particularly in school zones, 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 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 Campaign Activities

A number of special events were organized at Richmond schools during last year's Traffic Safety Awareness Week, held March 3-7, 2003. Highlights of the campaign, which featured the theme of "Keep Our Future Safe," are listed below.

- Distribution of bright yellow plastic lawn signs to elementary schools participating in the "Keep Our Future Safe" campaign.
- Distribution of Traffic Safety Awareness Week resource and information kits to all elementary and secondary schools.
- 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 Grauer Elementary School (2002 winner of the Walking Yellow Wednesday challenge) that featured the RCMP Safety Bear mascot, players from the Richmond Sockeyes hockey team and student presentations.
- Participation of 26 elementary schools (up from 22 in 2002) in the inter-school "Walking Yellow Wednesday" challenge to achieve the highest student participation rate. Grauer and Tait Elementary Schools each recorded 100% participation and were co-winners of the Mayor's Golden Shoe Award.
- Television and newspaper coverage of the kick-off day at Grauer Elementary School.
- Participation of Mayor Brodie, Councillor McNulty, Richmond School Trustees, RDPA representatives, ICBC, RCMP, and City staff in "Walking Yellow Wednesday" at Grauer Elementary School.
- Increased RCMP and City Bylaw enforcement of school zone traffic regulations and participation of local Speed Watch groups.
- Distribution of the "Special Crosswalks: A Guide for Drivers and Pedestrians" brochure that highlights the responsibilities of pedestrians and motorists when the crosswalks are in use.
- Installation of ICBC-sponsored "Keep Our Future Safe" street banners at selected locations throughout the City.

3. Planned Activities for 2004 Campaign

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. This year's campaign continues the "Keep Our Future Safe" theme and features the following events.

School Zone Signage

- Elementary schools participating in the "Keep Our Future Safe" campaign will display bright yellow plastic lawn signs (sponsored by ICBC Loss Prevention and the Autoplan Broker RoadSense Team) with the various messages such as "Please Slow Down - School Zone."
- Parent volunteers will place the signs along the roadway within the school zone area around the school. The signs will be displayed during Traffic Safety Awareness Week and on a rotating basis throughout the remainder of the school year.

School Resource Kits

- Distribution of Traffic Safety Awareness Week resource and information kits to all elementary and secondary schools.
- Elementary school packages will include yellow survey tape to be tied along walking routes to schools, traffic safety pamphlets and brochures, curriculum resource and *Way to Go!* information to promote safe pedestrian and cycling practices that can be implemented by individual schools.
- Secondary school packages will include information on CARS BC, a program that helps initiate road safety clubs in secondary schools, BEST's *Off Ramp* Program, which encourages a reduction in the number of motor vehicle trips to and from secondary schools, and cycling resources such as the City of Richmond's on-street cycling network map.

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" on March 3, 2004.

- Kick-off day at Tait Elementary School (co-winner of last year's Walking Yellow Wednesday challenge) that will feature the RCMP Safety Bear mascot and walking school buses.
- 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 the winner will be awarded the Golden Shoe trophy.

Enforcement Initiatives

- Increased presence and enforcement of traffic regulations in school zones and along corridors in the vicinity of schools by Richmond RCMP and City Bylaw.
- Monitor and display of traffic speeds in school zones by local Speed Watch groups.
- Enhanced enforcement on weekends through its criminal driving behaviour and CounterAttack programs with the assistance of the Richmond Citizens Crime Watch Patrol.

Publicity and Awareness Activities


- The tray placemats of all McDonald's restaurants in Richmond will feature traffic safety information and messages during Traffic Safety Awareness Week.
- Placement of advertisement in the City Page of the *Richmond Review* announcing the campaign and describing its objectives.
- Press releases by the City and RCMP to raise awareness of the campaign launch and of "Walking Yellow Wednesday" on March 3, 2004.
- The press releases will encourage television and radio coverage of the kick-off day at Tait Elementary School. The principal of the school will invite Mayor and Councillors to participate in the event.

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 initiatives. These activities are part of the Transportation Department's regular work program related to traffic safety enhancement and require no additional financial resource.

Conclusion

Traffic safety education is a cornerstone of the City's strategy to enhance traffic safety around schools. The 2004 Traffic Safety Awareness Week campaign (March 1-5, 2004) is a proactive program intended to educate elementary and secondary school students on traffic safety, emphasize the importance of parents and other motorists observing traffic regulations particularly at and around school sites, and encourage alternative travel modes to and from school. These activities will be complemented by increased enforcement activities by Richmond RCMP and educational notices to be placed in the City Page of the *Richmond Review*. Staff therefore request that Council endorse the 2004 Traffic Safety Awareness Week campaign activities.



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