



CITY OF RICHMOND

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

TO: Community Safety Committee
FROM: S/Sgt. K.M. Hildebrand
Acting Operations Support Officer

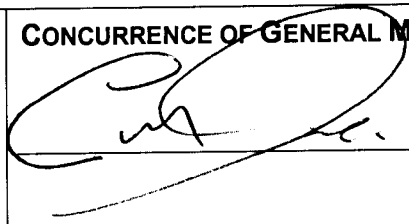
DATE: August 15, 2001
FILE:

RE: Replacement Enforcement for Photo Radar

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Options set out in the report of the Acting Operations Support Officer, be forwarded to staff for consideration at their staff workshop which will be addressing policing service levels.


S/Sgt. K.M. Hildebrand
Acting Operations Support Officer

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Emergency and Environmental Programs..	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
R.C.M.P.	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	

STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

A previous report on the History of Photo Radar in Richmond, resulted in direction to staff to report back with options available to the City to fill the traffic enforcement void left by the discontinuance of the photo radar program.

BACKGROUND

In 1999, Photo Radar issued 5,500 violation photos. In 2000, 4,653 violation photos were issued for the first eleven months. Data for December 2000 to the present has not been received.

A traffic officer issues, on average, 1,500 charges per year. This does not include warnings, prohibitions, impaired driving charges, or any investigations. To achieve the equivalent of the 5,000 charges a year issued through the photo radar program using traffic officers would require three officers, dedicated to traffic duties.

Photo Radar enforcement was for "speed" only. The service was provided at no cost to the City as the Province funded all costs. Photo Radar locations were determined through consultation between the City and the Integrated Traffic Control Unit (I.T.C.U.).

There are many other programs that address "traffic" enforcement issues. They are listed below:

Other Provincial Programs

Red Light Intersection Cameras:

Cameras are placed at high accident intersections, to deter the running of yellow and red lights.

Enhanced Corridor Enforcement

Traffic Section along with the Attorney General's office have identified a corridor for enhanced enforcement. This enforcement is funded by I.C.B.C. and conducted on an overtime basis with members of the Richmond Detachment. Enforcement in 1998 and 1999 was on Blundell. The corridor was changed to Cambie for 2000 and 2001 because of accident patterns.

Enhanced Counter Attack

This is another initiative that is funded by I.C.B.C. and under the direction of the Province. This program provides enforcement on the streets of Richmond at no cost to the City targeting, drinking drivers, defective vehicles, motor vehicle regulations infractions and other Criminal code matters. Areas targeted are determined by alcohol related collision locations, high volume of traffic, and access routes to the City for high visibility.

Richmond Programs

Richmond Police Traffic Section:

The Traffic Section operates with 14 to 17 officers. Their duties include:

- First responder to traffic related issues.
- First responder to general duty related issues.
- Back up unit for general duty, and other units of the Detachment
- Commercial Vehicle enforcement partnership with the Compliance Officers.
- Drinking driving enforcement.
- School zone enforcement.
- Problem Orientated Policing (POPS) projects.
- Working with Speed Watch.
- Collision investigation.
- Partnership with I.C.B.C. for fraudulent hit and run reports.
- Technical collision investigations.
- School lectures for physics classes in high schools.
- Lecturing locally and for "E" Division Training Branch.
- Enforcement of Criminal code matters.
- Enforcement of Motor Vehicle Act, and Regulations,.
- Monitoring, calibrating ASD, and Data master instrument

Richmond Police General Duties Section

Patrol officers responding to calls for service, already do traffic enforcement. The general duty contingent generally processes more tickets than the traffic section. The reason being the Traffic Section is often busy investigating serious fatal accidents. These investigations at times are very complicated and at times could be considered to be the same as a murder investigation in their demand on resources.

School Liaison Program

Officers assigned to the City high schools regularly give talks on the dangers of driving that include drinking and driving, speeding, racing. This is an ongoing program.

Speed Watch

Speed Watch is a volunteer group, working out of south Arm Community Police station under the guidance of the station constables, and the Traffic Section. Speed Watch in 1999 monitored 10,555 vehicles, and for the year 2000, 8356 vehicles.

Integrated Road Racing Project

This is a problem orientated project to combat illegal street racing in Richmond. Richmond RCMP, Delta Police, Richmond Crime Watch, Deas Island Highway Patrol and MVB Compliance Officers have teamed up to do selected enforcement and known drag/street racing locations.

Traffic Enforcement Options

With the discontinuance of Photo Radar, a number of possible options exist for the management of speeding. They include:

1. Increase Speed Watch:

There are volunteers ready to start a Speed Watch program in East Richmond. This group have been waiting for a Community Police Station to initiate the program. They could start earlier and utilize South Arm for storage of equipment. This could be given to the NCO i/c Community Policing as a project to get going early. I.C.B.C. would provided the funding for the necessary equipment. Cost would be minimal.

2. **Lobby the Province for Increased Funding to replace photo radar:**
Seek representation from the City to lobby for increased funding for enhanced corridor enforcement and Counter Attack. If obtained this could prove to be more effective than photo radar as all aspects of traffic enforcement could be covered.
3. **Traffic Calming Devices:**
Work with City transportation planners to identify high accident risk areas. Devices, signs or road design could then be implemented to slow traffic down. This has been done in areas where illegal street racing is going on. It is costly in both time and money but very effective. There are also inherent problems with access for fire trucks etc.
4. **Heightened awareness by the Police:**
Identify problem areas and initiate POPS projects. This could be achieved by having such things as a traffic enforcement week that is advertised through local papers. Patrol officers could be encouraged to complete reports while parked in problem areas or pay special attention to problem areas.
5. **Increase or redeploy officers:**
An increase in resources would be very expensive. Redeployment could be considered on a temporary basis. The units/sections that would provide officers for selected enforcement would have to sacrifice ongoing programs they are in. This solution is already being considered for problems with marijuana grow operations.

ANALYSIS

The costs for the Provincial programs are paid for by the Province. Enhanced Corridor Enforcement and Counter Attack pay for Richmond officers to work overtime to complete these duties. The average fine for speeding is \$100.00. In 2000, 4,653 violation photos should have generated \$465,300.00. The Province gets this revenue. This does not take into account savings in speed related accidents in terms of medical costs, etc.

The costs for the City of Richmond's traffic enforcement are approximately \$95,000 per officer. At a full complement of 17 officers the cost would be \$1,615,000.00. At an average of 1,500 tickets per officer per year potential revenue is \$2,550,000.00. This revenue is in fact lower as the majority of traffic officers do not do full time enforcement due to accident investigations, training, etc.

From a police perspective public safety is more important than revenue. It is well documented that enforcement has a direct impact on accidents and the perception of safety. The personal contact of a traffic officer with a violator is far superior to the contact a photo radar picture in the mail provides. Personal contact allows for the use of discretion, deals with the violation immediately and gives the violator an opportunity to provide an explanation.

Intersection cameras cost approximately \$80,000.00 each. Preliminary statistics are showing that these cameras drastically reduce accidents at high risk intersections. These cameras have the ability to capture speeds of violators. To place these cameras mid block for speed enforcement would be akin to photo radar and would not align the City with the wishes of the Province.

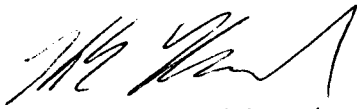
FINANCIAL IMPACT

If the remaining Provincial programs were enhanced there would be no cost to the City of Richmond. The present funding for Enhanced Counter Attack is \$220,000.00 per year. Funding for Enhanced Corridor Enforcement is \$80,000.00 per year.

The cost of adding three officers to replace photo radar would be approximately \$285,000.00.

CONCLUSION

A decision regarding enforcement of traffic violations should be made within the context of other policing priorities and the availability of resources. These matters will be discussed in detail at a workshop to be held by staff in the early fall. The options presented in this report should be considered at that time.



S/Sgt. K.M. Hildebrand
Acting Operations Support Officer

KMH:sjm