



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To Public Works & Transportation - Feb 18, 2009

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee **Date:** February 4, 2009
From: Victor Wei, P. Eng. **File:** 10-6450-09-01/2009-
Director, Transportation Vol 01
Re: 12th ANNUAL TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK – MARCH 2-6, 2009

Staff Recommendation

1. That Council endorse:
 - (a) the 2009 Traffic Safety Awareness Week (March 2-6, 2009) activities initiated by the Richmond District Parents Association, with the participation of the Richmond School Board, HASTE (Hub for Action on School Transportation Emissions) and the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation, as outlined in the attached report; and
 - (b) staff involvement in the 2009 Traffic Safety Awareness Week activities as part of the City's on-going traffic safety education initiatives.
2. That the report be referred to the Council/School Board Liaison Committee for information.

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Victor Wei, P. Eng.
Director, Transportation
(4131)

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ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Community Recreation	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>[Handwritten signature]</i>	
Community Bylaws	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
R.C.M.P.	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

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 12th annual event, which involves all Richmond elementary and secondary schools, has the participation of the City, Richmond RCMP, Richmond School Board, the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation, and HASTE (Hub for Action on School Transportation Emissions).

This report provides highlights of the 2008 Traffic Safety Awareness Week campaign and describes the planned activities for the 2009 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, notable among Lower Mainland municipalities for its longevity, is now in its 12th year and 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;
- encourage the use of alternative travel methods (walking, public transit and cycling) for the trip between home and school; and
- engage the involvement of various community groups and external agencies in the promotion of traffic safety in the city.

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, 2008. Highlights of the campaign, which featured the theme of "Keep Our Future Safe," are listed below.

- 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.

- “Walking Yellow Wednesday” kick-off day at Wowk Elementary School that featured several walks for schoolchildren with one walk led by Mayor Brodie, as well as the ICBC Captain Click mascot, walking school buses and student presentations.
- Participation of elementary schools in the inter-school “Walking Yellow Wednesday” challenge to achieve the highest student participation rate. Spul’u’kwuks and Maple Lane Schools again each recorded 100% participation and were co-winners of the Mayor’s Golden Shoe Award. A total of six schools achieved participation rates greater than 90%.
- Increased RCMP and City Bylaw enforcement of school zone traffic regulations and participation of local Speed Watch groups.
- Continued promotion of the Safer Traffic Around Richmond Schools (STARS) initiative, which provides community stakeholders, such as parents, teachers, and local neighbours, with a framework to work together to analyze and generate solutions to traffic safety concerns around schools.

3. Planned Activities for 2009 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 the Autoplan Broker RoadSense Team) with the message “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 public and private elementary and secondary schools as well as community centres and libraries.
- Packages will include traffic safety pamphlets and brochures, information on the City’s STARS initiative and healthy living programs, and curriculum resource information to promote safe pedestrian and cycling practices that can be implemented by individual schools.

Sustainable Travel Modes to/from School

- Encouragement of schools to organize a “Walking Yellow Wednesday” on March 4, 2009 in order to reduce the number of vehicle trips to and from school and to track the kilometres walked and cycled by students using on-line tools on the HASTE website.
- The event host school will be Spul’u’kwuks Elementary School (5999 Blanshard Drive) and will include walks to the school with school staff. The ICBC Captain Click, RCMP Safety Bear and BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation mascots will be invited to attend and the school’s principal will invite our Mayor, Councillors and Richmond School Trustees to participate.
- Inter-school challenge to achieve the highest student participation rate on “Walking Yellow Wednesday.” HASTE will provide on-line resources for schools to track their participation. All participating schools will receive a Certificate of Achievement and the winner will be awarded the Golden Shoe trophy.

Enforcement Initiatives

- Expansion of operation of V-Calm driver awareness units with two new units in the 8500-block of No. 5 Road, which includes the Richmond Jewish Day School and the Az-Zahraa Islamic Academy. These devices detect and display vehicle speeds along with an optional message (i.e., "Speed Limit" or "Slow Down").
- Continued operation of two V-Calm driver awareness units on Woodward's Road (between Railway Avenue and No. 2 Road) in the vicinity of Wowk Elementary School and Richmond Christian Elementary School.
- Increased presence and enforcement of traffic regulations in school zones and along corridors in the vicinity of schools by Richmond RCMP and City Bylaws.
- Monitor and display of traffic speeds in school zones by local Speed Watch groups.

Publicity and Awareness Activities

- Placement of advertisement in the City Page of the *Richmond Review* announcing the campaign and describing its objectives.
- Request that road safety messages be featured on community centre display boards.
- Press release by the City to raise awareness of the campaign launch and of "Walking Yellow Wednesday" on March 4, 2009.
- The press releases will encourage television and radio coverage of the events at Spul'u'kwuks Elementary School.

Measurement of Success of Event

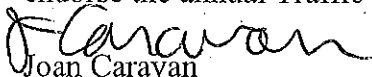
- Through the forum of the City's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, members will investigate the feasibility of an annual survey of schoolchildren to track their mode of travel to and from school and gauge the effectiveness of various traffic safety education initiatives.
- Work with the City's Bylaws Division to monitor the frequency of traffic incidents around school zones and, based on the results of the monitoring, develop targeted enforcement and educational initiatives.

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 Division's regular work program related to traffic safety enhancement and require no additional financial resources.

Conclusion

Traffic safety education is a cornerstone of the City's strategy to enhance traffic safety around schools. The 2009 Traffic Safety Awareness Week campaign (March 2-6, 2009) is a proactive program intended to educate 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 recommend that Council continue to endorse the annual Traffic Safety Awareness Week campaign activities in 2009.


Joan Caravan

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