TO:        Mayor R. Bratina  
        Members of City Council  

WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE

DATE: March 1, 2013

SUBJECT: 
Traffic Operations & Engineering - Traffic Flow and Road Safety Budget Enhancement Request for 2013 (City Wide) (CASP1304)

SUBMITTED BY: 
Gerry Davis, CMA  
General Manager  
Public Works Department

At the General Issues Committee (GIC) meeting held on February 14, 2013, staff was asked to provide additional information on the budget enhancement requests for Traffic Flow and Road Safety. The Public Works, Traffic Operations and Engineering Sections enhancement request is for two additional staff members for Traffic Signal Maintenance and a service vehicle and two additional staff members for Traffic Sign and Pavement Marking Maintenance and a service vehicle. Additional background information is provided below.

Traffic Flow and Road Safety - Traffic Signal Maintenance

Since 2005, the City has added 72 signalized intersections, which represents a growth rate of 15.3%. Today the City has 546 signalized intersections. Under the Municipal Act municipalities are mandated to complete annual intersection inspections on all signalized intersections. These inspections are in addition to Traffic Operation's ongoing controller replacement program, winterization and summarization of the cabinets, conflict monitor testing and 24/7 emergency trouble call response. This enhancement request is for an additional crew (two FTE’s) in traffic signal maintenance and an aerial boom truck to complete the annual intersection inspection program. The current completion rate for 2012 for these inspections is only 5%. With these additional staff and equipment the completion rate is expected to be 100% which will meet the mandated requirements set out in the Municipal Act. Full completion of the annual inspections reduces potential the liability to the City due to negligence of not completing its annual inspection program. Improving inspection rates reduces the likelihood of motor vehicular collisions resulting from failure of traffic signal indications, timing equipment or failed infrastructure.
Traffic Flow and Road Safety - Signs & Pavement Markings Maintenance

Since the mid 1990's road kilometres in the City of Hamilton have collectively increased by 37%. Graffiti, vandalism and collisions rates have also increased. This growth has created a significant strain on the City's Traffic Sign and Pavement Marking Maintenance Program's ability to keep pace with necessary sign replacements and pavement marking requirements. Traffic sign and pavement marking maintenance completion rates for 2012 are significantly below what is considered acceptable. Completion rates for foliage inspections at stop sign intersections are only 50%. Completion of arrow painting was 55% and painting of urban crosswalks was 75%. Response times for new sign installations are now about six weeks and there are delays in responding to emergency trouble calls. This is a health and safety issue for the City and the community. This enhancement request for two additional FTE’s and a specialized traffic truck will improve the City’s ability to meet the requirements under the Municipal Act and Highway Traffic Act. It is anticipated that with this enhancement, Traffic Operations will be able to significantly improve sign and pavement marking maintenance completion rates to 80% of the foliage inspections, 75% of the arrow painting program and 90% of the crosswalks painting program. It would also assist in reducing the wait times for new sign installations and improving emergency response times with these additional resources.

After reviewing the available staff complement within Public Works it has been determined that we can accommodate the four requested positions from within existing FTE complement. For the new vehicles requested, the City's Red Light Camera Reserve funds are intended to support the Strategic Road Safety Program; therefore with Council’s approval the new vehicles required for this safety enhancement could be funded from the Red Light Camera Reserve. With this approach there would be no impact to the levy as a result of this enhancement.

If you require additional information, please contact Martin White, Manager, Traffic Operations & Engineering at Extension 4345.

Copy to:

Chris Murray, City Manager
Rose Caterini, City Clerk
Mike Zegarac, Acting General Manager, Corporate Services
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OUR Mission: WE provide quality public service that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.
OUR Values: Accountability, Cost Consciousness, Equity, Excellence, Honesty, Innovation, Leadership, Respect and Teamwork.