

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

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DATE 31 March 2000

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP. Director of Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services
Environment and Transportation Department

SUBJECT/OBJET **RURAL TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNALS - COST-SHARING**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

That Transportation Committee recommend Council approve that the Region continue to fully fund only those intersection locations that are 100% warranted. If Committee wishes to proceed with a cost-sharing arrangement for traffic control signals in the rural municipalities for the rest of 2000, staff recommend that the following be adopted:

- 1. that the Council agrees to enter into a cost-sharing arrangement for the installation of unwarranted traffic control signals in the rural townships, where:**
 - a) the cost sharing formula will be based on the warrant percentage as calculated by the Council's current traffic control signal warrant process (i.e. the Region paying the warranted share and the requesting municipality the unwarranted share), and;**
 - b) the conditions and procedures as set out in Annex A, guide and regulate the process; and;**
- 2. that Transportation Committee allocate funds for the Region's share of the signals from the New Traffic Control Signal capital account to an upper limit of \$500,000.00.**

BACKGROUND

As part of the 21 October 1998 Transportation Committee meeting, staff presented a report on the Traffic Control Signal/Pedestrian Signal warrant process. Ensuing discussion, which focused in part on

the warrants for rural conditions, led to a motion which requested staff to assess the Stittsville intersection of Main Street and Wintergreen/Church Street and report back.

At the 18 November 1998 Transportation Committee meeting, staff reported back on the Main Street and Wintergreen/Church Street intersection, indicating that the signal was not warranted and that staff did not recommend that a signal be installed. The item was deferred.

Councillor Hill, at the 16 December 1998 Transportation Committee meeting, put forward a motion recommending: “that Committee and Council approve the installation of traffic control signals on Regional Road 5 (Main Street), Stittsville at the corner of Church/Wintergreen Streets. Funding to be provided from Regional Development Charges”. The motion focused on arguments from Goulbourn which reflect a desire to access Regional Development Charges (RDC) funds which are generated by new development in the area, to fund infrastructure which they feel is warranted. The resulting motion from Transportation Committee at the 16 December 1998 meeting was: “that the RMOC investigate the possibility of cost-sharing the installation of traffic lights in the rural municipalities (i.e., Osgoode, Goulbourn, West Carleton and Rideau) when a traffic control signal is not warranted (according to the present established criteria) but requested by the municipality for safety reasons”. As part of the motion, staff were directed to meet with the representatives from the rural municipalities to review the warrant process, discuss concerns and seek out possible solutions.

On 07 April 1999, staff met with the rural area municipalities. Aside from municipalities which were all represented, Regional Councillors Hill and van den Ham were in attendance. The meeting consisted of a review of the warrant process, the RDC process, legal issues and an expression of concerns by the municipalities.

Regional Council’s current policy states that where traffic control signals that do not meet the Regional Council’s warrants are requested for installation by a municipality, the municipality will pay the full cost of installation. In addition, the municipality is also responsible for the operating and maintenance costs until the signal becomes 100% warranted.

DISCUSSION

Rural Municipality Meeting

As a result of the 07 April 1999 meeting with the rural municipalities, the following issues and concerns were raised by one or more of those in attendance.

The need for traffic control signals to allow primarily small residential development areas/communities located directly off of Regional roads easier access to the Regional road, primarily in the peak periods. It is typical for access on to Regional roads in these conditions to have low side street volumes (except for the peak hours) and high (100% warranted) volumes throughout the day on the main roads. These conditions do not support Council’s current signal warrants which require eight hours of established activity. One of the main reasons for this rural traffic pattern is the fact that development usually occurs just off of the highly used Regional road, the development that occurs is small and has not matured to

the point that a hierarchy road network exists which maximizes access points, and developments are usually a low density zoning. These conditions generate the concern and perceived need for traffic control signals.

All municipalities expressed a desire to access to RDC specifically to fund signals, especially in the high growth spots in the urbanized sections of the rural areas.

In addressing possible funding, interest was expressed to cost-share the installation of unwarranted signals. The two main options considered for a cost-sharing arrangement were: i) a split in the total cost, where the split could be fixed or tied to the warranted percentage; and ii) the municipality fronts the funds for installation and once the signal becomes warranted, the Region reimburses the municipality, where the latter of the two is an attempt to speed up or advance an intersection's signal installation that is close to being warranted.

The area of coverage was also raised as an issue. It was suggested that the area put forth by Transportation Committee's 16 December 1998 meeting motion (West Carleton, Goulbourn, Rideau and Osgoode) be modified to include the rural component of Cumberland.

Review of RDCs and Financing as It Relates to the TCS/PS Programme

In developing a cost-sharing option, staff's major concern is the availability of funds. RDCs collected by the Region are divided among various capital infrastructure programmes, including the Traffic Control Signal/Pedestrian Signal Programme. Traffic signals are supported by 80% RDC funding. With the TCS/PS account budget established on the number and cost of the signals that are 100% warranted, utilizing funds from this account will create the potential that unwarranted signals may be installed before some of the warranted signals.

Should the Committee wish to proceed with a cost-sharing arrangement, the Committee will have to direct that the Region's share be drawn from the current TCS/PS capital account. As this year's TCS/PS Programme is perhaps the most ambitious ever, it is likely that some funds may be unspent because of property issues, design problems or complications revealed during the public consultation phase, etc. Therefore, the Committee may choose to allocate some part of its warranted programme funds to this new programme. In the 2001 budget should the New City's Council wish to continue with a programme to install unwarranted TCS/PS, a new programme budget will be required.

The 1998/99 TCS/PS Programme and Capital Account Budget

The number of 100% warranted signals in 1999 is 13, no fewer than six of which are in the rural area (this includes those newly identified in 1999 and those carried over from previous years). The current 2000 budget to implement these 13 signals is \$5,630,000.00.

The locations for fully warranted installations in the rural area include Huntley and Flewellyn, Carp and March, Dunrobin and Thomas Dolan, all of which are in the Western Townships and are estimated to cost close to \$1.5 M.

Other warranted rural locations include Mitch Owens and Albion, Mitch Owens and Stagecoach on the Gloucester/Osgoode border and Albion and Leitrim in Gloucester.

Recommendations

Based on the concerns and issues identified above, along with appropriate review of the Region's current policies and funding arrangements including legal issues that are relevant, the recommendations set out at the beginning of this report are put forth for Committee's consideration. The recommendations as presented provide a window of opportunity to address concerns of the rural municipalities and although these concerns are not unique to just the rural municipalities, they have made it clear that they are a priority issue to them.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

No formal public consultation was carried out. However, meetings and discussions were held between Regional staff, Rural Township representatives and Regional Councillors representing these areas.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Should Committee recommend and Council approve an allocation of funds to cover unwarranted signal installations, funds will be drawn from the New Traffic Control Signals capital account (#900431).

At the time of writing this report, the Transition Board had not yet approved the Region's 2000 Operating or Capital Budget.

*Approved by
Doug Brousseau*

Attach. (1)

ANNEX ACONDITIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR ENTERING INTO A COST-SHARING AGREEMENT FOR UNWARRANTED SIGNALS IN RURAL TOWNSHIPS

It will be the responsibility of the rural townships to submit locations to be considered for this cost-sharing arrangement.

Warrant calculations are to be performed with the Council's current warrant process which already includes lower warrant values for rural conditions.

Costs to be shared include signal hardware and installation, as well as any necessary roadway modifications.

Operating and maintenance costs associated with the signals are to be paid by the requesting municipality until the signal becomes 100% warranted. This will be nominal as the New City will assume all costs in January 2001.

Under this programme, signal installations will be limited to one per municipality.

The requesting municipality will be responsible for all design drawings deemed necessary for signal installation.

Should more requests exist than funds to support them, those signal locations submitted for consideration will be prioritized based on the history of preventable right-angle collisions, injuries, deaths followed by warrant percentage.

Signals identified as being required by the development approval process will not be considered for cost sharing.

The rural townships will include, as directed, Osgoode, Goulbourn, Rideau and West Carleton, and as requested by Councillor van den Ham, the rural component of Cumberland.