

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. **50 20-99-0001**

DATE 01 April 1999

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP. Acting Deputy Commissioner
 Environment and Transportation Department

SUBJECT/OBJET **RED LIGHT CAMERAS - STATUS REPORT**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Transportation Committee and Council receive this report for information.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to brief members of Transportation Committee and Council on the budgetary and contractual issues regarding the Provincial two year Red Light Camera Pilot Project.

BACKGROUND

On 18 December 1998, the *Red Light Cameras Pilot Projects Act*, 1998 (Bill 102) received Royal assent. This Act amends the *Highway Traffic Act* to enable municipalities to use evidence obtained from red light cameras for a period of two years in designated areas. This Act comes into force on a date to be named by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor when at least one municipality is ready to implement a pilot.

DISCUSSION

In announcing its *Red Light Camera Pilot Projects Act*, the Province stipulated that municipalities wishing to install red light cameras would also have to agree to a program of stepped-up police enforcement at selected intersections within their jurisdiction. This would enable “municipalities to test and evaluate the effectiveness of various enforcement options to address red light running”. A memo (Annex A) from the Minister of Transportation describing the pilot is attached. As yet the degree of police enforcement required has not been defined by the Province, thus it is impossible to determine the cost.

In order to be designated in the regulations as a Red Light Enforcement Pilot area, municipalities and their respective police forces will be required to enter a three party contract with the Province agreeing to the conditions of the pilot. This includes site selection, stepped-up police enforcement, and before and after studies comparing the effectiveness of red light cameras and police enforcement, the details of which have yet to be specified.

The red light camera legislation expires two years after the first municipality or initial “wave” of municipalities, indicate their readiness to proceed. Once the two year period is over, the Province will evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot and presumably decide the long-term fate of red light photo enforcement.

Staff from a number of Ontario municipalities, including Ottawa-Carleton, have formed a working committee designed to address a number of issues on the subject of the red light camera pilot including legislation, technology, project evaluation, and financial considerations. The goal is to work on a common strategy for implementing red light camera pilots in the respective jurisdictions. Due to all the issues that still need to be resolved, it is very unlikely that any two year pilots, even in municipalities with existing funding, will begin within the next few months or even later.

FUNDING

The Province has directed that municipalities are responsible for funding their respective red light camera pilots, including the costs of increased police enforcement should they agree to participate. Initial indications last December suggested the Insurance Corporation of Canada might provide funds to subsidise this project. This has yet to be confirmed; however the government has clearly indicated that should any subsidy money become available, it could only be applied against the costs of the stepped-up police enforcement portion of this project and not the cameras. The government has also indicated it will seek to recoup all costs it has incurred administering this program from participating municipalities.

Regional Council has not established a budget for red light camera installation or extra police enforcement.

Previous staff reports on the subject of red light cameras have described experiences in other cities, particularly New York City, where red light camera programs have been introduced on the basis of no net cost to the city. Initial capital outlays are eventually recovered through fine revenues over a number of years. At this point in time, this is still an option for Ottawa-Carleton.

However, because of the two year time limit imposed by the Province and status of the legislation thereafter, it is unclear whether all costs incurred during the pilot period can be recaptured. This will depend on the costs submitted by suppliers to operate the camera system along with the number of prosecutable violations captured by the cameras. Additional police and administrative costs will also need to be identified.

Fine revenue arising from traffic violations, such as red light running, and other provincial offences is currently not remitted to the Region. However, it is anticipated that such revenues

will be available to the Region on an ongoing basis once arrangements for the transfer of *Provincial Offences Act* responsibilities are formalized, possibly as early as this fall. Additionally, the Minister of Finance has indicated that a one-time payment will be made to the Region in April, based upon the figures contained in the Local Services Realignment documentation.

Of the municipalities participating in the joint meetings, only Toronto and Waterloo have dedicated funds established for the two year red light camera pilot.

CONCLUSIONS

Because of the scope of work involved in successfully implementing and operating a program such as this, it is very desirable that the Region work jointly with other Ontario municipalities. Whether proceeding with a request for proposal is a viable option for a two year pilot or whether we must ask Regional Council to create a budget for this activity to be recovered from violation revenue, is not clear at this time. However we will continue to work with our municipal partners to investigate various options to permit the installation of this important safety device and report back to Transportation Committee.

Approved by
Doug Brousseau

CFB/ks

Attach. (1)

**Ministry of
Transportation**

Office of the Minister

Ferguson Block, 3rd Floor
77 Wellesley St. West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1Z8
(416) 327-9200
www.mto.gov.on.ca

**Ministère des
Transports**

Bureau du ministre

Édifice Ferguson, 3^e étage
77, rue Wellesley ouest
Toronto (Ontario)
M7A 1Z8
(416) 327-9200
www.mto.gov.on.ca

**February 22, 1999****To: Heads and Members of Council****Re: Red Light Enforcement Pilot Projects**

Road safety is a priority of the Ontario government. Through Ontario's Road Safety Plan, we have worked with our partners to identify and develop appropriate measures to address various forms of aggressive driving, including red light running. We have listened to municipalities that have called for the use of red light cameras to improve intersection safety. In response, we enacted red light camera legislation to allow municipalities to test the effectiveness of various approaches to improve intersection safety.

The *Red Light Cameras Pilot Projects Act, 1998* amends the *Highway Traffic Act* to allow designated municipalities to test red light camera systems that will photograph the license plate or the driver. The amendments are designed to permit prosecution of red light offenders, using certified documents as evidence.

The government continues to believe that a visible police presence at intersections is an effective strategy to reduce red light running. Therefore, municipalities choosing to introduce red light camera pilot projects will be required to introduce stepped-up enforcement at other high-risk intersections to allow for comparison between the cameras and traditional enforcement.

I understand that some municipalities are interested in starting the pilot projects as soon as possible. At the same time, implementation must be done carefully to ensure the projects are productive. We need to work together so that the pilot projects are designed to facilitate the laying of charges, prosecution of red light runners, and protection of privacy. These projects must also generate the data required to perform a thorough, province-wide evaluation.

Fundamental to the success of the pilot projects will be full and open consultation with interested municipalities and police services. Together, we will need to address legal issues, business processes and the development of an overall evaluation framework. All of these elements will form the basis of the new regulations under the *Highway Traffic Act* and contracts between the province and each participating municipality.

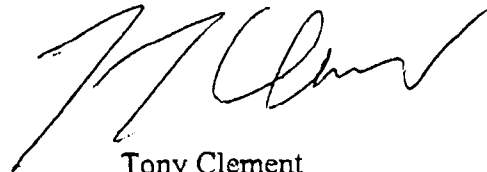
The contracts will also address the issue of cost recovery. Participating municipalities will pay for all costs associated with the acquisition, installation and ongoing operation of red light cameras. The province will also need to recover its costs related to the development of the pilot projects and for processing plate owner and driver information.

Provincial staff will be holding "Kick-Off" meetings in the first two weeks of March with appropriate municipal staff to establish a shared understanding regarding the purpose of the pilot projects, to address the operational issues, and to reinforce the unique partnership approach the government is taking with key stakeholders to introduce the pilot projects.

Information on meeting times and locations is provided on the attachment to this letter. If you are interested in attending, please complete this attachment and reply by fax to Barbara Sorbara, Business Advisor, Red Light Enforcement Project, by March 2, 1999.

The red light enforcement pilot projects are part of the Ontario government's commitment to reduce aggressive driving behaviour and improve road safety, and are a direct response to municipal interest. We look forward to working with you in partnership toward the successful implementation of this important safety initiative.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Clement', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Tony Clement
Minister

cc. Municipal Clerk