



Report to: General Committee

Meeting Date: November 29, 2021

SUBJECT: School Crossing Guard Program Contract Extension
PREPARED BY: Alex Moore Sr. Manager, Procurement & Accounts Payable
Ext. 4711
David Porretta Manager, Traffic Engineering Ext, 2040

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report entitled “ School Crossing Guard Program Contract Extension (City Wide)” be received; and
2. That the tendering process be waived in accordance with the City’s Purchasing By-law # 2017-8, Part II, Section 11.1(c), Non Competitive Procurement which states, “when the extension of an existing Contract would prove more cost-effective or beneficial”; and
3. That the contract for school crossing guard services be extended with Staffing Services Inc. for two (2) years from September 2022 to June 2024 in the estimated amount of \$1,437,507.30 (inclusive of HST); and
 - \$ 718,753.65 September 2022 – June 2023
 - \$ 718,753.65 September 2023 – June 2024
 - \$1,437,507.30 Total (Incl. of HST)
4. That the award be funded from Operating Budget # 740-998-5642 “School Crossing Guards”; and
5. That the Director of Engineering and Senior Manager, Procurement & Accounts Payable be authorized to exercise the option to renew the contract for two (2) additional years at the same rate subject to Council approval of the annual Operating Budgets; and
6. That staff be authorized to amend the award amounts to reflect changes to the crossing guard operating budget account as approved by Council during the annual budgeting process; and further
7. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

To obtain Council approval to extend the contract for school crossing guard services with Staffing Services Inc. for two (2) years from September 2022 to June 2024 with an option for two (2) additional years at the same (2020/2021) itemized pricing.

BACKGROUND:

The School Crossing Guard program provides an important service to the community as it improves safety for elementary school children, encourages students and parents to walk to school, and promotes active transportation. The program helps reduce traffic congestion around schools while improving the physical health of children and the environment.

The existing contract includes all aspects of administering the program; recruitment, training, payroll and day-to-day supervisory activities of crossing guards. City staff provides overall contract management to ensure service level requirements are met. The City has been contracting the school crossing guard program for the past 30 years with Staffing Services Inc. The City issued a bid to the market in 2001 and 2005, and both times Staffing Services Inc. was the sole bidder, followed by two contract extensions in 2009 and 2013. The existing contract was awarded to Staffing Services Inc. in January 2021, on a non-competitive basis, effective September 2021 and is set to expire on June 30, 2022.

Staff contacted other municipalities to understand how their programs are managed and also explored the market place to determine if there were new staffing vendors prior to determining next steps. Most municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area (“GTA”) that have a school crossing guard program use dedicated municipal staff to administer the program internally including recruitment, payroll, training and supervisory duties, and with the crossing guards hired as part-time municipal staff. Over the past few years, staffing companies have emerged with an interest in administering the school crossing guard program. While preparing to issue a bid to the market, Staff identified benefits in extending the existing contract with Staffing Services Inc.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

1. Ongoing pandemic creates uncertainties on school schedule and recruitment of crossing guards

The school schedule is susceptible to changes in Provincial response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has had significant impacts to school schedules as some schools are shifting between an in-class learning model and on-line virtual classrooms. As well, it is possible that individual schools may close in the event of an infection outbreak. These unpredictable events have created uncertainties and have affected how the school crossing guard program is delivered.

The ability to recruit new crossing guards has always been challenging for all Ontario municipalities that operate such a program. Guards are exposed to adverse weather and traffic conditions and are required to be at their designated locations at very specific timeframes for their shifts. The pandemic has exacerbated difficulties during the recruitment process due to health concerns that come with the highly social nature of the work.

2. There is a lack of qualified and experienced crossing guard vendors

There is a lack of qualified vendors that can administer school crossing guard programs for municipalities in the GTA. In the past few years, additional vendors have emerged, however, they lack relevant experience, with many having one or two-year experience operating such a program. The City has a large crossing guard program (90 locations) and Staff is concerned that a new contractor will be challenged in preparing all program requirements, including recruitment of new crossing guards.

3. Staff investigated the feasibility of administering the program in-house

Administering the crossing guard program in-house would require the following: Two (2) full-time staff members with access to a vehicle if service levels were to be consistent with the current program; one (1) coordinator would be required to manage the various aspects of the program including service coordination, deployment, training and recruitment; one (1) field supervisor would be required to conduct daily patrols across the City, assist with ongoing training and acting as a back-up crossing guard, if necessary. Staff would be required to be on-call after normal business hours in case of sudden absences and ensuring the timely deployment of back-up guards. Moreover, by administering the contract internally, the City would have to absorb indirect costs, such as Human Resources / Payroll, related to the hiring of part-time personnel. Staff has concluded that it will be more costly to administer the program in-house.

Staffing Services Inc. has a proven track record that they have the ability effectively administer all aspects of the school crossing guard program. The extension of the current contract will ensure the continuity / interoperability of existing services, and will ensure that the risk of service disruptions is mitigated that may otherwise come with the transition to a new vendor. Staffing Services Inc. also has the experience to respond quickly to significant changes in service needs during the Covid-19 pandemic.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Staffing Services Inc. has agreed to a contract extension to continue managing the program for two (2) additional years at the current 2020/2021 price. Staffing Services Inc have also agreed to maintain price for the optional two (2) year extension subject to Council approval.

The following table shows the negotiated cost of the crossing guard program for the 2022/2024 school year.

Year	Sep-Dec	Jan-Jun	Total
2022/23	\$288,270.18	\$430,483.47	\$718,753.65
2023/24	\$288,270.18	\$430,483.47	\$718,753.65
Total Award			\$1,437,507.30

The following table summarizes the financial impact of this award for 2022:

2022 Operating Budget for # 740 998 5642	\$718,753.65	School Crossing Guards
2022 Budget Available for this award	\$288,270.18	Amount allocated for Sept.– Dec. 2022
Less: Cost of Award	\$288,270.18	Award (Incl. of HST)
Budget Remaining	0.00	

*The cost of award is subject to Council approval of the 2022 operating budget.

The 2023 to 2024 awards will be subject to Council approval of the respective year's operating budgets and any future increases will be submitted for consideration as part of the annual operating budget process.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Staffing Services Inc. expends significant effort each year in the recruitment, training and deployment of Guards and assumes responsibility for payroll, insurance, workplace safety and other employer requirements, thereby alleviating much of the responsibility that would otherwise be assumed by the City.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The City is subject to the following trade agreements, which apply to public sector procurements above a certain dollar threshold: the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA), and the Ontario-Quebec Trade and Cooperation Agreement (OQTCA).

The recommended contract extension complies with the trade agreements.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The School Crossing Guard Program achieves the requirements defined in the Transportation & Transit strategic priority.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Engineering Department has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Frank Clarizio
Director, Engineering

Joel Lustig
Treasurer

Arvin Prasad
Commissioner, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A