

Report from Engineering, Facilities and Environmental Services, Transportation Services

Date of Report: October 30, 2019

Date of Meeting: November 13, 2019

Report Number: EFES-B046-2019

File: 68.81.6; 77.37.99

Subject: Rainbow Crosswalks

Recommendation

That the Budget Standing Committee consider the addition of new funds to the Pavement Markings account in the Operating Budget to accommodate Rainbow Crosswalk(s) in accordance with the approved motion of Council.

Background

At its meeting of [July 15, 2019](#), Council approved the following motion:

WHEREAS there is a request from the citizen group "Rainbow Crosswalk for St. Catharines" to join the Rainbow Crosswalk Initiative; and

WHEREAS the intent of this initiative is to show vulnerable people in our community that St. Catharines is inclusive, accepting, loving and welcoming; and

WHEREAS nearby communities such as Hamilton have experienced notable displays of homophobia, transphobia and other forms of bigotry recently; and

WHEREAS it is incumbent on City of St. Catharines to show solidarity with our LGBTQ2S+ population against bigotry; and

WHEREAS the City has recently established an LGBTQ2S+ Advisory Committee;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that City Council endorse the concept of the installation of a Rainbow Crosswalk within the City limits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this request be forwarded to the new LGBTQ2S+ Advisory Committee for discussion, approval and selection of a preferred location for a Rainbow Crosswalk; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that staff work with the LGBTQ2S+ Advisory Committee on a Rainbow Crosswalk policy, including criteria and a target number of Rainbow Crosswalks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the installation of any Rainbow Crosswalk is done by City staff who can ensure they are installed safely and comply with all appropriate accessibility requirements.

Report

At its meeting of July 15, 2019, Council directed staff to work with the newly formed LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee to identify potential locations for Rainbow Crosswalks, to develop a policy for Rainbow Crosswalks and ultimately to install Rainbow Crosswalks within the city. Accordingly, staff have begun to undertake some preliminary work with the Committee as well as undertaking research and an industry scan of the implementation process, materials and preliminary costs.

At this time the Committee and / or staff have not prepared a policy as the priority is to identify locations and costs for submission through the Operating Budget process.

Locations

Staff met with the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee to discuss Rainbow Crosswalks and to provide insight into the locations that the Committee would like to see the crosswalks installed. Based on the outcome of this meeting, the following locations were identified in order of priority / desirability:

1. On St. Paul Street at the Pedestrian Crossover (PXO) at Garden Park / FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre (PAC);
2. All four crossings at the intersection of Church Street and James Street;
3. All four crossings at the intersection of Queenston Street and Tasker Street / Oakdale Avenue;
4. On St. Paul Street at the Pedestrian Priority Signal (PPS) / Rankin Bridge; and
5. On St. Paul Street at the proposed PXO at William Street (when constructed).

Materials

To determine the most appropriate method of implementing Rainbow Crosswalks on the street, staff undertook a review information provided by other municipalities that have undertaken the installation of these crosswalks previously as well as through discussions with industry experts in the field of pavement markings.

It appears that, generally, the use of pavement marking paint for this purpose is not recommended. In fact, all three industry experts advised against using paint and two indicated that they would not provide the service. There are several reasons for this, namely:

- The cost of the custom paint required;
- The labour required to fully wash and clean the paint application machine between each colour;
- The potential for a solid painted surface to be slippery when wet; and

- Due to the relatively poor durability of the paint and the resultant need to continually refresh it.

Finally, the cost of paint and the labour required to perform the work is essentially similar to that of thermoplastic markings, as described herein.

Besides traditional road paint, there are two other options that are feasible; cold applied durable markings, which is a petroleum based product and which the City would not recommend due to environmental issues with the product, and thermoplastic markings, which are plastic markings melted into the pavement surface with heat. These types of markings are generally good for 5 to 6 years before needing to be replaced. Minor repairs to the markings could be done by City staff using small sections of spare material.

The cost of installation of the Rainbow Crosswalks is a function of a crosswalk's length and width. In order to accommodate each colour, the crosswalk needs to be approximately 5 metres wide, which is about 2 metres wider than a typical crosswalk. The length is determined by the crossing distance between the curbs on each side of the intersection. The estimated cost for thermoplastic markings is \$170 per square metre; the estimated total costs for each location is summarized in the following table.

Location	Area (1 crossing)	Number of Crossings	Total Estimated Cost
St. Paul St. PXO @ PAC	35 m ²	1	\$6,000
Church St. & James St.	80 m ²	4	\$54,000
Queenston St. & Tasker St. / Oakdale Ave.	65 m ² N/S	2	\$22,000
	40 m ² E/W	2	\$13,000
	-	4	\$35,000
St. Paul St. PPS @ Rankin Bridge	35 m ²	1	\$6,000
St. Paul St. PXO @ William St.	35 m ²	1	\$6,000

Financial Implications

The City's aggregate annual pavement marking budget is currently \$104,000. This budget allows staff to undertake all of the required pavement markings on City streets, including stop bars, symbols and parking stalls, as well as painting of various City facility parking lots. This dollar amount allows the City to paint the road system once per year (many municipalities paint twice per year). On a typical year, this budget is exhausted and therefore there is no budget capacity to accommodate Rainbow Crosswalks without additional funds being added to the Operating Budget.

The addition of one Rainbow Crosswalk on St. Paul Street at the PXO near the PAC is estimated to cost \$6,000. This would have an impact on the City's 2020 departmental expenditure operating budget of 0.01%.

Relationship to Strategic Plan

The recommendations in this report relate to the Strategic Plan in the following ways:

- Social Well-Being
 - Strategic Goal – Build and support strong, inclusive neighbourhoods that provide high quality of life for residents of all ages.
- Cultural Renaissance
 - Strategic Goal – Celebrate the City's rich history, diversity, arts and cultural assets through leadership, promotion and investments that support measurable, sustainable creative growth.

Conclusion

Staff are recommending to proceed with the implementation of at least one Rainbow Crosswalk in the City, that being the crosswalk on St. Paul Street at the PXO near the PAC, provided that additional funds are added to the Operating Budget to accommodate the costs associated with this unique application of road markings.

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