



Town of Newmarket
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Crossing Guard Appreciation Campaign Information Report

Report Number: INFO-2023-30

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Date: November 17, 2023

In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

Executive Summary

This information report is an update to Council and will highlight the Town of Newmarket's plan to show appreciation to the Town's crossing guards through a Crossing Guard Appreciation Campaign. This campaign will focus on a social media component, a thank you luncheon and an opportunity for Councillors to express their gratitude personally with a tie back to Newmarket's Choose Local campaign.

Purpose

The Town of Newmarket employs 29 crossing guards, and they play an integral role in our community. Crossing guards are the unsung heroes that ensure school children and pedestrians can walk to and from school safely while reminding motorists of the presence of pedestrians in these key locations. To show even more appreciation for crossing guards, the Town of Newmarket is proposing a Crossing Guard Appreciation campaign that will focus on educating the public on the importance of crossing guards, what their signs and signals mean, and how we can show even more appreciation for these individuals.

Background

At the September 11 Committee of the Whole, under New Business, Council directed staff to launch a Crossing Guard Appreciation Campaign to further show our appreciation to

these individuals who are often faced with many challenges in this role (i.e., aggressive motorists, etc.).

Discussion

Please see below for a few tactics that Corporate Communications and Public Works Services will work on this season as part of the Town of Newmarket's Crossing Guard Appreciation Campaign.

Crossing Guard Social Media Appreciation Campaign (External)

A social media campaign will be launched on the Town's social media and digital channels encouraging the community to take time to thank crossing guards for their work in the community. The campaign will focus on:

- Encouraging residents to take time out of their day to say thank you to crossing guards.
- Comment thank you messages in the comment section. Messages will then be transferred onto a thank you card to be presented to the crossing guards.
- Inform and educate residents on the importance of the crossing guard profession, their role, what their signals mean and following their lead to make Newmarket safer for pedestrians.
- Take this opportunity to recruit even more crossing guards as this position traditionally has been difficult to recruit due to the non-traditional hours of work (i.e., before school, lunch time and after-school).

Thank You Crossing Guard Luncheon (Internal)

- Public Works Services (PWS) is looking to host a Thank You Crossing Guard luncheon tentatively on November 22, 2023. At this luncheon, the Mayor and Councillors will be invited to attend to express their gratitude to the Town's crossing guards. PWS is also looking to arrange for a guest speaker from York Regional Police to provide some training on how to better protect themselves and pedestrians from aggressive drivers in the community.
- At this event, a thank you card with words of gratitude that was gathered from the social media campaign noted above will be presented to the guards.

Choose Local Gift Cards for Crossing Guards provided by Councillors

- Councillors will be provided with a few Choose Local Gift cards along with a few 'thank you cards' that can be signed by the Councillor and handed out to crossing guards in their ward. Each Ward Councillor will receive a list with the number of crossing guards in their ward, the locations, and names if applicable.

Other tactics being considered for 2024

- Reach out to crossing guards to see if they would like to share their story/passion on being a crossing guard that can be shared through the Town's Social Media Channels. (i.e., Day in the life of a crossing guard) and with the media.
- Create in-ground signage that can be placed in and around school areas (like the Safety Cone Sam Lawn Signs) with words of appreciation for Crossing Guards, along with safety tips.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Town is excited to launch a Crossing Guard Appreciation Campaign that will include a social media component, an appreciation luncheon, and an opportunity for Councillors to show their appreciation by providing our crossing guards with Newmarket Choose Local gift cards.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

The Crossing Guard Appreciation Campaign demonstrates the Town's mission to create an even better Newmarket by ensuring Crossing Guards, who play an integral part in keeping school children safe are recognized for their efforts.

Consultation

Corporate Communications and Public Works Services worked together to establish this campaign.

Human Resource Considerations

None.

Budget Impact

Existing budgets will be used to cover the minimal costs for this campaign.

Attachments

None.

Approval

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