



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 21, 2015
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Urban Braille Installation (PW15065) - (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Gary Moore (905) 546-2424, Extension 2382 Rick Andoga (905) 546-2424, Extension 2431 Susan Jacob (905) 546-2424, Extension 2621
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SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

Feasibility of Urban Braille Installation on Queenston Road

At its meeting of May 13, 2015 Council directed staff to report back as follows;

“That staff be directed to review the feasibility of incorporating the same design standards of Urban Braille on Centennial Parkway, between Eastgate to Red Hill Valley Parkway, as part of the scope of the Queenston Road Construction project, and report to the Public Works Committee at the appropriate time.”

Installation of Urban Braille System for New and Renovated Projects

At its meeting of July 7, 2015, Council directed staff to report back as follows;

“That Item 2 to Report 15-004 of the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities, respecting the installation of the Urban Braille system for new and renovated sidewalks, be referred to the General Manager of Public Works for a report to the Public Works Committee, which advises if the following Urban Braille system for new and renovated sidewalks city wide is required under the AODA legislation or would be considered in addition to the requirements of the AODA; and, the costs associated with the completion of Urban Braille on all sidewalks, as outlined below:

2. Installation of Urban Braille System for New and Renovated Sidewalks (Item 8.1)

That the Urban Braille system be installed when all new and significantly renovated sidewalks are being replaced.”

Information:

The current total length of sidewalk in the asset inventory for the City of Hamilton is 2,393 kilometres. The current average cost to replace/construct a linear metre of standard concrete sidewalk is \$105 per linear metre. The average price per metre of Urban Braille sidewalk is \$247, almost two and half times the cost of standard sidewalk. In 2014 the City placed new or reconstructed almost 99 kilometres of sidewalk at total value of \$10.4M.

The current urban braille policy requires that:

- a. That Urban Braille be implemented on a priority basis in the Hamilton Downtowns, such as Downtown Dundas, Downtown Stoney Creek, Ancaster Village Core and Downtown Waterdown.
- b. That Urban Braille installation projects, proposed as part of any streetscape or road improvements and rehabilitation, or as directed by an applicable Secondary Plan for those downtown areas described in Recommendation (a) be brought forward as part of the Public Works 10-year Capital Improvements Budget.
- c. That Urban Braille be incorporated into municipal parks and public building locations in consultation with Public Works staff and the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities, on a case-by-case basis, and only implemented based on a demonstrated need, transit accessibility and budget availability.

Projects such as the reconstruction of King Street through the core business area of Stoney Creek, Concession St. from east of Upper Wellington to Upper Sherman, Wilson Street through the business area of Ancaster and King Streets in Dundas, Highway 56 through Binbrook Community Core have all included Urban Braille sidewalk treatments as part of the capital project costs. However to extend this treatment to all sidewalk replacements across the City would increase yearly costs in excess of \$10M. Given that the estimate to replace the current asset inventory of 2,393 kilometres of sidewalk is approximately \$250M, for standard sidewalk, the premium to replace this walk with an urban braille treatment would be an additional \$340M.

The only requirement for an “urban braille treatment” under the new AODA standards is at intersections. There is a requirement for texture and colour contrast behind the curb at pedestrian crossing locations. These are being tested in installations this year.

Council also requested staff to report on the feasibility to place urban braille along the Queenston Road corridor from Eastgate Square to the Red Hill Expressway. This distance is approximately 1.4 kilometres. The amount of sidewalk normally anticipated to be replaced on project of this type would be something in the 30 to 40% range of existing walk. This cost would be estimated at approximately \$150,000. The cost to

totally replace the existing sidewalk with urban braille over the entire length of the Queenston Road project would be approximately \$725,000 for sidewalk alone. This does not include possible utility pole, hydrant or property conflicts which would add additional costs. While it is feasible to place Urban Braille sidewalk along this project, it is to be noted that over 50% of this sidewalk is adjacent to large parking lots rather than pedestrian oriented destinations.