



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the General Committee

From: W.H. Jackson,
Commissioner of Infrastructure and Planning Services

Meeting Date: September 17, 2018

Subject: Report IPSTR18-024
Safety Upgrades at Simcoe Street Parking Garage

Purpose

A report to recommend upgrades to the Simcoe Street Parking Garage to enhance the safety and security of employees and patrons.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report IPSTR18-024 dated September 17, 2018, of the Commissioner of Infrastructure and Planning Services as follows:

- a) That staff be directed to implement the security equipment upgrades to the Simcoe Street Parking Garage at an estimated cost of \$70,000 as described in this report;
- b) That additional funding of \$62,000 be included in the 2019 Operating Budget to expand the scope of the current Securitas contract to provide an additional full time security guard to patrol the parking garage; and
- c) That renovations to the unused commercial space at the Transit Terminal be undertaken at an estimated cost of \$50,000, and that use of the space be dedicated to the Peterborough Police Service at no cost to allow for a greater police presence at the Transit Terminal.

Budget and Financial Implications

The estimate cost to install the new security equipment in the garage is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 – Estimated Capital Costs and Funding Sources

Item	Cost Estimate
1) Installation of CCTV security cameras	\$ 42,000
2) Installation of panic alarms	\$ 12,000
3) Improved signage	\$ 16,000
4) Renovations to vacant office space	\$ 50,000
Total Estimated Cost	\$120,000
Funding Source	
1) 2017 Capital Budget – Parking Equipment Purchases (budget reference 5-12.02)	\$ 47,900
2) 2018 Capital Budget – Parking Equipment Purchases (budget reference 5-12.01)	\$ 72,100
Total Available Funding	\$120,000

The recommended funding sources listed in Table 1 would expend the uncommitted balance in the 2017 Parking Equipment Purchase budget, and the 2018 Capital Budget for Parking Equipment Purchases would have an uncommitted balance of \$4,400 remaining following the \$72,100 draw.

The 2018 Capital Budget includes \$250,000 for LED Retrofit projects, of which approximately \$150,000 remains uncommitted. Allocating the uncommitted funding to the lighting upgrades in the Simcoe Street Parking Garage will allow for the design of the lighting replacements to begin, and allow for new lighting to be installed in stages, starting with the most critical lower levels of the structure. Subject to finalization of the detailed design for the lighting upgrades, if additional funding is required to complete the lighting upgrades on the upper levels, this will be included in the 2019 capital budget request and the 2020 capital budget forecast for the Simcoe Street Parking Garage Rehabilitation. Lighting upgrades may qualify for government rebates to offset a portion of the capital costs and will also reduce hydro consumption contributing to lower operating costs for the garage in future years.

The cost of a full time guard is estimated at \$62,000 annually, and would be split equally between the 2019 Operating Budgets for Parking and Transit. It is expected that this cost will be incurred for 2019 and 2020, at which point this cost could be eliminated upon installation of the automated parking system, which would allow redeployment of the current guards manning the exit booths to provide the enhanced security patrols.

The capital cost for an automated parking system is approximately \$100,000, costs for which will be included in the future capital budget request for the Simcoe Street Garage

Rehabilitation project, with design to begin in 2019 and construction expected to be completed in 2020.

Background

Over the past year, there have been a number of incidents at Simcoe Street parking Garage that have prompted a review of on-site security measures within the Transit Terminal Platform areas and the Simcoe Street Parking Garage. In December of 2017, a transit passenger was sexually assaulted in the stairwell of the Simcoe Street Parking Garage. A second potential assault was reported in the area of the back stairwell in the garage in April of 2018. Between April and June, 2018, approximately 25 vehicles parked in the garage were reported to have been broken into.

As a result of these incidents, and previous comments received from transit passengers and parking customers about safety at the Terminal and garage, a working group comprised of staff from Transit Operations, Parking Operations, Facilities and Energy Management, Peterborough Police Services, and Securitas was assembled to discuss current safety standards and protocols and identify opportunities for enhancements.

In March 2018 a security risk assessment of the facility was completed by Securitas, the contractor who provides security services for the parking garage and transit terminal. The review highlighted the poor lighting and lack of security camera coverage which makes this area a target for thefts and other illegal activity. Based on the security risk assessment and the discussions amongst the working group members a number of security enhancements were recommended for the garage and transit terminal, including:

- Providing security cameras in the parking garage stairwells and on each level of the garage with monitoring by transit / security staff;
- Providing emergency panic alarms in the parking garage stairwells and on each level of the garage;
- Improving the lighting levels in the parking garage and establishing a lighting replacement protocol;
- Installing a protective fire extinguisher mounting system to prevent vandalism and theft;
- Additional security patrols of the parking garage and stairwell, particularly during peak periods of transit activity when the existing guard is not able to patrol the garage; and
- Enhanced police presence at the transit terminal / parking garage.

Security Cameras

There are no security cameras in any of the stairwells at the garage. An enhanced camera system was installed on the bus terminal platform as part of the Transit Terminal renovations completed in 2016, to assist with dispatching buses. These cameras also provide views of the platform area and were paramount in the quick

conviction of the assailant and the prevention of the assault victim being further traumatized. The cameras allowed for the assailant to be positively identified and showed the victim being escorted to the stairwell. It is probable that the assailant lured the victim to the stairwell knowing that there are no cameras there.

The proposed plan for security camera upgrades would provide 2 cameras on each level of the garage in the stairwells and parking areas and wired them into the same camera feed that serves the Transit Dispatch area. A monitor would also be provided for the on-site security office which is staffed 24 hours a day. Current policies for camera use restrict access to camera footage that is recorded and dictate the time limits for retention and destruction of recorded images. The current policies governing access to the existing cameras at the Transit Terminal would continue with the expansion of camera coverage to the public areas within the parking garage and signage would be installed in the garage to notify customers that security cameras are in use.

Emergency Panic Alarms

There is currently no way for a customer in the parking garage to contact security in the event of an emergency except through use of their own private phone. Access to the parking garage is available 24 hours / day, and while security staff are also on duty 24 hours per day, an alarm system would assist in early notification of an incident in the garage. Many parking operators, including Trent University, have installed emergency alarms in remote parking lots to enhance the security for customers particularly during the evening hours when visibility is restricted and vulnerable customers may be walking to their cars alone. For the Simcoe Street garage it is proposed to install two emergency panic alarm stations on each level of the garage complete with outdoor sirens, strobe lights, and appropriate signage. A direct connection to the security office would immediately notify the on-site security staff and allow them to contact the police and enhance response time for any incidents.

Improved Lighting

Due to the lower ceiling heights in the Simcoe Street Parking Garage, compared to the newer King Street Garage, the interior spaces have lower lighting levels than other more modern, open facilities. The light fixtures in the garage are due to be replaced as part of the garage maintenance program, and conversion to LED lighting is planned.

Fire Extinguisher Upgrades

The security review noted that fire extinguishers located in the stairwells did not have secure mounting boxes with breakable glass fronts or electronic monitoring systems. These fire extinguishers are prone to vandalism and theft. Due to the frequency of the vandalism, the fire extinguishers were often left inoperable until repairs or replacements could be obtained. This has been corrected and all fire extinguishers now have protective breakable glass covered mounting boxes, using funding from the approved 2017 budget for parking equipment purchases.

Additional Security Patrols

The Simcoe Street Transit Terminal and Parking Garage currently has two full time security guards on site. One guard is present 24 hours per day, and this position provides general safety patrol services for the entire facility including:

- monitoring pedestrian traffic around the platform while busses are entering and exiting the terminal;
- monitoring passenger behaviour in the customer waiting area and on the platform; and
- walking through the garage regularly and reporting any concerns.

The busses are on a regular schedule so the actions of the guard are predictable, and during the bus loading and dispatch periods, the garage and stairwells are vulnerable to criminal activity at these regular intervals.

The second guard at the site is responsible for accepting payments and monitoring the exit of vehicles from the parking garage from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays only. The guard is required to remain in a kiosk at the Hunter Street entrance/exit to accept payments and provide change, and is therefore not available to assist with security patrols.

Based on input from the security and transit staff working onsite, the busiest periods on the transit platform and the worst periods for illicit activity in the parking garage typically occur in the afternoon peak period and into the evening. The working group recommended one additional full time security guard be allocated to the garage for a 9 hour shift in the afternoon / evening, Monday to Saturday, which would allow for the facility to be appropriately monitored, reduce the predictability of the guards patrols schedule, and provide a safer environment for patrons and employees.

The additional security patrol service would provide 54 hours of additional coverage per week at an annual cost of approximately \$62,000, and would be split equally between the Parking and Transit operating budgets.

Automated Parking Management System

As part of the Strategic Downtown Parking Management Study, approved by Council at their meeting of November 23, 2017 (Report USTR17-018), the consultant recommended that the City procure a parking management system for the current parking garages that would include automated entry /exit gates and pay-on-foot kiosks to replace the manned parking booths. The estimated cost for a basic system is approximately \$100,000 per garage, however, costs can vary depending on the technology chosen and any enhanced features that may be implemented along with the basic system.

The automation of this process would provide many benefits. Following implementation of the automated parking system, the existing guard at the manned booth can be

reallocated to provide the additional security patrols, resulting in an operating cost saving in future years budgets. From a customer service perspective, an automated system would also allow for accurate counts of available parking spaces to be displayed to the public upon entry to the garage or would allow notification that the garage is full before a customer enters and wastes time searching for a parking spot. Automated directional equipment reduces public confusion and makes the facility more user-friendly, which when combined with enhanced security at the garage could potentially increase parking usage and associated revenue.

It is expected that an automated parking system may be incorporated into the planned rehabilitation project and funding will be included in the 2019 capital budget request for the Simcoe Street Garage Rehabilitation, which is currently identified to begin design work in 2019 with the full rehabilitation to be completed in 2020.

Enhanced Police Presence

When the Transit Terminal renovations were completed in 2016, the former restaurant space in the central part of the terminal was converted for use as temporary office space for transit staff. While there have been some discussions with various potential commercial tenants to use this space, no offers to lease this space have resulted from the initial discussions. Staff also approached the Peterborough Police Service to explore their interest in utilizing this space to support existing operations in the Downtown.

In 2017 police attended the Simcoe Street Transit Terminal and Parking Garage facility 167 times for various complaints, averaging 13.9 times a month. The greatest number of calls were for unwanted persons, closely followed by suspicious persons. It is believed that the number of calls would be decreased with enhanced police presence at the terminal and garage. An expected reduction in vandalism and graffiti would also save in future repair costs.

With the growing transit ridership and pedestrian traffic at the bus terminal it was determined by the Safety Working Group that it would be more beneficial from a safety perspective if the Peterborough Police were able to occupy this space and provide increased presence at the Transit Terminal.

The exterior of the office space would have decals placed on the door and windows to identify the space as an office of the Peterborough Police Service. The appearance of a police presence would provide a deterrent to aggressive pan handlers, intoxicated people, public mischief and other types of criminal activity. Police have also expressed a strong interest in having vehicles parked on site, and have also indicated the possibility of having a multi-media display on site which would provide crime prevention tips and other relevant information to the public. The office would be manned intermittently and a phone with a direct line to the police dispatch would be available to the public when police staff are not present.

Some renovations to the office space are required to allow it to be used for a Police Services Office, including the provision of an accessible washroom for staff, computer networking upgrades, frosting of the exterior glass, upgrades to the security systems for the exterior doors, and the telephone connection to Police Dispatch. The estimated cost of these upgrades is \$50,000.

Summary

Over the past year, there have been a number of incidents at Simcoe Street Parking Garage that have prompted a review of on-site security measures within the Transit Terminal Platform areas and the Simcoe Street Parking Garage. A working group comprised of staff from Transit Operations, Parking Operations, Facilities and Energy Management, Peterborough Police Services, and Securitas was assembled to discuss current safety standards and protocols and identify opportunities for enhancements. The recommended improvement program including new security cameras, panic alarms, and upgraded lighting combined with enhanced police presence and additional security patrol services will provide an improved level of security for customers, transit passengers, and employees working on site.

Submitted by,

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