

March 22, 2004

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## **BRIEFING NOTE –Hand-Held Ticket Writers**

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### **ISSUE:**

At its meeting held on March 9, 2004, the Budget Advisory Committee requested that the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer and Chief of Police provide an overview of the benefits of implementing hand-held parking enforcement devices.

### **BACKGROUND:**

- The City of Toronto issues approximately 3,000,000 parking tickets each year, all of them hand-written, while most other large municipalities in Canada and the United States have moved to automated hand-held ticket writers. Table 1 below identifies some of the larger municipalities across the GTA, Canada and the United States that have implemented hand-held technology for parking tickets.

Table 1: Municipalities Using Hand-Held Technology

<b>Canadian/Ontario Municipalities</b>	<b>United States – Municipalities</b>
Brampton	Detroit
Kingston	Los Angeles
Mississauga	Miami
Ottawa	New York
Vancouver	
Vaughan	

- The implementation of hand held technology provides a number of benefits to the City, including:
  - a) Expedient Transfer of Data to the City’s Parking Tag System, resulting in Enhanced Customer Service

Under the City’s current hand-written approach to ticket issuance, data entry staff are required to enter ticket information onto the parking tag system manually. Given that it takes up to two (2) days for Finance staff to receive a copy of the parking tickets issued, there is a 2 to 3 day delay between the time a ticket is issued and the time the data is captured on the parking tag system. This delay impacts customer service, since staff cannot provide ticket specific information to customers until the ticket is data-entered. The implementation of these real-time, hand-held ticket writers will allow

parking ticket data to be immediately transmitted to the City's Parking Tag Management System (PTMS) as tickets are issued, resulting in the City's ability to immediately respond to customer inquiries on newly issued parking tickets.

b) An Increased Ability to Locate Stolen/Wanted Vehicles

Currently, Toronto Police Parking Enforcement staff are very limited in their ability to identify stolen or wanted vehicles. If they suspect a vehicle has been stolen, or is wanted, they must call the main office and have the license plate checked manually. With the implementation of these hand-held parking enforcement devices, stolen or wanted vehicle information can be loaded onto the units on a daily basis. As Parking Enforcement Officers issue parking tickets, the unit will alert the officer if the license plate being entered for the ticket belongs to a stolen or wanted vehicle. In addition, if an officer spots a suspicious vehicle, they quickly input the license plate to verify if the vehicle is stolen or wanted.

c) Increased Processability of Parking Tickets

Currently a small percentage (less than 1%) of all hand-written parking tickets cannot be processed due to the ticket being illegible or because of date, time or street address errors and these tickets are subsequently cancelled. Given that the hand-held ticket devices print the ticket and have an automatic date and time format, as well as pre-loaded street names within the City, the implementation of these devices will significantly reduce, if not eliminate, the problem of illegible or erroneous parking tickets.

d) Opportunity to Link to the City's Residential Permit Parking Database, thus Enhancing Enforcement with respect to Permit Parking

Along with the pre-loading of street names, hand-held parking enforcement devices also have the ability to store vehicle permit information. This permit information can be linked to a license plate so that as an officer checks a license plate, any related permit information will be on hand for the officer to determine permit validity for that street.

Furthermore, given that the City introduced a program whereby residents can purchase parking permits on-line, information regarding the issuance of the new permits can be immediately transmitted to hand-held devices, thus enabling parking enforcement officers to have immediate access to the most current information/data with respect to permit parking.

e) Operational Efficiencies

The implementation of the hand-held parking ticket writers will result in annual savings of approximately \$648,000 as follows:

- i. The implementation of hand-held parking enforcement devices will reduce the City's reliance on manual data entry resources, given that the information on

the tickets will no longer have to be manually entered onto the City's parking tag system (\$458,000 per year; 10 data entry positions). It should be noted that the reduction in data entry staff will be achieved through a combination of staff attrition and re-training.

- ii. Furthermore, the implementation of hand-held parking enforcement devices will reduce bank charges that the City currently incurs with respect to the processing of payments made at various financial institutions/banks (\$190,000 per year).

**KEY POINTS:**

- Toronto Police Service staff, in consultation with Finance, Legal and Court Services staff, will be issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) in mid-2004 for hand-held units capable of satisfying a number of critical specifications presented as part of the RFP, including the ability to print parking tickets on paper acceptable to the Canadian Payment Association (CPA). Following the evaluation of the RFP, staff will report to Committee on their evaluation and recommendations.
- In January 2004, the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer submitted a report (December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2003) to Administration Committee providing an update on the status of the hand-held ticket writers project and outlining the direction staff is taking in implementing this new technology. It is anticipated that this technology will be fully implemented by December 2004.

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