



Governance and Priorities Committee Report

For the Meeting of September 3, 2015

To: Governance and Priorities Committee **Date:** August 26, 2015
From: Katie Hamilton, Director of Citizen Engagement and Strategic Planning
Subject: Update on Implementation of new Municipal Service –
Parking Ambassador Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the progress towards introducing the City of Victoria's new Parking Ambassador program in January 2016. A new on-street Parking Ambassador model was developed in early May, bringing what has traditionally been a contracted enforcement model in-house.

Parking availability and a positive parking experience is essential to supporting a safe, active and vibrant downtown. An in-house model provides the City greater ability to offer a parking experience consistent with customer service objectives and stakeholder needs, while still regulating parking to ensure there is high turnover of parking spaces downtown. Parking Ambassadors will be customer-focused City representatives and advocates for encouraging high parking turnover to support downtown businesses, at the same time providing directions, answering questions and providing additional eyes and ears on the street.

Recruitment for approximately 13 full-time and six part-time positions Parking Ambassador positions will start in early September. Positions are being finalized based on scheduling model and remain within the approved budget of \$1.16 million for 2016. By bringing the parking service in-house a number of efficiencies have been identified including streamlined processes for enquiries and concerns, integration of the review function, and modifying shifts to add greater capacity to higher demand areas at peak afternoon hours.

Parking Ambassadors will be unionized staff, represented by the Local 50 Chapter of the Canadian Union of Public employees. The Parking Ambassador positions will be advertised the first week of September. The recruitment will take place over a two-week period and the City will host a Job Fair during that period. The Job Fair, is a new recruitment strategy that provides an opportunity for applicants to gain a better understanding of the positions, and for staff to meet potential candidates. The City has had high interest in the upcoming recruitment.

To increase awareness of the recruitment and update on progress towards this change, the City will outreach to City staff, the Commissionaires, the Victoria Youth Council, the Downtown Victoria Business Association, the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Victoria, to help establish broad awareness about the Parking Ambassador

recruitment.

While recruitment will take place in September, the positions will not start until late November/early December. A comprehensive training program, with involvement from community partners and downtown businesses, is in development to equip Ambassadors with the knowledge and awareness they need to represent Victoria and the City, and educate, advocate and regulate safe and high parking turnover. It will also include extensive on-street orientation to familiarize staff with downtown businesses, neighbourhoods, City infrastructure and Victoria streets and landmarks.

Vehicles, equipment and uniforms, are being procured and will be in place for December 1, 2015. The new uniforms will be less formal than those currently worn currently by parking enforcement officers, and will be designed to increase the visibility and approachability of the new Ambassadors.

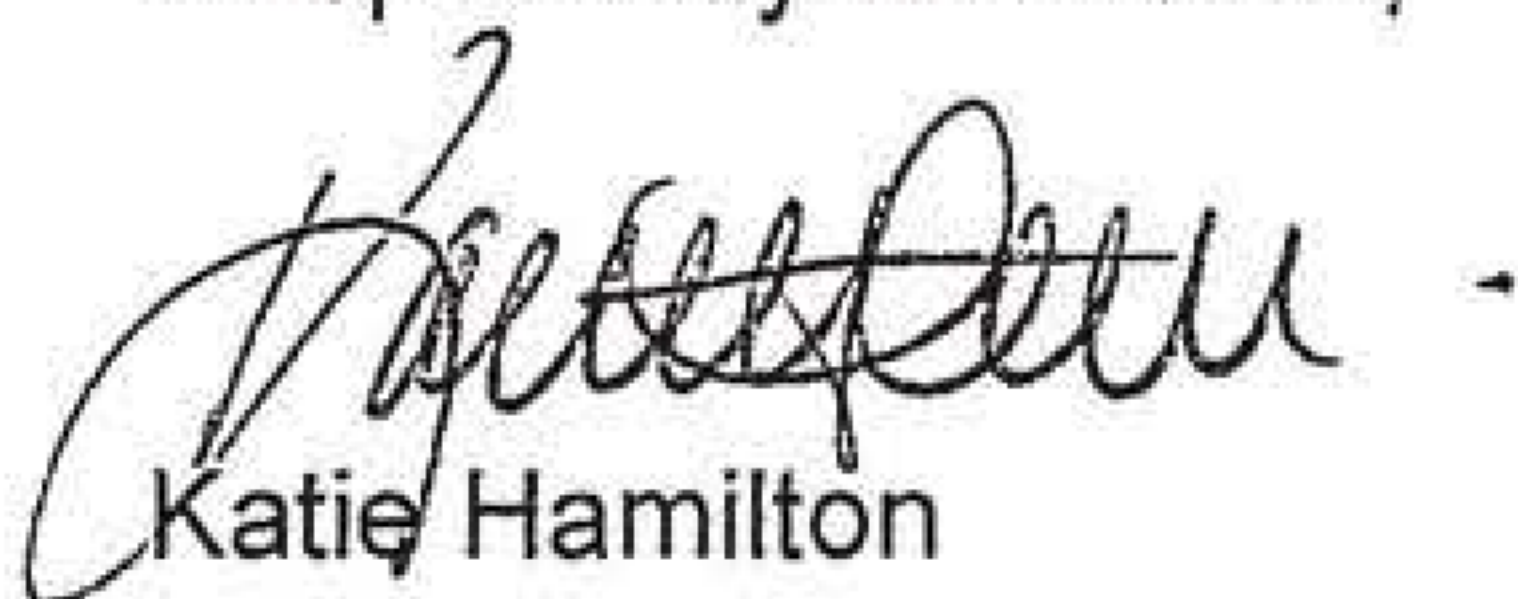
Also, effective January 1, 2016, the Parking Review Office will move into City Hall, providing a more integrated customer service experience, and making it easier for customers to pay tickets or have tickets reviewed.

The introduction of this new municipal service, provides a unique opportunity to refine the City's general orientation program and test the Job Fair format for seasonal hiring in the spring 2016. Improved orientation and training programs help reinforce the City's 2015-2018 action to support an organizational culture of collaboration, continuous learning and employee empowerment.

RECOMMENDATION:

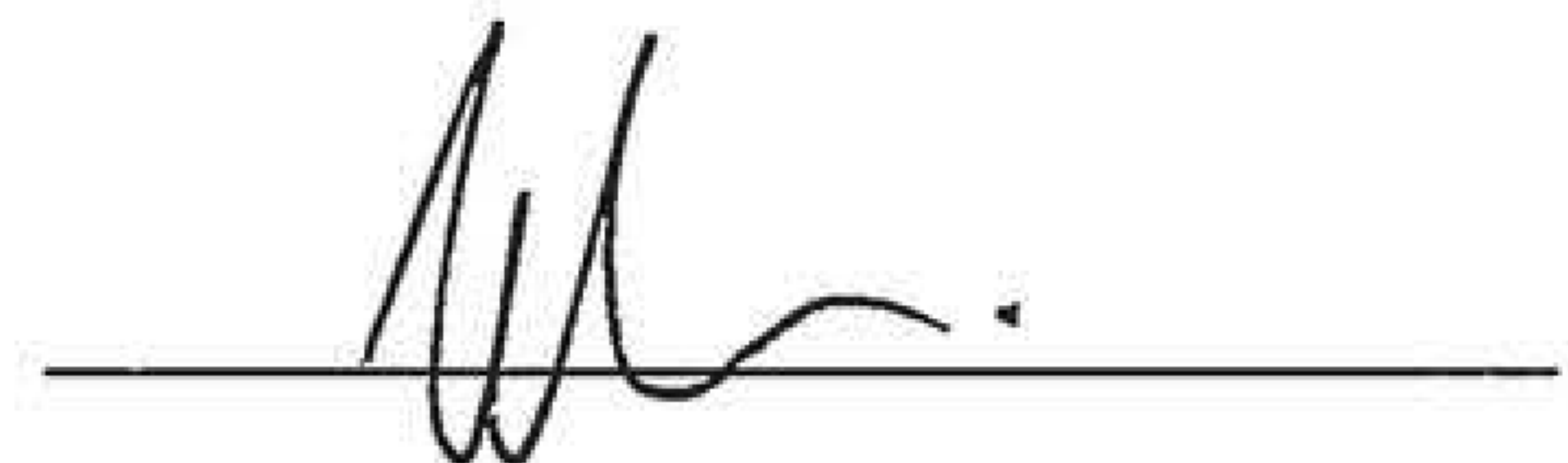
That City Council receive this report for information.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie Hamilton
Director of Citizen Engagement and Strategic Planning

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:



Date:

August 28, 2015