

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA CARLETON
 MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

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DATE 20 April 1998

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP. Regional Solicitor and
 Environment and Transportation Commissioner

SUBJECT/OBJET **LICENCING AND REGULATION OF BICYCLES
 RESPONSE TO MOTION TC-23**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

That Transportation Committee recommend Council:

- 1. not adopt a Regional bicycle licencing scheme at the present time;**
- 2. support the participation of the Regional Corporation in the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Service's (OCRPS) voluntary bicycle registration project by:**
 - a. providing Regional facilities to the OCRPS for the purposes of the registration of bicycles;**
 - b. assisting in the promotion and the education of the public regarding the Bicycle Registry Project by publicizing the OCRPS Bicycle Registry Project in bicycle education and promotional materials by the RMOC and Citizens for Safe Cycling, in its role as cycling safety and promotion contractor to the RMOC;**
 - c. providing funding to the OCRPS in an amount not to exceed \$8,500 for the purchase of "Selectamark" etching kits.**

PURPOSE

During consideration of the 1996 Transportation Budget, the Transportation Committee approved motion TC-23 of 4 December 1995, directing the Legal Department and the Environment and Transportation Department that "bicycles in general be licenced by the RMOC".

This report addresses this direction, discusses the jurisdictional and legislative issues involved in bicycle licencing, and examines alternatives to Regional licencing of bicycles.

BACKGROUND

During the summer of 1996, staff learned that the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Service (OCRPS) was implementing a voluntary, Regional bicycle registration system. The development of this system began at the end of August 1996. On 16 October 1996, Transportation Committee agreed to defer consideration of the establishment of a Regional bicycle licencing scheme until the results of the OCRPS's voluntary bicycle registration project were known. As of March 1997, the OCRPS's registry had approximately 27,000 registrants and Police staff indicated that public interest was ongoing. Staff have recently been informed that the OCRPS has received further approval to continue its bicycle registry project for another year, commencing September 1997. To this end, an operational work plan has been produced by the OCRPS and circulated to various stakeholders for comments, including bicycle retailers, local municipalities and the Region (see Annex A).

LACK OF REGIONAL AUTHORITY TO LICENCE BICYCLES

The Regional Corporation does not have the legislative authority to licence bicycles. That power belongs to the local municipalities. The *Savings and Restructuring Act 1996* (Bill 26) does not contemplate the assumption of licencing of bicycles at this time. Accordingly, the Regional Corporation could request an amendment to the *Regional Municipalities Act* to give authority to the Regional Corporation to licence bicycles.

The current dispositions of the *Regional Municipalities Act* allow the Regional Corporation to regulate traffic on Regional roads, under section 32 (1). However, the ability to licence the use of bicycles is not included in this disposition.

Licencing vs. Regulation

It is important to note that the power to **licence** bicycles is separate and distinct from the **regulation** of bicycles. The **regulation** of bicycle use on roads (i.e. the "conduct" of bicycle users) is already legislated by both the *Highway Traffic Act* (HTA) and the Region's Traffic and Parking By-law, which essentially governs vehicle use on roads, including bicycles. Other areas such as mandatory helmets and the use of lights on bicycles are also legislated by the Province. Accordingly, the regulation aspect of bicycle use has already been addressed both by the *HTA* and by the Traffic and Parking By-law.

OBSTACLES TO A REGIONAL LICENCING SYSTEM

At this time, it is not recommended that the Regional Corporation seek legislative authority to licence bicycles, either under a mandatory or a voluntary scheme. Any system of bicycle licencing set up by the Region would have to either work in conjunction with local systems (present or future) or would have to be the only system available to residents. Otherwise, the situation could arise where the local municipalities could set their own licencing system for local roads, with a

separate licencing system administered by the Regional Corporation for the Regional Road System. Bicycle users would then be confused by differing licencing schemes from road to road.

A Regional licencing system would also have to include administrative and enforcement components, which could present logistical problems for the Region. For example, at the present time, only police officers have the authority to stop individuals and ask for identification (with the exception of certain provincial offences officers under certain circumstances, for example, under the *Tobacco Control Act*). A mandatory bicycle licencing scheme would therefore depend on police officers for enforcement. It is unlikely that the OCRPS would be able to devote many resources towards the enforcement of a mandatory licencing program, given other policing priorities and functions. Furthermore, a registration system set up by the Region would likely duplicate the efforts already underway by the OCRPS, and may run the risk of causing confusion among residents in the Regional area.

A licencing system would not, in itself, promote safer cycling. The OCRPS already has authority under the *Highway Traffic Act* and the Traffic and Parking By-Law to enforce safe cycling. Licencing would not add to this authority or assist in enforcement. Therefore, licencing is of limited benefit from this perspective.

OCRPS' PRESENT BICYCLE REGISTRY PROJECT

The present system of bicycle registration set up by the OCRPS operates successfully with minimal police staff and volunteers. The system presently uses engraving to mark bicycles; however, a number of problems have occurred with this method and consequently, a method of etching is being considered for 1998. The etching method uses a Mylar stencil and an etching compound; it does not pierce the paint on the bicycle (as does the engraving method) and therefore does not promote rusting, and can only be removed by grinding. The "Selectamark" etching method has been identified by the Police Service as ideal for use in the bicycle registry system (see Annex B).

The registry service would be offered at various "points of sale" retailers. Participating retailers would be provided with etching kits by the police. When a bicycle is sold, the retailers would etch the numerical identifier on the bicycle and collect the information about the owner. The relevant information would then be transmitted by the retailers to the OCRPS. The name and address of the bicycle owner are inputted into the police bicycle registry data bank by volunteers. The data bank is secure and its information confidential. If a bicycle is found, the owner can be traced and the bicycle returned. Should the owner subsequently sell or give away the bicycle, the onus is on the individual to advise the police of the change of name and address.

The police are also monitoring the transactions of second-hand bicycle retailers, and it is anticipated that the registry program would encompass previously owned bicycles that have not been previously registered. Additionally, the registry system would be a useful tool to track stolen and found bicycles.

The police service also registers bicycles during specially scheduled events and rodeos at schools and various other locations. During these events, bicycle safety education is often provided by the OCRPS in addition to the bicycle registration services.

By minimizing the risk of theft, bicycle registration may encourage some commuters currently using private vehicles to cycle to work. Therefore, bicycle registration qualifies as a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measure, and a financial contribution from this programme is justified.

The OCRPS has also had success with additional bicycle-related incentives, such as providing secure bicycle “parking” at events such as the Hope Beach Volleyball tournament and the Exhibition. During these occasions, bicycle registry services were also offered.

The registration of bicycles by the police under this system is free for the public. Retailers participating in the program contribute a percentage of the cost of the etching kits. However, the OCRPS has indicated that donations by the public have been received at certain events.

REGIONAL PARTICIPATION IN THE OCRPS BICYCLE REGISTRY PROJECT

For the reasons noted above, it is recommended that the Region not seek legislative authority to licence bicycles at this time. Rather, it is recommended that in keeping with the Region’s commitment in the Regional Official Plan to provide an integrated transportation system and to encourage alternative modes of transportation, the Regional Corporation assist the OCRPS in its ongoing bicycle registration project. This assistance could be by way of:

1. providing Regional facilities to the OCRPS for the purposes of the registration of bicycles; and
2. assisting in the promotion and the education of the public regarding the Bicycle Registry Project by publicizing the OCRPS Bicycle Registry Project in bicycle education and promotional materials by the RMOC and Citizens for Safe Cycling, in its role as cycling safety and promotion contractor to the RMOC.
3. providing funding to the OCRPS in an amount not to exceed \$8,500 for the purchase of “Selectamark” etching kits.

COMMENTS OF THE REGIONAL CYCLING ADVISORY GROUP

The Regional Cycling Advisory Group (RCAG) has indicated its support of the OCRPS’s bicycle registration project. It has also indicated that it supports the staff recommendation with regards to this project (see Annex C).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The OCRPS is requesting seed money from the Regional Corporation in order to purchase the “Selectamark” etching kits, as described above. The OCRPS has indicated that it is seeking an amount not to exceed \$8,500 from the Regional Corporation for this purpose. The actual amount required is expected to be less, but will depend on receipts from retailers and public donations.

Funds are available in Account 912-33413 Transportation Demand Management.

CONCLUSION

Seeking legislative authority for bicycle licensing is not recommended at this time, given the jurisdictional and enforcement aspects that such an endeavour entails. Rather, it is recommended that the Region participate, at least on an initial trial basis, in the OCRPS Bicycle Registry Program. The present system operated by the police appears to be a highly visible and successful program that, in addition to providing a successful method of tracking and returning stolen bicycles, provides the opportunity for the OCRPS to promote bicycle use and safety in a variety of ways.

*Approved by
J. Douglas Cameron
Regional Solicitor*

*Approved by
M.J.E. Sheflin, P. Eng.
Environment and Transportation Commissioner*

JDC/VB/sc

Attach. (3)



**Ottawa-Carleton
Regional Police Service**

**Service de police régional
d'Ottawa-Carleton**

Bicycle Registry Progress Report

Prepared By: David Ashton

March 19, 1997

Progress report for a proposed Bicycle Registry to be administered by the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Service

BACKGROUND

Prior to 1997

Over the past several decades, the region of Ottawa-Carleton has tried and tested methods of bicycle registration, from compulsory by-law enforced methods to voluntary methods administered by various police departments within the region. At the end of 1994, only one bicycle registry was operating and that was administered by the former Nepean Police Service. This program was in operation for about 15 years and was relatively successful. In 1995, the Police Services in the Ottawa-Carleton Region amalgamated, however, the bicycle registry continued, which only served the City of Nepean. In April 1996, a general meeting of community service officers agreed that the RMS data base of the former Nepean Police Service should be used as a temporary measure for a regional bicycle registry. On the 26th August, 1996, Deputy Chief Renaud, announced to the media that the Ottawa-Carleton Police Service was now offering a regional bicycle registry.

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

September 1996- March 1997

It was necessary at this stage to identify and review all aspects of bicycle registration, including responsibility, administration, funding and operation. A complete review with recommendations was completed. Two main issues which had a direct impact on the feasibility of administering a bicycle registry were identified.

- who should be responsible
- how would it be funded

Several open forum meetings with the various community organizations and city administrations within the Ottawa-Carleton region involving bicycle issues were consulted. The consensus of opinion was that the police should be responsible, for the following reasons.

- historical involvement
- connections with criminal aspects

- expertise
- have the resources
- credibility
- unbiased
- trust

As a result of this, the Ottawa-Carleton Police began to review its present bicycle registry with a view to develop means to enhance its present system and find funding which would not impact police budgets.

SYNOPSIS OF DEVELOPMENT

December 1996 - System requirements

Due the ongoing upgrading of the Records Management System (RMS) for the Ottawa-Carleton Police, it was necessary to have a new data base, which could accommodate new and used bicycle registration, and occurrences relating to stolen and found bicycles. A commercial data base program was donated and is compatible with the new RMS. Redundant computer hardware was provided by the Ottawa-Carleton Police, Computer section.

January - February 1997 - Method of marking bicycles

A major part of bicycle registration is having a method of marking bicycles because bicycle serial numbers are not unique. Police budgets in the past, have paid for stickers with partial sponsorship from various sources. Ongoing sponsorship is difficult to maintain and therefore, new strategies had to be found. At the same time, the problem of deciding the type of bicycle sticker to be used, was addressed. Stickers being used, although were relative inexpensive (25 cents each), were of poor quality and caused several problems. Complainants were received regarding about them being easy to remove and were neither weather or damage proof. Acquiring high security stickers (90 cents to \$1.20 each) would prove to be an expensive alternative.

As a result of research into the matter, a system of bicycle marking was found in the United Kingdom, which is being used by the police, for their *National Bicycle Registry*. The company called 'Selectamark' uses a chemical etching process which permanently places a unique seven digit serial number on the bicycle. This system of marking resolves all the problems relating to normal stickers and other methods of marking such inscription or stamping which damages the bicycle. The product is marketed in 21 countries, which includes the United States. No similar system could be found used in Canada.

Negotiations with the company resulted in a price quotation of 71 cents per bicycle, based on a purchase of 10,000 stencils and a further 2000 would given free based on 10,000 purchased. This reduced the cost to 55 cents per bicycle. The registry has proved to be a very effective crime prevention tool wherever used.

March 1997 - Funding

It was made clear that police budgets should not be used for bicycle registration. The major concern was finding the means to fund the bicycle marking process, which amounted to \$7000. Charging the public for bicycle registration was dismissed as an option because there is no precedence for the Ottawa Police Service to charge for this kind of service. An innovative method of funding was found. This involved one aspect of bicycle registration, which involved bicycle retailers. Several independent dealers who participated in the decision to have the Ottawa-Carleton Police administer the bicycle registry were approached and asked to provide indirect sponsorship. The concept would involve the bicycle marking system. Firstly, the etching method was demonstrated to retailers, who agreed it was far superior to any labeling method. Secondly, retailers were asked if they would incorporate the process when registering bicycles at point of sale to their customers if the police were to supply the kits. Thirdly, retailers would have to agree to compensate the police for the cost of each bicycle registration of \$1.00, by making an equivalent cost donation to the bicycle registry. The cost of \$1.00 was considered by all retailers as very minimal and could be easily absorbed in the cost of the bicycle. They felt this would provide for them an effective marketing tool by offering this service at point of sale and would create better customer satisfaction. In addition, they would also offer registration when customers brought their bicycle's to their stores for 'tune-ups'.

A commitment of donations was asked of the retailer, based on 1996 sales and after sale tune-ups. So far, this has reached approximately **\$15,000**. This would easily cover any costs incurred by the Bicycle Registry and police budgets would not be effected.

March 1997 - Project approval

Programs being used by Community Service Offices throughout the region are under review. The bicycle registry is operated under the West Division, Community Service Office. The overseeing committee has asked for reports about the registry and have made the following decision.

"Although the proposed new Bicycle Registration Proposal Registry is a good one, it was felt *Operation Identification* program and method of identification should be used". This involves inscribing a persons driving licence or social insurance number on their bicycles using an engraving machine.

The proposed bicycle registry is therefore, **not approved**.

SELECTAMARK

ANNEX B

Makes your valuables worthless to a thief...

Selectamark is the world's leading security marking company. The Selectamark system enables individuals and companies to permanently and visibly mark their property by postcoding. This conforms to the recommendations laid down by the Home Office. Property marking is also the key to the successful Operation Bumblebee national police campaign.

The Selectamark property marking system used for over 10 years, has marked more than 10 million items. The system is patented and distributed worldwide. This, our latest brochure details our traditional and new systems together with additional features available.

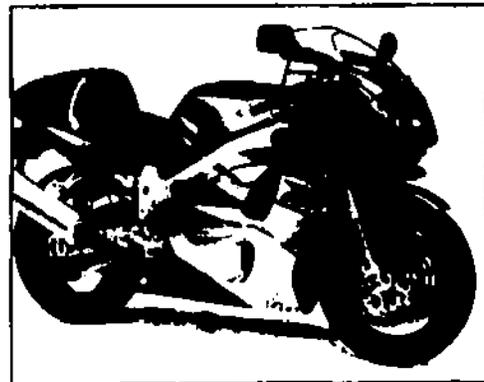
Our business has grown over the years because we pride ourselves on top quality products, the best customer service and exceptional value. We are sure you will be totally satisfied but would always welcome your comments.

The permanent solution in visual security marking

Every year theft and crime prevention costs British industry millions of pounds. Permanent security marking is a simple, low cost and highly effective way to deter the thief. There is little doubt that permanently marked property is of little interest to thieves and is virtually impossible to sell. In the event that marked equipment is stolen, it is easily identified and there is a very good chance of recovery. Selectamark is ideal for most types of office equipment and is used to identify motor vehicles, motorcycles, caravans, bicycles and marine craft.

Exceptional Value

Just pause for a moment and think (if you dare) how much money you have invested in computers, word processors, televisions, videos and other office equipment. Then consider that it costs 60p or less per item to safeguard your property with the Selectamark permanent security marking system. You can't get more cost effective than that!



PARTNERS
AGAINST
CRIME

SELECTAMARK™

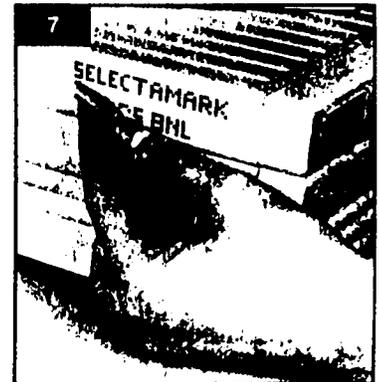
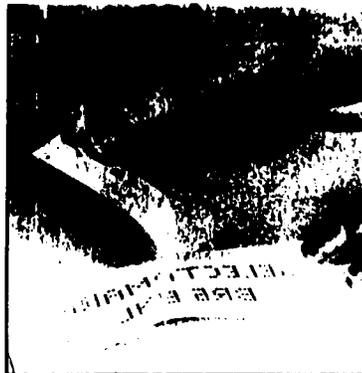
...simplicity itself

Selectamark is quick and easy to use, giving a neat, professional mark every time. Individual stencils are produced with the message of your choice on our highly advanced dot matrix punch machines. The message can be on one or two lines with a maximum of 16 characters per line, each character is 7mm in height. Simply select your message using your company name, postcode, departmental name, sequential number, etc.

For the marking of Plastic

Ensuring the surface is clean:

- 1 Remove backing paper of stencil.
- 2 Rub down firmly.
- 3 Pierce tube and squeeze plastic compound out into a non-plastic receptacle.
- 4 Apply compound sparingly over stencil and leave for 30 seconds to one minute.
- 5 Dab off excess chemical with tissue.
- 6 Peel off and discard stencil.
- 7 Dry by wiping with surgical spirit wipe.
- 8 Attach Marked Property warning sticker.



A warning

Also included are 'marked property' stickers for each item to be marked. Large window stickers (6" Diameter) for doors and windows can be ordered separately.



Sample Stencils Shown Actual Size

L100 SUE

BRS BNL 5

BRS BNL LOC

Registration

For complete peace of mind your details can be registered on our 24-hour database held by Green Flag National Breakdown - one of the foremost assistance organisations. Simply indicate on the order form and we will register your details **free of charge**.



How does the scheme work?

When you place your order for over 100 Selectamark stencils, you can choose to go onto the free database. The database will hold the name of the company, invoice address, postcode, the number of items marked and the marking details. You will then be given a database card with your registration number. We do not need any details of the individual items held. Should you suffer a loss, this must be reported to the police and your crime reference number obtained.



The Freephone number is then used to report the loss to the database. You give them your database registration number, crime reference number and a description of the item stolen. This information can then be made available to help the police return the property.

Specials Available

If you do not see what you require within these pages please contact us to discuss customised orders - our sophisticated manufacturing processes can meet most requirements.

Recommended by leading insurance companies

A number of major commercial insurance companies actively recommend the Selectamark system to their policyholders. Some firms even make it a condition of insurance cover. Security marking also forms part of many police and crime prevention initiatives.

Phonotas



If you require the marking to be carried out for you, we can arrange for this work to be done by Phonotas High Technology Care, established since 1911. Their fully trained, security checked, uniformed and insured personnel will carry out the work nationwide. Please ask for prices.

Ideal for a wide range of materials

We have formulated unique compounds for the marking of plastic, glass and aluminium. Your chosen chemical permeates through the holes of the stencil into the item to be marked, leaving a permanent record of ownership.

- **PLASTIC** The plastic compound is available in blue or UV orange (for black or dark colours) and will also mark baked paint finish, wood and fabrics.
- **GLASS** Car windows can be etched with the vehicle registration number or glass or ceramicware in the workplace.
- **ALUMINIUM** The aluminium compound is effective on bare aluminium, anodised aluminium and aluminium alloys, but not on other metals. It is ideal for a host of industrial products.

SUPER

...a more sophisticated system!

Supermark is the latest product from Selectamark, based on their proven chemical marking system used over the last 10 years to mark millions of items and deter theft. Supermark can offer these additional benefits:

- A tamper-resistant label.
- Personalised printing in colour.
- Company logos.
- Printed barcodes for automatic asset identification.
- Security marking.
- Professional finish.

How does it work?

Supermark I labels have 'MARKED PROPERTY' printed on them in red and are punched with your customised message: postcode, company name, sequential numbering, etc. When you receive your stencils, you remove the backing paper, place the label in the required position, wipe over the punched holes with the chemical provided, leave until compound is dry (dull in colour) then remove the protective film (do not touch for 3 hours). You will be left with a smart, tamper-resistant label which has a permanent chemical marking underneath - a quick, simple, low cost deterrent.



Supermark 2 is the same system, but the printing is personalised with company name and/or logo in various colours plus a barcode, if required (see price list for costs) as well as your punched, customised message.

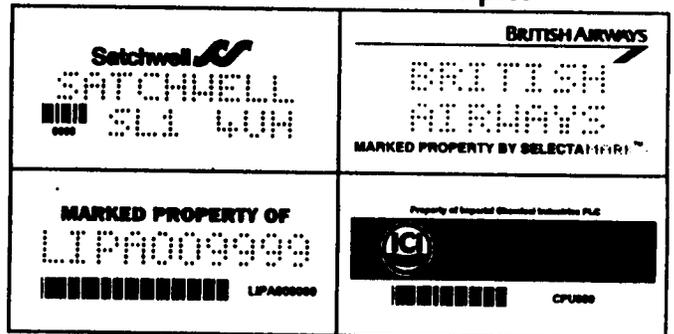
We can supply a range of coloured chemicals to mark plastic surfaces. There has never been such an economical system.

SUPERMARK I

MARKED PROPERTY


SELECTAMARK™

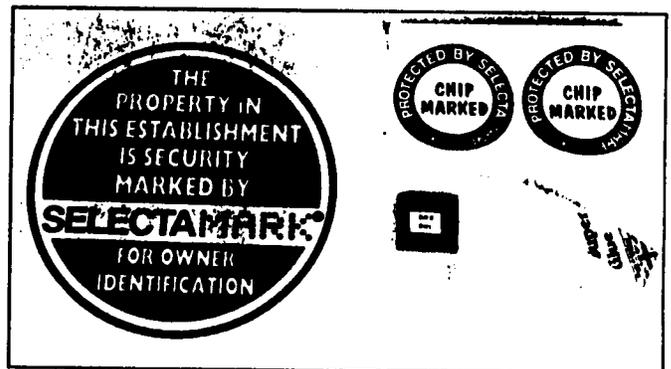
SUPERMARK 2 - Examples



CHIP

New, computer chip marking

It is now possible to stick a special laser printed mark onto computer chips showing the initial letters of the organisation together with the postcode. A thief will feel vulnerable if he has marked chips in his possession and will find it difficult to sell to receivers. Cost 40p or less. Ask for the Chipmark leaflet and order form.



SELECTA 
Selectamark Security Systems PLC

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Date: 06 November 1997

To: Valerie Bietlot,
Regional Solicitor's Office

Cc: Harvey Dorman
Environment and Transportation Department

From: Gavin MacPhail, Regional Cycling Advisory Group (RCAG)
Member
for Al Corbishley, Chair, RCAG

Subject: Licensing and Regulation of Bicycles
Response to Motion TC-23

The Regional Cycling Advisory Group agrees with the departmental recommendation to:

1. Provide Regional facilities to the OCRPS for the purposes of the registration of bicycles; and
2. Assist in the promotion and the education of the public regarding the Bicycle Registry Project by publicising the OCRPS Bicycle Registry Project in bicycle education and promotional materials by the RMOC, RCAG and Citizens for Safe Cycling , in its role as cycling safety and promotion contractor to the RMOC.

Rationale

Bicycle theft is a serious problem in Ottawa-Carleton that victimizes residents, hurts legitimate retailers and discourages cycling as a means of transportation. To significantly reduce the incidence of bicycle theft will require both strategic police intervention and community education.

The registration system proposed by the OCRPS, if implemented effectively, will discourage the theft of bicycles that are clearly and permanently marked and will make bicycles easier to identify and return to the lawful owner. Continued monitoring of pawnshops and used bicycle dealers by the OCRPS to reduce the sale of stolen bicycles and parts is also necessary. In the longer-term the program should save the OCRPS resources in reporting and investigating incidents of bicycle theft.

To be effective the bicycle marking and identification system must be widely publicized to the general public and bicycle owners must be provided many opportunities to register their bicycles with the police. The RMOC, RCAG and Citizens for Safe Cycling's Safety and Promotion Program will need to coordinate

the marketing of the Bicycle Registry Project with the OCRPS and dedicate resources to this goal.

The program will be most successful if it is adopted provincially or nationally in the future. Consideration should be made to carefully document the development of the program and its effectiveness in Ottawa-Carleton so that, if successful, it will become the model for a provincial or national program.

RCAG fully agrees with staff's conclusions on the inappropriateness of licensing bicycles.

Concerns

1. The financing of the Bicycle Registry System needs to be examined to ensure that costs are fairly shared among users and sustainable in the long-term.

RCAG would like to commend the work of Cst. Ashton and the OCRPS for proactively addressing this serious problem. We look forward to working with them to ensure the success of this valuable program.