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HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL

February 26, 2002

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**



K. S. Dhillon, P.Eng., Director, Public Works & Transportation

**DATE:** February 19, 2002

**SUBJECT:** OVERHEAD (RA-5) CROSSWALK SIGNS

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

January 22, 2002 Halifax Regional Council meeting, item 11.2.1.

**BACKGROUND**

Council requested a staff report providing information on specific aspects of the layout and design of overhead crosswalk signs and the criteria for their installation.

**DISCUSSION**

The overhead crosswalk sign (RA-5) is used to provide supplemental overhead lighting at some marked crosswalk locations and may include pedestrian-actuated flashers at locations with a multi-lane roadway approach. The attached information sheet describes the criteria for RA-5 installation and is provided to residents who request information about these devices.

The standard HRM design for pedestrian-actuated RA-5 installations is to place the signal pole on the “downstream” side of the road so that the pole does not come between approaching vehicles and the pedestrian. However, nearly all RA-5's are at intersections and many of these already have utility poles right at the intersection corner. The only location at which the crosswalk can be placed in these instances is just beyond the utility pole. Since the utility pole is there anyway, it makes good economic sense to place the pedestrian push-button on it. The problem of pedestrian screening may be remedied by relocating the crosswalk, relocating the utility pole, or other design features, but these are employed only when the screening problem creates a severe hazard. It should be mentioned that some researchers actually recommend placement of the pole on the “upstream” side of traffic so that when pedestrians push the button, they are turned to face the oncoming traffic.

Staff is aware of the occurrence of push-buttons becoming frozen in winter weather and respond frequently to requests to repair push-buttons that become stuck. Staff will continue to experiment with new types of push-button designs, but feel that the push-buttons currently in use in HRM are the most reliable in winter conditions on the market today.

On the issue of public education regarding crosswalks, staff is currently working with the Province of Nova Scotia's Road Safety Advisory Committee to develop such a program.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

**ALTERNATIVES**

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

RA-5 Installation Criteria

Additional copies of this report and information on its status can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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490-6696.

DMC/bmh

## **(RA-5) OVERHEAD CROSSWALK SIGNS**

### **What are they?**

The basic marked crosswalk installation (which consists of two painted lines across the roadway and four ground-mounted pedestrian crosswalk signs - two signs for each direction of travel) may be supplemented by overhead illuminated pedestrian crosswalk (RA-5) signs. Two RA-5 signs are required for each crosswalk and are positioned over the centre of the approach lane(s) with the pedestrian symbol oriented to the center of the roadway. As well as helping to indicate the location of the crosswalk at night, the illuminated RA-5 sign provides down-lighting over the crosswalk area.



The RA-5 signs may be supplemented by pedestrian actuated flashing amber lights. Each sign has two flashing light units, one facing in each direction, flashing alternately.

### **Where are they used?**

RA-5 overhead illuminated crosswalk signs may be installed at existing marked crosswalk locations when there is a demonstrated need for nighttime illumination of the crosswalk area which is not provided by existing street lights. RA-5 signs may also be considered for use when vehicular approach speeds are high, when visibility of the crosswalk is limited and/or there is a history of pedestrian related accidents. RA-5 signs with pedestrian actuated flashing amber lights are intended for use on multi lane roadways.