

TO: Chair and Members of Harbour East Community Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Ken Reashor, P.Eng., Traffic Authority

DATE: April 30, 2009

SUBJECT: Woodland Avenue Traffic Concerns

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 12.2 raised at the March 5, 2009 meeting of Harbour East Community Council.

BACKGROUND

At the March 5, 2009 Harbour East Community Council meeting, Councillor Smith requested a staff report on the following items of request to Community Council:

1. Reduce green light time at Micmac and Lancaster intersection to allow for more breaks in traffic in the am and pm peak hours;
2. Provide advance warning to traffic light change;
3. Request Province to lower speed sign limits from Dartmouth Crossing into Woodland Avenue;
4. Request Province to install rumble strips before and after Traffic Lights;
5. Request Province to approve the changing of the traffic lights to a round about;
6. Request Province permission to install lower than 50 km speed signs;
7. Install speed regulatory signs that show fine amounts;
8. Get permission and install a changeable message sign at top of hill after Lancaster Drive/Micmac intersection;
9. Support for hidden speed infraction cameras on Woodland Avenue if and when Province approves use in Nova Scotia.

DISCUSSION

HRM Staff and area Councillors met with residents to discuss Woodland Avenue traffic concerns on February 25, 2009. The discussion focused on the excessive vehicular speeds on Woodland and what could be done to reduce the speeds.

Since part of Woodland Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the province, item numbers 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 were forwarded to Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (NSTIR) for review and response.

Item #1, requests the reduction of green time at the Micmac and Lancaster intersection to allow for more breaks in traffic during the a.m. and p.m. peak hours. The signals are fully actuated and the timing of the traffic signals is determined by the volume of traffic on the approach roadways and calculated accordingly to achieve the most efficient level of service at the intersection. Vehicle loop detectors are installed on the four approaches and push buttons are provided for pedestrians wanting to cross the major roadway. The traffic signals remain green on the major roadway until either a cross street vehicle is detected or a pedestrian pushes the button. Shortening the green time for Woodland Avenue during peak times would result in backups and the potential for an increase in rear-end collisions.

Item #5, requesting the province to approve the changing of the traffic lights to a roundabout, was also forwarded to NSTIR for comments as this requires a joint response. Part of Woodland Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the province and the intersection of Woodland/Micmac/Lancaster falls within HRM's jurisdiction. Municipal staff has previously indicated that HRM would be in favour of jointly pursuing a roundabout at the intersection, a viable alternative to traffic signals.

Item #2, requesting the provision of a sign with an advance warning to traffic light change, was reviewed. An advance warning sign for signal change may be considered under certain conditions. Examples would be where sight distance is limited, roadway alignment is an issue or there is a large volume of truck traffic. Since this intersection does not meet the warrant criteria, the sign is not recommended.

Item #9, requesting HRM support for hidden speed infraction cameras on Woodland Avenue if and when the Province approves the use in Nova Scotia. The province is in the early stages of developing a pilot study for the use of these cameras and it is HRM staffs' intent to support the use of these cameras. This location will be identified and forwarded to the committee for consideration as a possible study site.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

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.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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