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Halifax Regional Council  
April 13, 2004

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
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Ken Reashor, P.Eng., Traffic Authority

**DATE:** April 1, 2004

**SUBJECT:** Westmount Petition

## INFORMATION REPORT

### ORIGIN

March 2, 2004 regular meeting of Regional Council. Item 9.2.

### BACKGROUND

The residents have expressed concerns for the volume and speed of traffic as well as the vertical alignment of Westmount Street. They have also expressed concern for the lack of a protected crosswalk across Chebucto Road between the traffic signals located at both Mumford Road and Connaught Avenue.

As suggested solutions to these concerns, they have requested staff to approve and install "Maximum 40 km/h" speed limit signs and a "Blind Crest" sign on Westmount Street as well as a crosswalk controlled by a "Pedestrian Half Signal" on Chebucto Road at Quinn Street. In support of the proposed crosswalk to be controlled by a "Pedestrian Half Signal", the petition alleges that the pedestrian "Walk" signal timing at the intersection of Chebucto Road at Mumford Road is inadequate.

## DISCUSSION

Staff conducted both traffic volume and speed studies on Westmount Street last fall. The results of these studies indicated that the average annual weekday traffic volume on Westmount Street is 422 vehicles; and the average speed of these vehicles was 35 km/h. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed, which is the speed at which drivers feel comfortable when not influenced by outside factors, was 46 km/h. These volume and speed characteristics are well within the accepted limits for residential street characteristics.

The Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act does not permit the establishment of maximum speed limits lower than 50 km/h. Therefore, it is not possible to post a maximum speed limit lower than 50 km/h; and, based upon the above noted speed characteristics for Westmount Street, there is no need to do so.

Staff also investigated the vertical alignment of the roadway. It has been determined that a "Blind Crest" sign is not required as visibility is not impeded to the point of compromising safe stopping distance for motorists.

Staff will be conducting pedestrian crossing studies on Chebucto Road between Mumford Road and Connaught Avenue this coming spring to determine if and where the installation of a crosswalk may be justified. This crosswalk review will incorporate the application of our new crosswalk warrant which has been adopted for use and which was introduced to Council earlier this year. Staff will report back directly to Councillor Fougere on the crosswalk findings when that data becomes available.

Staff wishes to confirm that the "Walk" signal timing for north/south pedestrian movements across Chebucto at Mumford provides a minimum "Walk" display of at least seven seconds with a standard clearance interval of 18 seconds of Flashing "Don't Walk". These two timings combine to provide a total of at least 25 seconds for pedestrians to complete their crossing before Chebucto Road receives a green light. The flashing "Don't Walk" display is designed to work the same as an amber traffic signal does for drivers. Pedestrians should never leave the curb to begin a crossing on a flashing "Don't Walk" display. However, if the crossing was started on a "Walk" display, then the flashing "Don't Walk" interval will provide enough additional time to complete the crossing before the cross street traffic receives a green signal. Therefore no further adjustments are required or recommended.

## 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.

**ALTERNATIVES**

There are no recommended alternatives.

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.

Report Prepared by: Kevin McEachern, Traffic Analyst, West Region, 490-6133