



PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 1

**Halifax Regional Council
April 7, 2009**

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Reashor".

Ken Reashor, P.Eng., Traffic Authority

DATE: March 9, 2009

SUBJECT: **Marked Crosswalk at 1478 Main Road - Request for Flashing Amber
Lights**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 10.2.2 raised at the February 24, 2009 meeting of Halifax Regional Council.

BACKGROUND

At the February 24, 2009 Regional Council meeting, Councillor Barkhouse submitted a petition with 367 signatures requesting that the crosswalk at 1478 Main Road have more safety mechanisms, such as a button to light the sign prior to crossing.

DISCUSSION

The marked crosswalk on Main Road at Civic #1478 in Eastern Passage is presently equipped with all components of a basic marked crosswalk installation (consisting of two painted white lines across the roadway and four ground-mounted pedestrian crosswalk signs - two signs for each direction of travel), but is also supplemented with overhead illuminated pedestrian crosswalk (RA-5) signs. The two illuminated RA-5 signs which are present at the crosswalk - one sign positioned over the centre of each lane - while not essential, do assist in designating the location of the crosswalk both day and night and help provide additional nighttime downlighting over the crosswalk area.

Pedestrian-actuated flashing amber lights on RA-5 signs are intended for use on multi-lane roadways and are not considered necessary at this two-lane crosswalk location.

Pedestrian-actuated flashing amber lights are not legally required at any marked crosswalk. They are basically a supplementary traffic control device designed for more complex locations where a driver's attention may be difficult to obtain with a simple marked crosswalk. On wide, multi-lane streets it is often difficult for a pedestrian to make eye contact with drivers or to signal his/her intention to cross by raising a hand. Flashers are less useful on a narrower two-lane roadway and can even have the negative effect of increasing rear-end vehicle collisions if pedestrians activate the flashers and immediately step into the travel way without first waiting for traffic to slow to a stop.

In the case of the marked crosswalk on Main Road at the Eastern Passage Post Office, all of the necessary, regulatory signs are properly installed and visible and there is no particular difficulty in conveying a pedestrian's crossing intention to a driver. While some drivers may choose deliberately not to stop at crosswalks and others may be inattentive and fail to stop, that is not something that flashing lights can overcome. Such is often the case at most marked crosswalks... that there is a small percentage of drivers who either through negligence or intent fail to yield to pedestrians in accordance with the law. It is staff's view that the solution lies not with bigger signs or brighter lights, but with increased education through enforcement.

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/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Vaughn Perrin, Traffic Analyst, 490-4822