



PO Box 1749
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Item No. 1
Halifax Regional Council
March 30, 2010

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ken Reashor", written over a horizontal line.

Ken Reashor, P.Eng., Acting Director, Transportation & Public Works

DATE: March 12, 2010

SUBJECT: Zebra Crosswalk Markings

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 8.1 raised at the April 14, 2009 meeting of Halifax Regional Council. "Councillor Watts - Request to add March 10, 2009 Information Item #1 to the Agenda - Crosswalk Safety Education and Public Awareness Campaign."

BACKGROUND

At the April 14, 2009 meeting of Halifax Regional Council it was moved by Councillor Karsten, seconded by Councillor Younger, that Halifax Regional Council request a staff report on initiating the process to incorporate zebra stripe markings on crosswalks that would currently be considered or warranted under today's standards for the 2010/2011 paint season. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

DISCUSSION

The twin parallel line crosswalk marking is identified in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada (MUTCDC) as the standard and typically is used to denote crosswalk locations in conjunction with crosswalk signs/signals or, where vehicles are required by a traffic signal or stop sign to stop. The zebra-style marking, with 600mm longitudinal bars alternating with 600mm spaces may be used optionally. The primary purpose of crosswalk markings is to guide pedestrians to the most appropriate crossing location and to guide drivers where to stop for pedestrians. The standard crosswalk markings used in Nova Scotia consist of two parallel white lines, 100m-200m wide with a minimum separation of 2.5m. For consistency, the HRM Traffic Authority does not recommend use of zebra-style markings, but has previously indicated that if Council wishes to approve additional funding, the markings could be included in the upcoming pavement marking program.

Staff resources are not available to evaluate each of the approximately 500 uncontrolled marked crosswalks in HRM to determine whether or not it is warranted according to present standards. Consequently, pavement marking contractors who were awarded a 3-year contract last year were asked to provide cost estimates for painting zebra markings at all uncontrolled marked crosswalks. This year, in Year 2 of the contract, it would cost an additional \$40,000 and \$22,000 in Year 3. The Year 2 figure is higher because of the extra time involved in the initial layout and spacing of the bars.

The disadvantages of the use of zebra markings include the increased maintenance cost for repainting and the reduced traction caused by the larger painted surface which can be hazardous for pedestrians, bicycles and motorcycles. Although the zebra markings are intuitively more visible, the increased visibility is much more apparent to pedestrians than to drivers (who view the markings from a lower eye level and from an end-on perspective). There is a concern that pedestrians will have an exaggerated expectation regarding the visibility of the crosswalk to motorists.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There is currently no funding allocated for zebra crosswalk markings.

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, Traffic & Right of Way, 490-4822

Report Approved by:



Tasou Koutroulakis, P. Eng., Acting Manager, Traffic & Right of Way, 490-4816