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HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL  
January 15, 2002

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**   
K. S. Dhillon, P.Eng., Director, Public Works & Transportation

**DATE:** January 2, 2002

**SUBJECT:** CROSSWALK REQUEST - ST. MARGARET'S BAY ROAD AT "RAILS  
TO TRAILS" CROSSING (NEAR GREENWOOD HEIGHTS  
SUBDIVISION)

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

September 4, 2001 Halifax Regional Council meeting, item 9.1.2. (Please note subject title variance which was originally listed as "Request for Sidewalk, St. Margaret's Bay Road")

**BACKGROUND**

At the Halifax Regional Council meeting of September 4, 2001, Councillor Rankin served a petition from residents requesting the installation of a proper crosswalk/road markings on St. Margaret's Bay Road for the newly installed trail. The Councillor noted the petition had been delivered to Mr. Bill Estabrooks, MLA Timberlea/Prospect.

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## DISCUSSION

Because of the numerous requests for the marking of crosswalks, it has been necessary to establish criteria which provide a basis for evaluation as to where marked crosswalks are installed on HRM maintained roadways. The attached "Traffic Control Practices and Warrants" sheet provides the details of the rationale for the criteria. The purpose of establishing minimum volume criteria is to limit the proliferation of marked crosswalks thereby preserving their effectiveness. Numerous studies on the relative safety of crosswalks support minimal installation.

Although the minimum traffic volume warrant on St. Margaret's Bay Road is met, the minimum pedestrian volume criterion is not met at the Trail crossing and therefore a crosswalk is not approved. However, advance warning signs will be installed.

There are several walking/biking trails that cross arterial and collector highways in HRM which do not meet the necessary criteria for the installation of marked crosswalks. At such locations the Traffic Authority has determined that warning signs conforming to the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Bikeway Traffic Control Guidelines for Canada would be applicable. These "Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossing Ahead" signs consist of standard pedestrian and bicycle symbols in black on a yellow diamond shaped warning sign and are intended to indicate to drivers that they are approaching a location where a multi-use path crosses the road. These signs are warning signs only, not regulatory signs, and do not convey the right-of-way to the trail crossing. Users of the trail are still required to yield to oncoming vehicles on the highway in the same way that pedestrians and cyclists are required to exercise due caution when crossing a highway at a driveway or at any other non-intersection.

## 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

Marked Crosswalk Policy.

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: David McCusker, P.Eng., Manager, Traffic & Transportation Services,  
490-6696.

# MARKED CROSSWALKS

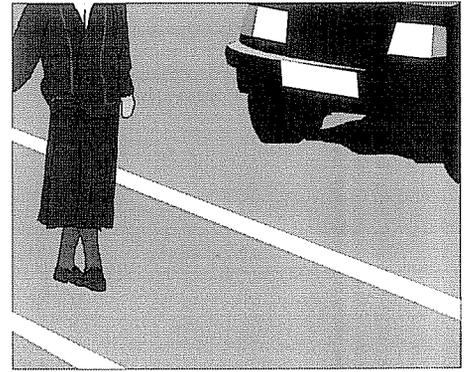
## What are they?

A marked crosswalk installation consists of two painted parallel lines across the roadway and four ground mounted pedestrian crosswalk signs, two signs for each direction of travel.

## What are the issues?

Since crosswalks exist by legal definition at all intersections whether marked or unmarked, the determination of whether a crosswalk needs to be marked is based primarily on the necessity to create gaps in traffic. At locations with low traffic volume, pedestrians can generally cross a street without difficulty and more safely by waiting a short time for an adequate gap. On higher volume streets, pedestrians may experience excessive delays while waiting for acceptable gaps unless drivers stop to permit them to cross. Marked crosswalks are useful in providing notice to drivers that pedestrians are likely to be encountered at a particular location on a regular basis. If the pedestrian activity is minimal and sporadic, however, the marked crosswalk becomes a redundant device and simply becomes part of the background "sign clutter" along the roadside.

When crosswalk markings are used sparingly, individual locations are more conspicuous. To oversaturate the streets with crosswalk markings would reduce their significance greatly.



## When are they used by HRM Traffic Services?

The following criteria ensure that marked crosswalks are established only at locations where a need for pedestrian assistance exists and where operation of such an installation will be safe and efficient.

- Crosswalks will not be marked at locations where pedestrian safety may be compromised:
  - because visibility is restricted by horizontal or vertical alignment
  - where stopping sight distance is insufficient due to prevailing operating speeds
  - by complex lane configuration and usage.
- Crosswalks should not be marked at locations within 200 meters of an existing "protected" crosswalk (i.e. equipped with traffic signals or stop signs or RA-5 signs).
- The vehicular volume must be in excess of 6000 vehicles per day (or 4000 v.p.d. for a "school" crosswalk requested for use with crossing guards).
- The pedestrian volume must be in excess of 50 pedestrians crossings per hour in at least one hour of the day.