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Item No. 06
Halifax Regional Council
January 10, 2017

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed by Director

Bruce Zvaniga, P.Eng., Director, Transportation & Public Works

DATE: December 12, 2016

SUBJECT: Reinstatement of Crosswalk near Sheet Harbour Hospital

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 14.5.1 of the October 4, 2016 meeting of Regional Council:

THAT Halifax Regional Council request a staff report to determine how the Municipality can make a formal request to the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation to reinstate a pedestrian crosswalk on Highway #7 near the vicinity of the Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital in Sheet Harbour.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Motor Vehicle Act, R.S.N.S. 1989, subsection 90 (1) The traffic authority may establish and designate and may maintain, or cause to be maintained, by appropriate devices, marks or lines upon the surface of the highways, crosswalks at intersections where, in his opinion, there is particular danger to pedestrians crossing the highway, and at such other places as he may deem necessary.

BACKGROUND

On roadways within the Municipality that are owned by the Province of Nova Scotia, all requests for the installation of a marked pedestrian crosswalk must be submitted to Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (NSTIR). Prior to reviewing the request, NSTIR requests a written confirmation from the Municipality agreeing to pay for the cost and annual maintenance if after their review a marked pedestrian crosswalk is warranted (see Attachment 1).

DISCUSSION

In April 2016, staff officially requested on behalf of the area Councillor and residents that NSTIR review the requirement for a new marked crosswalk in the vicinity of the Sheet Harbour hospital. NSTIR

conducted an assessment and found that a marked crosswalk was not warranted. On June 15, 2016, NSTIR held a stakeholders meeting to discuss the results of their review.

As a result of further feedback received in September 2016, staff requested that NSTIR review a location further west on Trunk 7 for a marked crosswalk. NSTIR staff indicated that since vehicular volumes would be the same and the original study incorporated all pedestrian volumes in the near vicinity, the warrant for a marked pedestrian crosswalk would not be met. A letter was received from NSTIR which provides additional detail (see Attachment 2).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

NSTIR staff met with area residents to discuss the results of the crosswalk assessment.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: NSTIR Guidelines – Request for Installation of Pedestrian Crosswalks
Attachment 2: Letter from NSTIR – Sheet Harbour Crosswalk Installation Request

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Taso Koutroulakis, P.Eng., PTOE, Manager, Traffic Management, 902.490.4816

Attachment 1: NSTIR Guidelines

Division: Highway Operations
Section: Maintenance
Function: Operations Admin. (HO 2.30.66)
Policy Number: PO1005

Installation of Pedestrian Crosswalks

Policy Statement

The Department will approve the location of, and will install pedestrian crosswalks on provincial highways when requested to do so by a Municipal Unit which has agreed to pay the cost of installation and maintenance of the crosswalk.

Rationale

The Department has responsibility for administration and control of all provincial highways. Therefore, the installation of any roadway features on provincial highways must be approved by the Department in advance of installation.

Policy Objectives

To clarify responsibilities regarding the installation and maintenance of pedestrian crosswalks on provincial highways.

Application

This policy applies directly to staff of the Department and indirectly to staff of the Municipal Units. The authority for this policy is derived from the Public Highways Act.

Accountability

Area Managers will be responsible, and accountable, for the administration of this policy as it applies to Municipal Units within their specific area.

Monitoring

The District Directors will monitor the policy's implementation, performance and effectiveness with regard to the installation of pedestrian crosswalks.

Directives

None

Guidelines

1 Request for Installation of Pedestrian Crosswalks

All requests for the installation of a pedestrian crosswalk must be submitted to the Area Manager, who will forward the request to the District Traffic Supervisor. The Area Manager should obtain from the Municipal Unit a written commitment that the Municipal Unit will pay the cost of installation and annual maintenance.

2 Need for Pedestrian Crosswalks

The District Traffic Supervisor will, at the request of the Area Manager, determine the need for pedestrian crosswalks based on the proximity to pedestrian traffic generators and traffic volumes on the highway approaches. Consideration should be given to the proximity to shopping centres, recreational complexes, post offices, etc. when determining the need for pedestrian crosswalks.

3 Installation of Pedestrian Crosswalks

Pedestrian crosswalks will be installed by the Department when the following conditions have been met:

- I. the crosswalk has been requested by a Municipal Unit which has agreed to pay the cost of installation and maintenance,
- II. the need for the crosswalk has been verified by the Area Manager considering the proximity to pedestrian traffic generators and traffic volumes on the approach highway,
- III. the crosswalk location has been approved by the District Traffic Supervisor, who has verified the location meets requirements for available stopping sight distance for the location's approach speed and grades.

4 Costs for Installation and Maintenance of Pedestrian Crosswalks

Costs to install each new pedestrian crosswalk, including two painted lines and four ground mounted (RA-4) signs are:

- 4-lane highway \$750.00
- 2-lane highway \$500.00

Costs for annual repainting of the crosswalk and maintenance of the four ground mounted signs are:

- 4-lane highway \$500.00
- 2-lane highway \$300.00

All costs for installation and maintenance of the crosswalk and the ground mounted signs are the responsibility of the Municipal Unit requesting the installation.

5 Need for Additional Regulatory/Warning Devices

Should the Department's investigation prove that there is a need for additional regulatory and/or warning devices, the Municipal Unit must agree to bear the costs for purchase, installation and maintenance for such devices.

6 Overhead Crosswalk Warning Devices

Overhead crosswalk devices, such as RA-5's, will only be installed where the Department gives approval for their installation and the Municipal Unit has agreed to pay the cost to purchase, erect and maintain such devices.

References

The Public Highways Act

Enquiries

District Director

Appendices

None

Approved by:
Approval date:
Effective date:

Martin Delaney
02-03-15
already in effect

Transportation & Public Works
Policies and Procedures Manual

Attachment 2: Letter from NSTIR

November 30th, 2016

Mr. Taso Koutroulakis, P.Eng.
Manager
Traffic Management
Halifax Regional Municipality
koutrot@halifax.ca

Dear Mr. Koutroulakis,

Re: Sheet Harbour Crosswalk Installation Request

Due to the ongoing concerns regarding the crosswalk installation request located adjacent to the hospital in Sheet Harbour, I wish to provide a brief summary of this matter in order to provide clarity on the Department's position.

In the fall of 2015, a safety concern was brought to the Department's attention by a member of the public in regards to the current location of the existing crosswalk. This concern was subsequently investigated by the Department's Traffic Division who concurred that the location did create a hazard to pedestrians and needed to be removed. Shortly following this investigation, Department maintenance forces removed the crossing controls at this location.

In April of 2016 a request was received from HRM for the installation of a new crosswalk. In June 2016, following this request, the Department's Traffic Division carried out a site assessment and conducted manual counts of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The results of the data collection exercise were compiled and compared to the requirements as set out by the Pedestrian Crossing Control Guide (TAC-ATC). The results concluded that both the pedestrian traffic as well as the vehicular traffic were insufficient to warrant the installation of a crosswalk at this location. The study also showed that given the existing pedestrian and vehicular movements, there were ample available crossing opportunities in order to allow safe crossing of Trunk 7 at and near this location.

Following this study, on June 15, 2016 a stakeholders meeting was held at the Harbourview Lodge in Sheet Harbour in order to discuss the findings of the investigation and to explain some of the reasoning behind this conclusion.

In September 2016, you also requested for the Department to consider a location further west on Trunk 7 for the new crosswalk location. However, as vehicular traffic counts would be the same at this location and the pedestrian data collected during the study incorporated all of the pedestrian crossings in the near vicinity, the results would be unchanged again concluding that the warrants are not met for the installation of a crosswalk.

In addition to this, Department policy also states that mid-block crosswalks should be avoided unless there are no practical alternatives. The studies carried out confirmed that this section of road can be crossed safely given the number of pedestrians present in relation to the crossing opportunities available with the current vehicular traffic patterns. Mid-block crosswalks can increase the inherent risks to a pedestrian in certain circumstances due to the nature of their location and expectation of drivers.

I trust that this will help clarify the situation. However if you should have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Guy Deveau, P.Eng.
Area Manager – Halifax East
N.S. Department of Transportation
& Infrastructure Renewal