



Subject: *Flagging Programs at Crosswalks*
To: December 2014 Executive Committee
Date Prepared: December 1, 2014
Related Motions: C14(223), C10(402)
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Approved by: Connie Nolan, Chief Administrative Officer

Summary

Through correspondence with NSTIR it has been validated that a flagging program at the corner of Hwy 2 & Riverside Drive in Milford will not be approved without the establishment of a crossing guard program which is required for there to be any marked crosswalk within a school zone.

In areas where there are existing crosswalks that are not within school zones, a flagging program could be considered in a scenario where they were an additional level of precaution after meeting base standards. The flagging programs would typically be set up by a volunteer group within the community.

Financial Impact Statement

Flagging programs are setup by volunteer groups, thus there would be no cost if they are added to existing crosswalks that are already meeting base standards set out by NSTIR.

Recommendation

It is recommended that flagging programs not be pursued within the School Zone of Riverside Education Centre until the point there is an active Crossing Guard program in place with the appropriate road markings and signage.

Recommended Motion

There is no recommended motion at this time.

Background

A motion was brought forward during Minutes from Councilors as part of the September 24, 2014 regular meeting of Council to report back on the potential for a Flagging System at a location for a proposed crosswalk at the corner of Hwy 2 and Riverside Drive in Milford, NS.

The intended destination is the Riverside Education Centre, which would place the proposed crossing of Hwy 2 in a school zone. Sidewalks were installed along Hwy 2 in Milford in 2013 which was a trigger to the request.

Although the sidewalks are new, the request for crosswalks in the Milford area are not new. The Lions Club had once installed their own crossing signage above the road as a community effort to create crossings. These were subsequently removed at the request of the Province as it was not approved signage and did not meet the standardization of programming that is sought out by the Province. Also there was a previous report presented to Executive on November 26, 2010 on this same intersection entitled "Crosswalk or Crossing Guard".

Discussion

School Zone Crosswalks

It has been confirmed with the Deputy Traffic Authority for the Province that the minimum standard for a crosswalk in a School Zone requires there to be a Crossing Guard program in place. This stance was received on September 10, 2014 and then again on October 27, 2014 which established a clear and repeatable response on the topic. This is also the same response given by NSTIR in 2010 when a request for a crosswalk was made at the same location near the Riverside Educational Centre.

If a Crossing Guard program is in place in a school zone, the Province does and will support community based programs, such as the Flag Program, if it is seen to augment the existing standard. An alternative community based program cannot be used as a substitute or replacement for existing standards.

Regular Crosswalks

Requests for pedestrian crosswalks on Provincial Roads is covered by the Department of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal's policy number PO1005. This policy details a repeatable approach for TIR to assess requests and lists the responsibilities of all parties involved.

Staff reviewed this process with the Deputy Traffic Authority for the Province who was able to describe 2 critical success criteria in the assessment of a crosswalk request;

1. Is there a safe destination for pedestrians to travel to on each side of a proposed crossing
2. Does it meet the traffic volume criteria as set out using the Pedestrian Crossing Control Warrant Chart

A safe destination should be an area that is clearly marked and maintained solely for pedestrian usage. Ideally, each crossing would be a connection to an active pedestrian route, such as sidewalks. These destinations would need to be maintained for all seasons, so in winter there needs to be snow clearing within an acceptable time frame after weather events. A parking lot would not be considered as a safe destination as it is designed and set up for vehicle use and a crossing into a parking lot would be directing pedestrian into a hazardous situation.

Alternatives

Pursue amendments to the existing policy on the funding of crossing guards. This will likely lead to multiple locations requesting a program which should be considered and aligned to prior to proceeding.

Conclusion

NSTIR has a clear and direct message for crosswalks within School Zones in that there must be a crossing guard program in place.

NSTIR is open to community groups setting up flagging programs at individual crosswalks if that crosswalk is already meeting base requirements.

Recommendation

It is recommended that flagging programs not be pursued within the School Zone of Riverside Education Centre until the point there is an active Crossing Guard program in place with the appropriate road markings and signage.