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Info Item No. 1
Transportation Standing Committee
October 26, 2017

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

ORIGINAL SIGNED

SUBMITTED BY:

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

DATE: September 26, 2017

SUBJECT: January to June 2017 Pedestrian Safety Semi-Annual Reporting

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 14.2.3 of the May 10, 2016 session of Halifax Regional Council; MOVED by Deputy Mayor Whitman, THAT Halifax Regional Council direct staff to prepare a semi-annual report on crosswalk and pedestrian safety for the Transportation Standing Committee.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Terms of Reference for the Transportation Standing Committee are defined in Administrative Order 1, Schedule 7, and include "road and pedestrian safety" in the Transportation Standing Committee's Terms of Reference.

BACKGROUND

The Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) was created in 2014 to provide a review of activities carried out in promoting pedestrian safety as well as an assessment of any trends or recurring issues impacting the safety of pedestrians on Halifax's roadways. The document was updated annually from 2014 to 2016/17.

As outlined at the November 10, 2015 and November 24, 2015 Committee of the Whole meetings, a new road safety strategy will be developed moving forward in lieu of the PSAP as shown in the 2017/18 TPW Business Plan. This new road safety strategy will encompass all road users including pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists to ensure that our roads provide safe mobility.

On May 10, 2016, Regional Council directed staff to prepare a separate semi-annual report on crosswalk and pedestrian safety for the Transportation Standing Committee.

DISCUSSION

Evaluation

Police and Traffic Management staff work together to share vehicle-pedestrian collision information. Data shared and reviewed included factors such as time of day, gender and age of driver and pedestrian, collision location, etc.

Statistics compiled from police reports from January to June 2017 indicate an increase in the number of pedestrian-vehicle collisions within the public Right of Way (ROW) compared to last year. Table No. 1 provides a summary of the findings in comparison to previous years.

Table No. 1

Pedestrian Collision History (Months of January to June)						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total Pedestrian Collisions Occurring within ROW	89	56	89	70	65	87

An assessment of the data compiled for the first half of 2017 shows that the most common pedestrian-vehicle collisions are occurring at traffic signals, with left hand turns continuing to be the most predominant vehicle movement. A total of 34 pedestrian-vehicle collisions occurred at a traffic signal in the first half of 2017, 16 were related to a left turn movement. This is consistent with previous years' findings.

An increase in the number of pedestrian-vehicle collisions occurring at traffic signals resulting from right turn movements was observed from January to June 2017. Of the 34 pedestrian-vehicle collisions occurring at signalized intersections, 11 were related to a right turn movement. In contrast, between January and June 2016, 26 pedestrian-vehicle collisions occurred at signalized intersections; only 6 resulted from right turn movements.

A detailed comparison of the vehicle-pedestrian collisions: including injury severity, control type and vehicle turning movements; will be provided in the next semi-annual report, when data is available for the full year.

Engineering

HRM Traffic Management is currently involved with multiple crosswalk and pedestrian safety initiatives.

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons

In 2016 a tender was awarded for the installation of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB's) at four separate pilot locations. Installation was completed in spring and early summer 2017. Yielding compliance studies are scheduled for late summer and early fall 2017 to evaluate the potential benefits.

Fluorescent Yellow-Green Pedestrian Crosswalk Signs

HRM Traffic Management is currently working with partners in the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) on a new volunteer project to evaluate the effectiveness of fluorescent yellow-green pedestrian crosswalk signs at uncontrolled marked pedestrian crosswalks. The results will be used to determine if the yellow-green sign should be recommended for inclusion in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada (MUTCDC).

Permission was granted recently by NSTIR for the municipality to use the fluorescent yellow green colour for crosswalks signs for a pilot study to test its effectiveness, six locations were identified as candidates to test this colour. Yielding compliance studies were completed before the signs were replaced, and will be repeated after installation at various time intervals.

Strategic Road Safety Plan

One component of TPW's 2017/18 Business Plan is to develop a broader general road safety strategy which will include pedestrian safety. The objective is to set out safety goals, policies and action plans for reducing the number and severity of traffic collisions in HRM. A consultant has been selected through a competitive RFP process and the project kicked off in March 2017. The project is ongoing at the time of this report, with anticipated completion at the end of 2017.

Crosswalk Flags

In May 2017, HRM Traffic Management recommended Administrative Order (AO) respecting the Placement of Crosswalk Flags to Regional Council. The intent of the AO was to establish a process for requests for the installation of crosswalk flags and to identify the types of crosswalks that would be considered for the installation of flags.

The Administrative Order as presented was not adopted by Regional Council. Staff was directed to begin a pilot of various treatments to enhance the visibility and safety of crosswalks. The pilot project will include data collection before and after treatments are installed and will include at least one location with crosswalk flags.

A report will be provided to Regional Council by the end of December 2017. It was decided by Regional Council to not allow any further community installations of crosswalk flags until the report is received.

Infrastructure Upgrades

On an ongoing basis HRM Traffic Management reviews crosswalk installation, modification and removal based on criteria that provide an objective source for an evaluation. Marked crosswalks are installed at locations where this evaluation has determined that a marked crosswalk is warranted, based on national standards.

Infrastructure upgrades include treatments such as: installing pedestrian ramps, extending concrete pads for better access to push buttons, extending curb openings, adding curb bump-outs, installing brighter LED down lighting, installing side mounted flashing beacons and adjusting crosswalk controller boxes to include a Pedestrian Extend Feature. All work is undertaken under existing operating and capital budgets.

A summary of the crosswalk modifications initiated between January and June 2017 is presented in Table No. 2. At the time of this report some installations were complete while others were ongoing.

Table No. 2

Jan to June 2017 Crosswalk Upgrades*				
Crosswalk Type	Addition	Change**	Rehab	Removal
All-Way Stop	0	0	2	0
Basic Marked Crosswalk	5	0	0	6
Crosswalk Light (both flashing and non-flashing)	3	2	55	0
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons***	1	3	0	0
Unmarked	0	0	7	0
Grand Total	9	5	64	6

*Some upgrades are ongoing at the time of this report

**Existing crosswalk type was changed (upgrade or downgrade)

***Project was tendered in 2016 and installed in 2017

Education

Although some Halifax Transit busses continue to carry advertising from 2016, the primary education efforts for 2017 are planned for the fall. Corporate Communications recently completed an RFP process to engage a creative agency and will launch a campaign to promote pedestrian safety and participate in Crosswalk Safety Awareness Day in November.

Enforcement

Halifax Regional Police have adopted the new Nova Scotia Road Safety Calendar. The calendar was developed as a joint project with the RCMP and municipal police forces to serve as a guiding document for enforcement and education efforts. Intersection Safety months occur in January and October of each year.

The themed months are similar to HRP's previous Crosswalk months; however, patrol officers and community response officers now target enforcement on other issues such as light violations and improper turning and right of way, in addition to the area of crosswalks.

A total of 141 special checks were conducted during January's Intersection Safety month. These special checks not only include enforcement of the Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act but also perform as a proactive measure as there is increased visibility of police in these areas. As a result, there is an increase in charged violations due to targeted enforcement, and also corrective driving behaviour due to the additional presence of police.

Table No. 3 summarizes the number of tickets issued during the January 2017's Intersection Safety month.

Table No. 3

Offence	Total
Crosswalk	68
Approach motor vehicle in roadway	23
Intersection violations	58
Illegal turn	75
Fail to yield in intersection	36
Fail to use sidewalk	10
Stop sign violation	50
Stop on crosswalk	1
Improper lane change at intersection	2

In addition to the infractions noted above, tickets were also issued for using a hand held cellular telephone while driving, speeding in intersections and sign violations during the targeted intersection enforcement.

One of the recommendations from the 2016/2017 Pedestrian Safety Action Plan was the full roll-out of electronic collision reporting software for HRP. In September of 2016, the initial soft roll-out of this system occurred and was utilized by the HRP front door staff for reporting motor vehicle collisions. The full roll-out of the system for all patrol officers at HRP was completed in 2017.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no new financial implications associated with this report. All activities are anticipated to be carried out as part of existing capital and operating budgets.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was not undertaken as part of this report as there are ongoing engagement initiatives with the public through education campaigns and enforcement programs.

ATTACHMENTS

No Attachments

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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