

HALIFAX

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Item No. 11.2
Halifax Regional Council
September 1, 2020
Transportation Standing Committee
September 17, 2020

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Brad Anguish, P.Eng., Director, Transportation & Public Works
Original Signed 

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: March 2, 2020

SUBJECT: Bi-Annual TSC Report – Traffic Control Practices and Warrants

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 14.3.4.1 of the April 10, 2018 meeting of Halifax Regional Council.

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Mancini THAT the Halifax Regional Council:

1. Direct staff to amend the Traffic control Practices & Warrants document as appropriate to remain consistent with the principals of the Integrated Mobility Plan and to support the Complete Streets policy and revisions to the Municipal Design Guidelines (Red Book) and;
2. That staff prepare bi-annual reports for the Transportation Standing Committee respecting updates or amendments to the Traffic Control Practises and Warrants document.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, meetings of the Transportation Standing Committee have been cancelled indefinitely. Therefore, this information report is being submitted by staff directly to Halifax Regional Council.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, Part XII, subsection 321(8), "The Traffic Authority for the Municipality has, with respect to highways in the Municipality, excluding those for which the Provincial Traffic Authority has authority, the powers conferred upon a traffic authority by or pursuant to the Motor Vehicle Act."

Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act, Part V, subsection 89(1), “Subject to such authority as may be vested in the Minister, the Registrar or the Department, traffic authorities in regard to highways under their respective authority may cause appropriate signs to be erected and maintained designating business and residence districts and railway grade crossings and such other signs, markings and traffic control signals as may be deemed necessary to direct and regulate traffic and to carry out the provisions of this Act.”

BACKGROUND

The Traffic Control Practices and Warrants document was created by Traffic Management to provide a consolidated reference used by staff when assessing requests for various traffic control measures. The document is intended to provide general clarification of the approach taken and a starting point or methodology that is to be used when considering implementation of traffic controls. Much of the guidance provided is based on national best practices to ensure general consistency regarding the application of traffic control measures. Modification or updates are undertaken to ensure new approaches and technologies are incorporated, as appropriate, to reflect the HRM context.

DISCUSSION

In keeping with the goals and principles outlined in the Strategic Road Safety Framework, Integrated Mobility Plan and Complete Streets approach, staff will be incorporating Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPI) into the Traffic Control Practices and Warrants document.

An LPI is a timing option used at signalized intersections to activate the pedestrian walk signal before the adjacent (parallel) vehicle signal, providing a head start to pedestrians wishing to cross. This head start provides an advantage to the pedestrian over vehicles turning at the intersection and can help improve driver yielding behavior. The LPI enables pedestrians to establish their presence within the crosswalk, making them more visible to drivers.

LPIs are used at signalized intersections where there is a significant amount of turning traffic, especially left turns, travelling over a crosswalk. Signalized “T” intersections would be priority candidate locations since all traffic exiting the side street would be turning across the main street crosswalks. Consideration is also given to locations where turning traffic encounters limited or no opposing through traffic (i.e. intersections with one-way streets), near schools or seniors’ facilities or where collision history indicates a pattern of vehicle/pedestrian collisions associated with turning traffic.

Although LPIs can provide an improvement to pedestrian safety at signalized intersections, it should be noted that there are impacts that need to be considered. Since the LPI results in changes to the signal timing, there is potential to impact all other road users, including cyclists and transit. Intersections must be assessed individually to determine the impact timing changes could have on the location as well as any corridor or network impacts that could arise. LPIs are not considered where advanced (protected) turning phases exist for vehicles turning toward a crosswalk as this introduces additional safety risks related to turning vehicles trying to complete their turn and clear the intersection.

Since the pilot implementation at eight intersections in the fall of 2018, there have been two additional locations where an LPI has been approved for implementation. These additional locations were identified based on collision patterns and include Glendale Avenue at Beaver Bank Road (implemented February 2020) and Inglis Street at Tower Road (implemented March 2020).

Staff will be bringing forward an initial plan for the general implementation of LPIs as part of the Road Safety Update scheduled for September 2020.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the information contained within this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was not conducted as this report and its attachments deal with internal policy.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

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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