

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Steve Powers, City Administrator

DATE: December 16, 2011

SUBJECT: Agenda Item B-2
An Ordinance to Amend Section 10:148 of Chapter 126, Title X, of the Code of the City of Ann Arbor (Ordinance No. ORD-11-22)

At the Council Work Session on Monday, December 12, 2011, staff provided a detailed memorandum and presentation explaining the City's approach to addressing requested improvements to the non-motorized program area. The presentation was integrated with Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) and traffic engineering staff. The presentation included a chronology of recent pedestrian crosswalk code considerations with an eye on enhancing the safety and predictability at crosswalks.

In regards to potential revision of the pedestrian crosswalk code, staff recommended that Council consider the following language, with particular emphasis on the underlined portions:

10:148. – Pedestrians crossing streets

“(a) When traffic-control signals are not in place or are not in operation, the driver of a vehicle shall stop before entering a crosswalk and yield the right-of-way, to any pedestrian stopped at the curb, curb line or ramp leading to a crosswalk and to every pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk when the pedestrian is on the half of the roadway on which the vehicle is traveling or when the pedestrian is approaching so closely from the opposite half of the roadway as to be in danger.

(b) A pedestrian shall not leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into a path of a vehicle that is so close that it is unsafe for the driver to yield.

(c) Every pedestrian crossing a roadway at any point other than within a marked crosswalk or within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway.

Rationale for recommendations:

Curb line – Use of the term curb ramp may not be well understood.

Half of roadway – Provides clarity so motorists are able to focus on the roadway in the direction of their travel and in their immediate view. Questions have arisen as to the ability of a motorist to safely observe the opposing lanes and curb area for pedestrian that could be up to four lanes away from the lane they are driving in..

Unsafe is a substitute word for impossible. The safety of motorists and pedestrians is of interest. Although under certain circumstances it may be possible for a motorist to stop, to do so might introduce safety issues for others. Amending the word impossible to unsafe allows for emphasis of the need to consider safety of oneself and others when deciding to stop or not.

Staff also recommended that Council call the community's attention to the following Uniform Traffic Control (UTC) provision currently in effect in the City:

Passing vehicle stopped at intersection to permit pedestrian to cross: violation as civil infraction

(1) *When any vehicle is stopped at a marked crosswalk or at any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection to permit a pedestrian to cross the roadway, the driver of any other vehicle approaching from the rear shall not overtake and pass the stopped vehicle.*

Calling attention to this code provision can enable the community to become more familiar with existing responsibilities. Staff will include this Stopped Vehicle provision in future educational outreach activities and advise motorists when a vehicle is stopped at a crosswalk, you, too, are required to stop.

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