

**Transportation Commission  
Crosswalk Ordinance Requested Clarification**

**Crosswalk Ordinance Existing Language:**

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 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 suddenly 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 impossible 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.

(Ord. No. 30-59, 8-10-59; Ord. No. 62-76, 12-6-76; Ord. No. 2-87, § 1, 1-20-87; Ord. No. 08-15, § 1, 5-5-08; Ord. No. 10-01, § 14, 2-1-10; Ord. No. 10-28, § 1, 7-19-10; Ord. No. 11-22, § 1, 12-19-11)

**Transportation Commission questions and/or scenarios requested for further clarification are provided below. Staff responses are denoted in italics.**

- 1. For the crosswalk ordinance to be successful, our crosswalks have to meet corresponding design guidelines. For example, drivers need to be able to see the pedestrians in time to stop (given their current speed). My sense is that we still have crosswalks at which pedestrians are not salient to drivers for a variety of reasons, such as those listed below. For what percentage of our crosswalks do problems like this exist? What are the short term and long term plans for such cross-walks?**

- **No streetlight at crosswalk**
- **Street parking allowed close to crosswalk**
- **Hill/curve/trees/etc block pedestrians from driver**
- **Drivers don't expect pedestrian crossings, so they are driving too fast to stop**

*Staff response:*

*Inventory*

*In 2016, the City conducted a fairly exhaustive marked pedestrian crossing inventory. At the time, we identified nearly 350 marked crossings.*

*School Improvements*

*A priority for pedestrian crossing improvements has been areas located around schools. For the past several years the City has embarked upon several rounds of crossing improvements. The*

*first tier was implemented in 2017 and largely focused on upgrading and refreshing pavement markings and reduced speed zone signs at 4 high schools, 6 middle schools, and 17 elementary schools. The second tier of improvements was also implemented in 2017 and included a mix of in-lane gateway treatment signs, bump outs, and RRFBs at 10 schools. Tier 3 included evaluation, recommendation, and in some instances implementation of higher cost capital projects at 21 schools. Some of this work was started in 2018 and will carry over to 2019. The next phase of improvements will be to partner with the AAPS and the schools that have established Safe Routes to School Programs.*

#### *Crosswalk Upgrade Requests*

*The City receives requests for improved crosswalks from various sources including City Council, concerned residents, A2FixIt, and other stakeholders. Staff takes these concerns very seriously and explores the feasibility of those suggestions as they come in and as staff resources allow. We also try to leverage the implementation of crosswalk improvements with complementary opportunities such as other capital projects or unique funding programs (grants). Additionally, the City's Non-Motorized Plan identifies mid-block crossing opportunities and these are considered as part of other capital projects. Staff is currently tracking about 30 requests that have come in from these disparate sources.*

#### *Streetlights*

*During the great economic recession, the City put a moratorium on all new streetlights. Fortunately, in the past couple of years the City reinstated funding for streetlights and budgeted an infusion of money for pedestrian safety lighting to address the backlog. The City went through a prioritization process to identify streetlights that would achieve the greatest effectiveness. The evaluation criteria were centered around crosswalks and included additional consideration of: history of crash incidents; crash potential; proximity to transit stops; city/DTE system addition; proximity to activity generators/destinations (schools, libraries, parks, etc.), current lighting levels, street classification, and public request/desire. It is anticipated that 25 to 40 locations will be able to be implemented with this funding in the coming year. It should also be noted that all crosswalk lighting is installed to provide positive contrast lighting to the pedestrian when in the crosswalk.*

#### *Street Parking*

*The Michigan Motor Vehicle Code (MVC) defines that parking is not allowed within 20 feet of any marked crosswalk or 15 feet of an intersection if there is no crosswalk.*

#### *Sight distance (hill/curve/trees/etc)*

*The City addresses such circumstances on a case-by-case basis. The need for improvements may be identified through a road safety audit, new development review, staff field observations, citizen/Council/stakeholder suggestions.*

#### *Driver speed*

*Safety is a paramount concern for all transportation projects. Staff continues to try to realize the goals of Vision Zero through multiple initiatives including the Traffic Calming Program, speed*

radar feedback signs, rectangular rapid flashing beacon signs, road diets, bump outs, and a multitude of other projects.

#### Crosswalk Design

Staff uses state of the practice approaches when designing and implementing crosswalks. Resources include: the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, the National Association of City Transportation Officials Urban Street Design Guide, and the American Association of State Transportation Officials Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets. It should also be noted that the City has initiated a Crosswalk Design Guidelines Project. More information is available at <https://www.a2gov.org/departments/engineering/Pages/Crosswalk-Design-Guidelines-Project.aspx>.

2. **I agree that the wording of the ordinance is confusing. Is there the expectation that drivers approaching cross-walks without traffic signals must check both sides of the street for pedestrians, and be traveling at a speed that allows time for both inspection of curbs and stopping if a pedestrian is detected? If so, could this be stated more clearly? If not, I don't understand part (a).**

*Staff response: Section 10:148(a) of City Code only provides that vehicles must stop and yield to pedestrians under the circumstances described. It does not otherwise regulate how vehicles are operated. Other laws do regulate vehicle operator behavior, including Michigan's basic speed law MCL 257.627(1), which provides that "[a] person operating a vehicle on a highway shall operate that vehicle at a careful and prudent speed not greater than nor less than is reasonable and proper, having due regard to the traffic, surface, and width of the highway and of any other condition existing at the time. A person shall not operate a vehicle upon a highway at a speed greater than that which will permit a stop within the assured, clear distance ahead. A violation of this subsection shall be known and may be referred to as a violation of the basic speed law or "VBSL".*

3. **The ordinance does not mention bicyclists. If bicyclists are on the sidewalk, waiting at the curb, do they count as pedestrians?**

*Staff response: Yes, under MCL 257.660c(3) "[a]n individual lawfully operating a bicycle upon a sidewalk or a pedestrian crosswalk has all of the rights and responsibilities applicable to a pedestrian using that sidewalk or crosswalk."*