

From: WBWC <info@wbwc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2019 12:28 PM
To: Coleman, Kayla; Linda Diane Feldt
Cc: wbwc-board@googlegroups.com; Hess, Raymond
Subject: Please recommend against proposed changes to ped ordinance tonight

Hello Transportation Commission Members,

We would like to thank you for your past unanimous support of Ann Arbor's current pedestrian crossing ordinance. As you can see from your agenda this evening, some members of Ann Arbor City Council are again recommending changes to Ann Arbor's crossing ordinance. Councilmember Elizabeth Nelson, with the support of some others on Council, is proposing that the ordinance be changed to require pedestrians to signal their intent to cross by putting part of their body in the roadway before motorists are required to stop. Under the proposed changes, a pedestrian would be considered crossing the roadway in a crosswalk when any part or extension of the pedestrian, including but not limited to any part of the pedestrian's body, wheelchair, cane, crutch or bicycle, moves onto the roadway in a crosswalk. <https://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/2019/03/ann-arbor-explores-change-to-crosswalk-law.html>

Ann Arbor City Council has asked the Commission on Disability Issues and the Transportation Commission to weigh in on these proposed changes. We request that you tell Council that these proposed changes are dangerous and recommend they make no changes to our current ordinance.

The Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition is **strongly opposed to the proposed changes** because these changes would put our most vulnerable pedestrians (individuals with disabilities, kids, seniors) at greater risk. While it might be possible for an able-bodied adult to signal their intent to cross by placing part of their body into the roadway (since they can move back quickly in the event of a dangerous situation), for our more vulnerable pedestrians this is an incredibly dangerous mandate. It is simply not safe to require someone in a wheelchair to place their wheelchair in the roadway to signal their intent to cross. And it does not increase the safety of our school children to encourage them to stand on the curbs edge, placing them precariously close to fast moving traffic, and wave an arm into the roadway. Further, we believe any changes to the crossing ordinance would likely only serve to unnecessarily confuse the driving public and make enforcement all the more challenging. We believe our current ordinance, which allows pedestrians to remain safely on the curb out of harms way and places the responsibility on drivers to be alert to pedestrians, is the safest and most sensible ordinance for our community.

I am sharing a video that WBWC developed in 2009 prior to the adoption of our current ordinance. It demonstrates how ineffective our state white cane law (which the Oregon law simply expands) is at encouraging drivers to stop for a visually impaired pedestrian. Why would we want to move backward, rather than forward with regards to pedestrian safety? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsT5ZJUnBg0>

While we still have much work to do in Ann Arbor to make walking safer, we have made major gains since this video was taken. **Please tell Council to stop debating the ordinance and put dollars into engineering safer crossings, educating/enforcing our current crossing ordinance, eliminating sidewalk gaps, and slowing traffic to make it safer to move around our community.**

Thank you for your consideration of this issue this evening. We greatly appreciate all the work you have done to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists in Ann Arbor.

Sincerely,
Board of Directors
Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition