

Request for Decision

Safety Concerns - Lasalle Boulevard at 901 Lasalle Boulevard

Presented To: Operations Committee

Presented: Monday, Sep 21, 2015

Report Date: Wednesday, Sep 09, 2015

Type: Referred & Deferred Matters

Recommendation

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury continues to monitor traffic volumes at the intersection of Lasalle Boulevard and 901 Lasalle Boulevard to determine if an advanced left turn signal for westbound traffic becomes warranted, all in accordance with the report from the General Manager of Infrastructure Services dated July 14, 2015.

Background

At the City Council meeting of March 31, 2015, a petition was submitted requesting that an advanced left arrow phase be installed for westbound traffic at the intersection of Lasalle Boulevard and the Lasalle Court Mall/901 Lasalle Boulevard and that additional time be provided for pedestrians crossing Lasalle Boulevard (see Exhibit 'A').

The intersection of Lasalle Boulevard and the Lasalle Court Mall / 901 Lasalle Boulevard is located in New Sudbury and is currently controlled with a traffic signal (see Exhibit 'B'). Eastbound traffic at this intersection currently has an advanced left turn phase.

Westbound Advanced Left Turn Phase

Separate left turn phases are not provided at all traffic signals. The need for a left turn phase depends on a number of factors including: vehicle volume, number of left turns, collisions, delay, signal timing and intersection geometry. Left turn arrows increase delay for all other movements of traffic and should only be installed when warranted.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has provided a method to calculate the number of vehicles that can turn left during the green and amber phase. This method incorporates the opposing traffic volume, number of lanes that must be crossed and the signal timing of the intersection. The City uses an even more conservative value than recommended by the province. For westbound traffic at this intersection, approximately 30 vehicles will be able to make a left turn during the peak hour of traffic.

City staff completed a traffic count on May 25, 2015 to determine how many westbound vehicles were

Signed By

Report Prepared By

Dave Kivi
Co-ordinator of Transportation & Traffic
Engineering Services
Digitally Signed Sep 9, 15

Division Review

David Shelsted
Director of Roads & Transportation
Services
Digitally Signed Sep 9, 15

Recommended by the Department

Tony Cecutti
General Manager of Infrastructure
Services
Digitally Signed Sep 9, 15

Recommended by the C.A.O.

Bob Johnston
Interim Chief Administrative Officer
Digitally Signed Sep 9, 15

turning left during the afternoon peak hour. During that time, a total of 10 westbound vehicles turned left. As a comparison, during the same peak hour a total of 111 eastbound vehicles turned left at the same intersection.

A review of the City's collision information from 2009 to June 2015 revealed that there were no collisions that involved westbound left turning vehicles at this intersection during the 6 ½ year period. Based on the traffic volumes and collision history, it is not recommend that an advanced left turn phase be provided for westbound vehicles at this intersection. Staff will continue to monitor traffic volumes at this intersection to determine if an advanced left turn phase for westbound traffic becomes warranted in the future.

Pedestrian Crossing Time

The pedestrian crossing time at traffic signals is calculated based on a designated walking speed of pedestrians and the length of the crosswalk. Currently, provincial standards recommend using a normal walking speed of 1.2 metres per second, and a speed of 1.0 metres per second may be used at crosswalks frequented by children, seniors and special needs persons. Since 1998, the slower walking speed of 1.0 metre per second has been used to calculate pedestrian crossing times at this intersection. At the time, this walking speed had been selected to a meet the needs of the seniors who lived in the apartments at 901 Lasalle Boulevard.

In 2014, City staff conducted a walking speed study to determine what walking speed should be used in the City of Greater Sudbury so the majority of residents could comfortably cross a roadway. It was determined that if a walking speed of 1.0 metre per second were used, 95 percent of residents within the City of Greater Sudbury will be able to comfortably cross a roadway. These results were similar to a study completed by the Transportation Association of Canada which found that 90 percent of Canadians would be accommodated by a walking speed of 1.0 metre per second. As a result of these studies, the City is now using a walking speed of 1.0 metres per second when recalculating pedestrian timing at all intersections.

There is often a misunderstanding regarding the operation of pedestrian signal displays. Although pedestrian signals are very common throughout the City of Greater Sudbury and the province of Ontario, many pedestrians do not understand the meaning of the "Walk" and "Flashing Don't Walk" symbols. Many pedestrians expect to see the "Walk" symbol displayed during their entire crossing of the intersection. However, the "Walk" symbol is intended to tell pedestrians that they may begin to walk across the intersection. The "Flashing Don't Walk" symbol means that if you are in the middle of crossing the intersection there will be enough time to complete the crossing but do not begin to cross from the curb or sidewalk. It is important to note that pedestrians continue to have the right-of-way while the "Flashing Don't Walk" symbol is being displayed.

To help residents better understand the amount of time remaining to cross an intersection, the City of Greater Sudbury installs pedestrian countdown timers at intersections with traffic signals. The countdown timer provides a numeric display that indicates the number of seconds remaining for a pedestrian to complete the crossing. The timer starts counting down when the "Flashing Don't Walk" symbol is first displayed and finishes counting (i.e. a "zero" display is shown) at the end of the "Flashing Don't Walk" period. There is no count-down displayed during the "Walk" or "Solid Don't Walk" symbols. This intersection was one of the first within the City of Greater Sudbury to have countdown timers installed for pedestrians crossing Lasalle Boulevard.

A review of the City's collision information from 2009 to June 2015 revealed that there were no collisions involving pedestrians at this intersection.

Based on the walking speed used, collision history and the safety enhancements that have been made, it is recommended that no changes be made to the pedestrian crossing time at this intersection.

