
Decorative Crosswalks Policy

Recommendation

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommend to City Council:
That the proposed Decorative Crosswalks Policy be approved.

Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to obtain City Council approval of the proposed Decorative Crosswalks Policy.

Report Highlights

1. To date there have been three decorative crosswalks installed in the City.
2. A review of common practices from other municipalities was completed and a summary is provided.
3. A proposed Decorative Crosswalks Policy has been drafted to establish criteria in evaluating an application for a decorative crosswalk and provide guidelines for installation of a decorative crosswalk.
4. The costs of installation (materials and labour), traffic control, and any maintenance are paid for by the applicant.

Strategic Goal

This report supports the Strategic Goal of Quality of Life by providing clear direction on installation of decorative crosswalks to promote neighborhood identity and sense of place.

Background

In April 2016, the Administration prepared informal guidelines for decorative crosswalk painting. To date, there have been three decorative crosswalks painted in the city, details of which are as follows:

1. Across 21st Street, from Spadina Crescent to 1st Avenue, in 2016:
 - Multiple crosswalks of various design, such as ice cream cones, guitars, dinosaur feet, fish, musical notes, were installed by the Urban Design section, and were funded by the 21st Street Streetscape project.
 - The cost of materials, labour, and traffic control to install the crosswalks was approximately \$3,000 per crosswalk.
 - Downtown YXE maintains the artwork.
2. Across 23rd Street at 3rd Avenue and 4th Avenue in 2017:
 - Two rainbow crosswalks were installed for the 25th anniversary of Saskatoon's Pride Festival.
 - The cost of materials, labour, and traffic control to install the crosswalks was \$5,800, and was shared between the applicant and the City.
 - This crosswalk will not be maintained and will fade over time.

3. Across 10th Street, at Broadway Avenue in 2017:
 - A geometric pattern decorative crosswalk was installed by the Broadway Business Improvement District (BID).
 - Traffic control costs of \$1,000 were paid by the Transportation division, and the Broadway BID provided the materials and labour.
 - This crosswalk will not be maintained and will fade over time.

In 2017, the Administration received several inquiries regarding how a specific organization can install decorative crosswalks, and clarification on who pays for the installation and maintenance of the crosswalks. The Administration recommends that a Council Policy be approved to provide clarity and consistency.

Report

Introduction

Decorative crosswalks can represent the character of a community or neighborhood, and can be used to showcase a community's unique culture, history, or to animate an intersection or corridor. The Administration has drafted a policy that provides guidance with respect to the application process and installation of decorative crosswalks.

Decorative crosswalks are not a safety or traffic control measure. Decorative crosswalks are not a substitute for, and should not detract from, standard or zebra crosswalk markings.

Other Municipalities' Policies and Practices

A review of decorative crosswalk policies and practices implemented by the following municipalities was completed:

- St. John's, Newfoundland
- Oshawa, Ontario
- Denver, Colorado
- San Francisco, California
- St. Louis, Missouri
- Seattle, Washington
- Austin, Texas

This review identified a wide range of implementation strategies. Oshawa, Ontario for example, fully funds and provides the decorative crosswalks while St. Louis, Missouri has banned decorative crosswalks altogether. The majority of the municipalities reviewed have a policy in place to provide guidance and direction to community organizations or individuals wishing to install, maintain and fund decorative crosswalks.

Review of Common Practices

Common practices contained in decorative crosswalk policies applicable in other municipalities include:

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1. Safety First:
 - Decorative crosswalks should be limited to locations where there is an existing marked crosswalk and where traffic is required to stop because of a stop sign or traffic signal.
 - Decorative crosswalks should not detract from the standard or zebra crosswalk markings.
 - Decorative crosswalks should not be designed to cause driver confusion or distraction.
 - Proper traffic accommodation must be considered during installation and maintenance of decorative crosswalks.
2. Neighbourhood Identity:
 - Decorative crosswalks can promote neighbourhood identity and a sense of place. They can also improve the aesthetic quality of a street.
 - Community involvement is key to a successful application to ensure the design is reflective of community values.
 - The design should have consistency of style to create a unified aesthetic at an intersection.
3. Installation and Maintenance:
 - To maximize the longevity of decorative crosswalks, pavement must be in good condition and the street should be swept prior to installation to provide good bonding.
 - Painting the crosswalk on the lower traffic volume, shorter width streets at intersections will help extend the life of markings, as well as limit overall square footage, and reduce costs.
4. Costs:
 - Costs are generally paid by the applicant.
 - Most communities do not offer municipal traffic control services to the applicant during installation and maintenance of the decorative crosswalk.
 - Application fees are not typically applied.

Decorative Crosswalks Policy Framework

Several key components are recommended for inclusion within the proposed Decorative Crosswalks Policy:

Component	Details
Location Requirements	Lists criteria for consideration when identifying appropriate locations for decorative crosswalks.
Design Guidelines	Outlines restrictions on the design to eliminate driver confusion and distraction.
Crosswalk Specifications	Identifies physical limitations to the decorative crosswalk.
Materials and Installation	Outlines appropriate materials and installation methods for the paint.
Maintenance	Identifies maintenance responsibilities.
Application Process	Provides details to applicants on the submission and review process.
Cost	No application fee required and all costs associated with the installation and maintenance to be paid by the applicant.

Decorative Crosswalk Policy

The Administration recommends adoption of the Decorative Crosswalks Policy provided in Attachment 1.

The proposed Decorative Crosswalks Application Form is provided in Attachment 2.

Options to the Recommendation

City Council could consider alternate funding models to implement decorative crosswalks such as:

1. The City pay the implementation costs for the initial crosswalk installation including materials, labour, and traffic control and the applicant pay the maintenance costs including associated traffic control costs if they wished for the crosswalk to be maintained. An increase to the Sign Shop operating budget would be required. An initial estimate of \$23,000 for four crosswalks per year is suggested.
2. The City pay the traffic control costs only and the applicant provides the materials and labour for the initial crosswalk installation and any required maintenance. An increase to the Sign Shop operating budget would be required. An initial estimate of \$4,000 for four crosswalks per year is suggested.

Communication Plan

The policy, if approved, will be posted to the City website (Saskatoon.ca) and a notice will be provided to BIDs. The policy will also be shared with key internal City agencies that handle special event applications and liaise with the BIDs.

Policy Implications

The proposed Decorative Crosswalks Policy is included as an attachment to this report.

Financial Implications

All costs associated with the request for decorative crosswalks are to be funded by the applicant.

Other Considerations/Implications

There are no public and/or stakeholder involvement, privacy, environmental or CPTED considerations or implications.

Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion

If approved, the policy will be published on the City website.

Public Notice

Public Notice pursuant to Section 3 of Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy, is not required.

Attachments

1. Decorative Crosswalks Policy
2. Decorative Crosswalk Permit Application Form

Report Approval

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