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## CROSSWALKS

### What Is A Crosswalk?

A crosswalk is that part of a roadway used to channel pedestrian traffic safely across the roadway. The Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) states a "crosswalk" means:

- a) a portion of the roadway at an intersection or elsewhere distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing, by signs, or by lines or other markings on the surface; or
- b) the portion of highway at an intersection that is included within the connection of the lateral lines of the sidewalks on the opposite sides of the highway, measured from the curbs, or in the absence of curbs, from the edges of the roadway.

### How Are Crosswalks Used?

At any crosswalk (marked or unmarked) drivers must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians. Crosswalks are marked to encourage pedestrians to use a particular crossing location. Pedestrian crossing safety relies on the judgment exercised by pedestrians and drivers; therefore, educating pedestrians and drivers is essential in providing for a safe operation.

### Where are Crosswalks Normally Marked?

Crosswalks are marked at intersections where there is substantial conflict between vehicle and pedestrian movements, where significant pedestrian concentrations occur and where pedestrians could not otherwise recognize the proper place to cross.

### What Guidelines Are Used For Marking Crosswalks?

The City of Nanaimo follows guidelines set out in the *Transportation Association of Canada Pedestrian Crossing Control Manual*. The factors considered for marking a crosswalk are vehicle volumes, pedestrian volumes and road width at a location that meets or exceeds the minimum safe sight distance for approaching vehicles. When it has been determined that a marked crosswalk should be installed, the City follows the installation guidelines to determine the type of crosswalk most suited to a particular crossing location.

By using the Canadian standards for the installation of crosswalks, the City can provide pedestrians and drivers with consistent, uniform traffic control devices throughout the City, making traffic operations more orderly and predictable, thus improving safety.

### Does A Marked Crosswalk Guarantee A Safe Crossing?

Research suggests marked crosswalks may give pedestrians a false sense of security. Pedestrians often step off the curb into the crosswalk, expecting drivers of approaching vehicles to see them and stop. However, drivers sometimes fail to stop, resulting in an accident causing injury to the pedestrian. **At all crosswalks, both marked and unmarked, it is the pedestrians' responsibility to be cautious and alert before starting to cross the street.** Be sure that the vehicle has stopped before crossing the travel lane.

Mid-block crosswalks on multi-lane

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roadways present a particular hazard. The following scenario describes a real concern at these locations;

*A vehicle in a lane nearest to the curb stops for a pedestrian who is waiting to cross or who is already in the crosswalk. A second vehicle traveling in the adjacent lane attempts to pass the stopped vehicle, even though it is illegal for drivers to pass a stopped vehicle at a crosswalk.*



The City discourages painting crosswalks at midblock locations on multilane roadways where traffic is not normally required to stop. Instead, we try to consolidate pedestrian crossings at intersections where the MVA already recognizes legal crossings.

### What Are School Crosswalks?

When a marked crosswalk has been established adjacent to a school building or school grounds, it can be signed with a school crossing sign. Marked school crossings may be considered where the crossing is located directly adjacent to a school property access to encourage a particular location as the best location to

cross.

School crosswalk signs may be installed if the crosswalk is associated with a school route and is located within 200 metres of a school frontage.

**The best safety measure for school age children is to educate them on how and where to safely cross the street.**



**Other Traffic Information  
Brochures Available:**

- School Zone Signage
- Pedestrian Indicators
- Stop Signs and Traffic Signals

If you have questions, requests or suggestions concerning traffic, please call the Engineering Department at 250-755-4409.

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**ENGINEERING AND  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

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