



**CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION:**

**ITEM \_\_\_\_\_**

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

**00-031**

**SYNOPSIS -**

**AGENDA:**

JANUARY 24, 2000

Staff has reviewed the intersection of Lower Beaver and Madison Avenue (Woodlawn Elementary School) and recommends that an Adult Crossing Guard be placed at this location.

**SUBJECT:**

ADULT CROSSING  
GUARD AT LOWER  
BEAVER ROAD AND  
MADISON AVENUE

**FISCAL IMPACT -**

One-half of the cost (\$1,800) would come from the Police Department Operating Budget for School Crossing Guards, and the remaining one-half of the cost would be funded by the Des Moines Independent School District. The closure of three elementary schools at the start of this school year resulted in a decrease of three adult guards compared to 1998-99.

**TYPE:**

**RESOLUTION**  
ORDINANCE  
RECEIVE/FILE

**RECOMMENDATION -**

**Approval.**

**SUBMITTED BY:**

FLOYD BENTZ, P.E.  
CITY ENGINEER

**BACKGROUND -**

In November 1999 Amy Shaw, Principal of Woodlawn Elementary School, submitted a petition for an Adult Crossing Guard at the intersection of Lower Beaver Road and Madison Avenue, which was forwarded to staff by Council Member Vlassis by letter dated November 24, 1999.

Staff conducted a school crossing count in December 1999 and met with Ms. Shaw and other representatives of Woodlawn School on January 4, 2000, to discuss their concerns and the results of the City's count. The representatives indicated there are a large number of students that cross this intersection and with the heavy traffic and high number of turns, it is difficult for the children to cross. The representatives also indicated an

increase in traffic since Samuelson School was opened this past fall, which serves students from the former Rice Elementary School area.

Based on these concerns, staff conducted a follow-up count in January 2000 in order to supplement the data from the December count. This information was then compared to the criteria for an Adult Guard as established in the Manual for School Crossing Control, which has been adopted by both the City and the Des Moines Independent School District. Based on this information, the west crosswalk at the Lower Beaver and Madison intersection has a Crossing Guard Volume Factor of 1416, which exceeds the 1400 threshold, and warrants an Adult Guard. This factor considers several items including the number of children crossing, volume of through and turning traffic through the crosswalk, and the amount of trucks.

Also included was a revised analysis whereby the adult crossing guard factor was based on the highest one-half-hour period when students were crossing at this location, and then pro-rated to an equivalent one-hour period. This analysis should reflect the crossing conditions better than the previous method that reviewed the total of the one-hour period, since most of the school crossing activity occurs within a short time period near the dismissal period. Because this is a new methodology, staff plans to review all of the existing adult crossing guard locations and several additional sites later this spring during good weather conditions to determine the impact of this methodology.

This location has traffic patterns similar to those that existed at the intersection of Beaver and Madison Avenues prior to the restriping project. Lower Beaver is designated as a two-lane roadway but is driven as four lanes. By restriping the intersection to a three-lane street (one through lane and one left-turn lane in each direction on Lower Beaver), congestion and safety could be enhanced. However, with the considerable amount of on-street parking that is needed for school drop-off and pick-up activity, on both sides of Lower Beaver, some curb modifications would be required to accommodate the three-lane concept and retain the school parking. Over the next several months, staff will review and discuss with school representatives various possibilities to accommodate these changes.

At their January 18, 2000 meeting, the Traffic Safety

Committee concurred with the staff recommendation that an adult crossing guard is warranted and should be placed at the intersection of Lower Beaver Road and Madison Avenue. In addition, staff should continue to work with the school to develop other traffic safety improvements, including minor intersection improvements to allow the restriping of Lower Beaver as a three-lane approach. This would reduce the congestion and enhance safety at this location.

The addition of an adult crossing guard at this location is estimated to cost approximately \$3,600 per year. This cost is equally divided between the City and the Des Moines Independent School District.



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