

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Hwy 3 Crosswalks (Chateau Nova Hotel)
Committee of the Whole—2019-2020 Capital Budget Review
Department of Infrastructure—October 29, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have had the occasion to use the crosswalk myself out in front of the Assembly here. It crosses the highway. One half is in my riding; the other is in the riding for my colleague from Yellowknife North. I know I have been on the record as urging the Minister to put in the crosswalk. It's good; it's there. I also heard a commitment today that the path on the Explorer side is going to be paved. That's great.

I know that, in using the crosswalk, I have pressed the button, and I felt a little bit leery about crossing the road, because you don't know if those cars are actually going to stop or not. You don't know if the lights are flashing. There is no indicator on the part of the crosswalk, once you press the button, that anything is happening when you are a pedestrian. I am wondering if there is some way that that can be adjusted so that there is either a blinking sound or some sort of light so that the pedestrian knows that the system is actually working or not. I really ventured out there kind of gingerly, wondering whether the cars are going to stop or not, and whether the thing is actually working.

That is my first question for the Minister, if he could work with his staff to make that work just a little bit better. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thanks, Mr. Chair. There is a risk with crosswalks. Pressing the button is only one part of it, and then making eye contact with the drivers to make sure that they see you, especially as we get into the darkness.

We are committed to working with the Transportation Association of Canada and the guidelines for crosswalks, and we will look at other options to improve that site as much as possible and the suggestion of a blinking light to tell the pedestrian the lights are working.

Again, we would like to see the pedestrians make eye contact with those vehicles to make sure that they do stop and stop safely. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks. I appreciate the comments, and in fact, I try to do that, but given that the traffic there is, like, actually five lanes wide when you consider the turning lane into the hotel, it is hard to see that far, and if another vehicle is sort of in behind, you don't know whether they are stopping or not. I get it; you guys are going to check into that and try to improve it.

That is from the pedestrian perspective, but also, I think, for the drivers, because I have driven that part as well. All of a sudden, somebody's pressing a light. You don't know whether the guy in front of you is actually going to stop or not. If there is a way to make the lighting system a little more noticeable for drivers, as well, that would be appreciated. Is that something the department could look at as well? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, as Mr. McLeod said, we are looking at it from a pedestrian perspective, but we will also look at it from that perspective as well.

As Mr. McLeod said, the new standard, the standards that we follow, come from the national standards of the Transportation Association of Canada, so we also have to work with them to see if there is another standard we can use or more enhanced equipment, but we do recognize that problem that the drivers are having, too, noticing those lights there aren't as bright as they could be at certain times of the day. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the commitment made by the department to look at those two issues. I will check out the crosswalk again myself in probably a few weeks, after it gets a bit darker, and see how it is working, but I look forward to the department looking at that and improving it. Thanks, Mr. Chair.