



**OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK**  
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## **MEMORANDUM**

January 12, 2017

**TO:** The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
Cliff Moore, City Manager

**FROM:** Sonya Claar Tee, City Clerk

**SUBJECT:** Question from Tony Courcy at the January 10, 2017 Business Meeting

Attached is a March 11, 2015 memorandum to the City Council (also provided to Mr. Courcy). This was included in the March 17, 2015 agenda packet as an information item. Additionally, Mr. Courcy received this information again on September 2, 2015, in response to a Public Disclosure Request he filed that day. City Engineer Sheffield has provided a second memo, which further explains the issue.



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
2301 Fruitvale Blvd., Yakima, Washington 98902  
Phone (509) 575-6005

### Informational Item

**Date:** March 11, 2015

**To:** Honorable Mayor, Members of City Council, and City Manager

**From:** Scott Schafer, Public Works Director  
Joe Rosenlund, Streets & Traffic Operations Manager

**Re:** Status of Crosswalk on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard at North 4<sup>th</sup> Street

At the March 3, 2015 City Council meeting, Tony Courcy asked about the status of the pedestrian crossing on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard at North 4<sup>th</sup> Street near St. Joseph Church.

The pedestrian crossing still exists with a marked crossing and warning signs. The in-pavement flashers were removed as part of the arterial repaving program last summer. The contractor however failed to remove the pushbuttons that activated the flashers; causing some confusion as to whether the system was still active or was in need of repair. City staff has since removed the pushbuttons to avoid any further confusion.

The in-pavement flashers were removed because they were ineffective with poor compliance for both the drivers and pedestrians. From the drivers' standpoint, the flashers were difficult to see under most conditions. Additionally, drivers may not have known what was expected of them since in-pavement flashers are not common in this area.

An additional warning beyond the existing signs and pavement markings is not necessary. The Streets Division will continue to monitor to ensure safety at this crosswalk. The location remains well lit and has no apparent sight obstructions.

## **Informational Item**

January 12, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor, Members of City Council and City Manager

From: Brett Sheffield, Chief Engineer

Subject: Pedestrian Crossing at Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and 4<sup>th</sup> Street

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At the January 10, 2017 City Council Meeting, Tony Courcy questioned the absence of a pedestrian crossing signal on Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Boulevard at 4<sup>th</sup> Street. He had asked the same question at the March 3, 2015 City Council Meeting and Scott Schafer and Joe Rosenlund had provided the attached response.

Perhaps a little more information could be helpful.

In 2008, the City bid a project that had a contractor install four pedestrian crossing signals in the following vicinities: 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Bonnie Doone; 4<sup>th</sup> Street and MLK; 1<sup>st</sup> Street and 'N' Street; and, 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Hathaway. The signals placed near 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Bonnie Doone, 1<sup>st</sup> Street and 'N' Street, and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Hathaway were the typical overhead traffic signal.

At the 4<sup>th</sup> Street and MLK crossing, it was determined to experiment with a new methodology that placed high intensity lights into the pavement, which would flash shortly after the pushbuttons were activated by pedestrians, thereby alerting drivers that pedestrians were crossing the street. The pedestrian crossing system was planned to be placed at the west 4<sup>th</sup> Street crossing. Due to the fact that the basement of the Yakima Herald Building extends under MLK, it was not practical to place the pedestrian crossing signal west of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Following placement of the high intensity lights at the crossing east of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, it was noticed that the profile of the roadway made it difficult to see the flashing lights.

As stated in Scott's response, during the 2014 Street Resurfacing Project, the in-pavement flashers were removed because they were ineffective. Currently, there are crosswalks, both east and west of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, along with pedestrian crossing warning signs. The City's Streets Division monitors the safety of these crossings. Due to the modest ADT (6,000 in 2015), and traffic signals at 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, there appear to be plenty of gaps in traffic for pedestrians to cross MLK at this location.