

## **CITY OF FORT SASKATCHEWAN**

### **Bylaw C16-15 - Prohibit Alternating Flashing Lights on School Buses**

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#### **Motions:**

1. That Council give first reading to Bylaw C16-15, which amends Traffic Bylaw C4-09 by prohibiting the use of alternating flashing lights on school buses.
2. That Council give second reading to Bylaw C16-15, which amends Traffic Bylaw C4-09 by prohibiting the use of alternating flashing lights on school buses.
3. That Council provide unanimous consent to proceed with third and final reading to Bylaw C16-15, which amends Traffic Bylaw C4-09 by prohibiting the use of alternating flashing lights on school buses.
4. That Council give third reading to Bylaw C16-15, which amends Traffic Bylaw C4-09 by prohibiting the use of alternating flashing lights on school buses.

#### **Purpose:**

At the April 14, 2015 regular Council Meeting Administration was directed to bring forward a Bylaw amending Traffic Bylaw C4-09 to effectively prohibit the use of alternating flashing lights on school buses within the City of Fort Saskatchewan.

#### **Background:**

Since 2010, the issue of the use of alternating flashing lights by school buses in urban areas has come under review in several Alberta municipalities. Fort McMurray, Camrose, Edmonton, Red Deer, Medicine Hat, Grand Prairie and Calgary have each conducted a review of school bus operations, with a view to making their communities safer. All but Fort McMurray elected to continue with their current practice of prohibiting the use of this equipment in their urban areas. Some of their findings were:

- Where well-marked intersections and roadways are present, it is safer for students to use those markings and devices than to use flashing school bus lights.
- Allowing school buses to stop randomly mid-block and have children cross the street in front of the school buses increases the pedestrian/vehicle collision risk.
- Non-compliance with flashing red lights and stop arms is an identified problem in jurisdictions that mandate their use. This puts children at risk for collisions.
- Mandating the use of flashing red lights and stop arms cannot guarantee students safety during loading/unloading of the school buses; rather this could increase the risk of a collision by providing a false sense of security to the students while crossing the road.

The experience of Wood Buffalo/Fort McMurray has been mostly a positive one. The school bus routes are largely designed to follow the regular transit bus routes. The stops are cleared of snow and the majority of stops are designed for right hand side pick-up/drop off, so students do not need to cross the roadway at that location. However, there are problems with vehicle fly-bys and Municipal Enforcement sets up at certain locations to try to minimize the risk. There is no information on near misses or incidents.

Additional information from the Elk Island Public School Superintendent, Elk Island Catholic School Board, school bus drivers and parents was presented at the April 14, 2015 regular Council Meeting. The preponderance of information presented supported prohibiting the use of

this equipment within the City. The focus of information presented was on maintaining the safest possible environment for transporting students to and from school.

**Plans/Standards/Legislation:**

- City of Fort Saskatchewan Strategic Plan Guiding Principles: To work collaboratively with our colleagues, residents, partners and stakeholders. To use a forward thinking mindset and consider the impact of decisions on others.
- Community Sustainability Plan Update: Goal of a safe community.

**Financial Implications:**

The enactment of this Bylaw would maintain the current school bus operations within the City, and would have no financial implications.

**Internal Impacts:**

There are no internal impacts from the enactment of this legislation.

**Alternatives:**

1. That Council give three readings to Bylaw C16-15, which amends Traffic Bylaw C4-09 by prohibiting the use of alternating flashing lights on school buses.
2. That Council not give three readings to Bylaw C16-15, which amends Traffic Bylaw C4-09 by prohibiting the use of alternating flashing lights on school buses, and advise how they wish to proceed.

**Recommendation:**

That Council give three readings to Bylaw C16-15, which amends Traffic Bylaw C4-09 by prohibiting the use of alternating flashing lights on school buses.

**Attachment:**

Bylaw C16-15 – Amending Traffic Bylaw C4-09.

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Approved by:	James Clark Acting General Manager, Corporate & Protective Services	Date: April 22, 2015
Reviewed by:	Kelly Kloss City Manager	Date: April 22, 2015
Submitted to:	City Council	Date: April 28, 2015