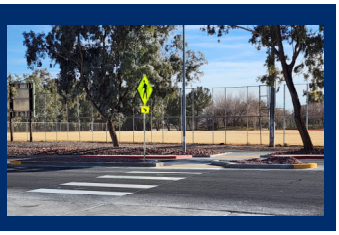
TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING DIVISION
FACT SHEETS

Crosswalks

Is it true that crosswalks exist whether marked or not?

When does the city mark crosswalks?

Why aren't all crosswalks marked?



Is it true that crosswalks exist whether marked or not?

Crosswalks are both marked and unmarked. Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 484A.065 defines a crosswalk as:

> *"1. That part of a highway at an intersection included within the connections of the lateral lines of the sidewalks on opposite sides of the highway measured from the curbs or, in the absence of curbs, from the edges of the traveled portions of highways; or 2. Any portion of a highway at an intersection or elsewhere distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing by lines or other markings on the surface."* (NRS 484A.095 defines any public road as a highway.)

Accordingly, a legal crosswalk exists at all public street intersections whether marked or unmarked. However, the only way a crosswalk can exist at a mid-block location is if it is marked. The city of Las Vegas uses "high-visibility" crosswalks that utilize a bar pattern as shown in the photo above.

When does the city mark crosswalks?

Crosswalks markings are used to show pedestrians and drivers preferred crossing locations and are just one tool to direct pedestrians safely across a street. The city of Las Vegas, like a lot of municipalities, installs crosswalks at signalized intersections in urban and suburban locations where pedestrian crossing activity can be expected. Crosswalks are also installed at school crossings and at some uncontrolled pedestrian crossings of collector and arterial streets based on an engineering study. Uncontrolled crossings occur where sidewalks or designated walkways intersect a street at a location where no traffic control (i.e., traffic signal or stop sign) is in place for motorists on that street. Crosswalks are generally *not* installed on local residential streets since pedestrians should be anticipated along the entirety of the street.

Why aren't all crosswalks on major streets marked?

On higher volume and higher speed multi-lane streets, research has found that crosswalks markings alone are insufficient to facilitate safe pedestrian crossings. Crosswalks alone can increase the frequency of "multiple-threat" pedestrian crashes on multi-lane streets. A multiple-threat crash involves a motorist yielding in the near lane to a pedestrian to permit them to cross, and an oncoming non-yielding motorist (in the same direction) striking the pedestrian as he or she emerges from crossing in front of the yielding vehicle. Under these conditions, more substantial crossing improvements (e.g., median refuge and overhead beacons) are needed to provide for safe pedestrian crossings.

The city conducts engineering studies to determine where uncontrolled pedestrian crossing improvements on collector and arterial streets are needed and justified. The city utilizes research-based nationally recognized best practice guidance to determine where crosswalks and the more substantial improvements are appropriate. This includes FHWA's Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations that is available at https://highways.dot.gov/safety/pedestrian-bicyclist/step/resources. Factors considered include a number of street conditions (i.e., number of lanes, speed limit, daily traffic volumes, and existence of raised median) as well as pedestrian crossing volumes.

Want More Information?

This flyer is for general purposes only. For more information, please contact the city of Las Vegas Department of Public Works, Transportation Engineering Division at (702) 229-6331 or https://seeclickfix.com/las-vegas

NOTE: The **Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)** is used throughout the country as the standard by which traffic control decisions are made. Nevada Revised Statute 484A.430 requires its use for placement of all traffic control devices. Find the ***complete*** **MUTCD** at https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/ or scan the QR code.

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