

City of Kenosha Partners with TAPCO, Makes Pedestrian Crossings Safer

The City of Kenosha Department of Public Works needed to act after a student was struck by a passing vehicle outside of a middle school during the winter of 2016.

Problem:

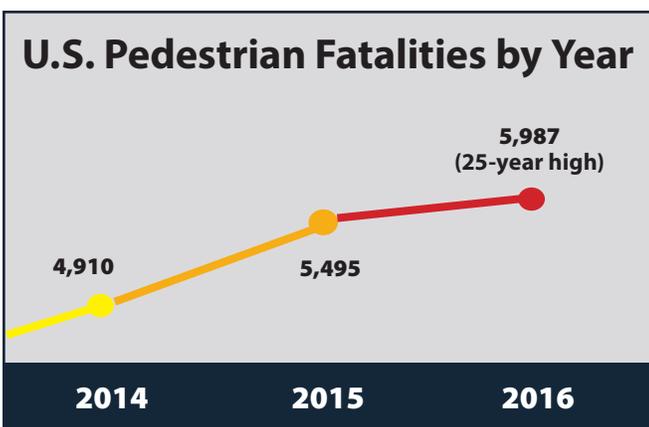
City engineers observed drivers not yielding to pedestrians throughout Kenosha, Wisconsin, a challenge faced by communities across the country. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there were 5,987 pedestrian fatalities in the United States in 2016, a 25-year high and second year in a row at that level.

“When that (accident) happened, we took a serious look at our higher traffic volume streets adjacent to schools, parks or anywhere with high pedestrian count,” Tony Stupar, Traffic Engineer for the Kenosha Department of Public Works said. “It is really unsafe to have drivers ignore signs around schools and small kids.”

Like many other communities, the Kenosha Department of Public Works was facing a tight budget and numerous projects to prioritize. In the face of these challenges, the city turned to TAPCO to help them find the right pedestrian safety solution.



RRFB Pedestrian Crosswalk System was installed outside of Washington Middle School at Sheridan Road and 43rd st. in Kenosha, Wisconsin.



Source: Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA)

Solution:

The Kenosha Department of Public Works installed 10 Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) Pedestrian Crosswalk Systems throughout the community because **these systems have been shown to increase driver yield rates by as much as 90 percent***.

Upon push button activation, the RRFB catches the driver’s attention by flashing LEDs in a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) specified wig-wag plus simultaneous (ww+s) flash pattern.

“They are highly visible,” Stupar said. “They are very high quality. We have not had any issues.”

Stupar also commented on how easy the installation process was thanks to the solar-powered control cabinet. Technicians assembled the RRFB systems in the shop and installed them without having to run power to each system.

* Source: Efficacy of Rectangular-shaped Rapid Flash LED Beacons

Results:

Zero pedestrian crossing incidents have occurred at the middle school since the city installed the RRFBs. Stupar said crossing guards outside the school have been impressed by how responsive drivers are to the system. They say the students now feel safer when crossing the high-volume street.

“Everything is not a cure all, but in terms of increasing the safety on these high traffic roads, I think they have been very well received and they have really done their job,” Stupar said. “We feel like these have helped increase safety in these sensitive areas around the school. In general, getting something to catch that driver’s eye and catch their attention has really benefited us.”

Overall, Stupar said he has received positive feedback from the school district, crossing guards and police regarding the effectiveness of the RRFB Pedestrian Crosswalk Systems.

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- Anthony Stupar
Traffic Engineer
Kenosha Department of Public Works

Preventative Measures:

After seeing the results of the RRFB installations around the city, Stupar said they have installed an RRFB system outside a baseball stadium located on a busy road in 2018. So far, he said that installation has proven to be just as effective.



The city of Kenosha has received positive feedback from the community regarding the RRFB Pedestrian Crosswalk System.