Ralph Maher-MCJ
Chief of Police
Oak Creek CO Police Department

Crosswalk Regulations Review

We have not adopted an ordinance that states pedestrians can only cross at crosswalks.

We do have a provision where pedestrians must obey all relevant traffic control devices, so, like Steamboat Springs has done, we can prohibit pedestrian crossings where we don't want them to by posting appropriate signs. I don't see this happening. (SS posts these signs at Lincoln Ave intersections that don't have traffic control signals.)

We have adopted the Model Traffic Code for Colorado and I believe we have only adopted it up to the 2010 version. (There were no significant changes between the 2010 version and the 2020 review so we are ok. We might want to adopt 2020 and craft the ordinance so that it reads "any revision published in the future." We can work on that after the first of the year if I can get the other three ordinances off my desk.)

I have attached the relevant sections (802 and 803) with a strikethrough of the information that details the meanings of different pedestrian crossing signals since we don't have any.
--
Pedestrians are responsible for their safe crossing with or without a crosswalk.

In short, crosswalks require traffic to yield the right of way to pedestrians in the crosswalk in their direction of travel OR close enough to their direction of travel as to be in danger.

PEDESTRIANS cannot leave the curb to cross the roadway until they yield the right of way to all vehicles on the roadway.

(This would be different if we had lights or signals, but we don't.)

We have NO provisions that prohibit crossing anywhere else, even between cars 15 feet away from the crosswalk.

The only thing a crosswalk gives the pedestrian is the right of way when they SAFELY enter the crosswalk. They aren't allowed to just dart into the crosswalk and create a traffic hazard for the motorist.

If they unsafely enter the crosswalk they may forfeit the protection of the crosswalk. If they unnecessarily delay their crossing they may forfeit the protection of the crosswalk.

If they cross at any place other than the crosswalk they have NO PROTECTION. THEY MUST YIELD TO ALL TRAFFIC AT ALL TIMES.
--
As I humbly stated during the re-engineering of Main Street during the rebuild (and our CDOT engineer agreed) and as I currently humbly state... crosswalks seemingly increase danger to pedestrians because they don't understand they don't have protections without lights. They tend to just walk off the curb into traffic thinking the crosswalk is a forcefield.

Thankfully and luckily in my 8.5 years of service to Oak Creek, we have not had ANY auto-ped crashes on Main Street or elsewhere. We didn't have crashes with our crosswalks before the rebuild of Main Street and we haven't had any without the cross walks since the rebuild.

It's my only desire that we keep it that way.
--

With current laws, I cannot and will not take enforcement action against pedestrians crossing anywhere in the Town of Oak Creek so long as they don't pose a hazard to the motorists on the roadway by failing to yield the right of way to ALL of them as required.

Ralph Maher-MCJ
Chief of Police
Oak Creek CO Police Department