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Info Item No. 3
Transportation Standing Committee
December 7, 2017

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: ORIGINAL SIGNED

Bruce Zvaniga, P.Eng., Director, Transportation & Public Works

DATE: October 31, 2017

SUBJECT: **Agricola Bicycle Corridor Route**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

At the August 7, 2013, meeting of Transportation Standing Committee, a motion was passed requesting that staff undertake further study of the potential for an Agricola bicycle corridor route that would include a parking management plan and report back to the Committee with the findings.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Motor Vehicle Act (section 90) allows the Traffic Authority to mark lanes on a street and control their use.

Section 70(1)(d) of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter states that the Municipality may establish or maintain parking facilities.

BACKGROUND

At its May 23, 2013, meeting, the Transportation Standing Committee discussed the North-South Peninsula Cycling Corridor report, which examined bicycle corridor options on the Halifax Peninsula. The Committee recommended to Regional Council that the installation of marked bike lanes on Windsor Street proceed. Those lanes were installed later that year.

One of the options studied in the report was a bicycle lane on Agricola Street. The Committee acknowledged a high level of public support for marked bicycle lanes on Agricola Street but recognized that their implementation would result in loss of on-street parking that may not be fully compensated for by proposed changes to parking on side streets.

DISCUSSION

Following approval of the North-South Peninsula Cycling Corridor, additional examination of cycling options on the Halifax Peninsula were explored through Making Connections: 2014-19 Halifax Active Transportation Priorities Plan (approved by Regional Council in 2014) and the Integrated Mobility Plan (expected to be presented to Regional Council for approval in December, 2017). The recommendations developed in these two plans include the use of a “local street bikeway” using Isleville/Fuller/Northwood/Maynard and Creighton streets which run parallel to Agricola Street. This local street bikeway is now proposed in place of marking bicycle lanes on Agricola Street.

Used effectively in several other Canadian cities, local street bikeways are described in Making Connections as:

low speed, low volume streets that have been optimized for bicycle through traffic. They typically include a mix of traffic calming and bicycle priority measures to minimize traffic volumes and speeds and create a comfortable cycling environment suited to a wide range of users.

The Integrated Mobility Plan anticipates that the parking issues raised by Transportation Standing Committee may reappear with other future projects. To deal with this, the Plan states:

Given the importance of parking in many areas and the impact that removal [due to implementation of bus lanes, bicycle facilities, etc] can have on residents and businesses, it is important to consider potential consequences. Where possible, the replacement of lost on-street parking should be explored. Implications of changes should be communicated to the public along with an overall context for the project.

Agricola Street is a candidate for a “state of good repair” rehabilitation project in 2019. There have been requests from the local business improvement association and other stakeholders to introduce measures on Agricola Street that would make it more comfortable for walking and bicycling, but that would not involve the introduction of bike lanes or parking removal. There is currently an intention to explore such measures in a planning/design process in 2018.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Extensive community engagement has already been undertaken as part of the North-South Peninsula Bicycle Corridor, the Making Connections Plan and the Integrated Mobility Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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