



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 2
Transportation Standing Committee
March 26, 2018

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Bruce Zvaniga, P.Eng., Director of Transportation and Public Works

Original Signed

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: January 16, 2018

SUBJECT: Rainnie Drive Protected Bike Lane – Parking in the Buffer

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 12.2.2, July 27, 2017, Transportation Standing Committee meeting, MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Zurawski THAT the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report regarding the protected bike lanes on Rainnie Drive that addresses the issue of cars consistently parking in the buffer zone in the bike lanes.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter section 79 (1) (aa): “The Council may expend money required by the Municipality for... (aa) streets, culverts, retaining walls, sidewalks, curbs and gutters;”

Motor Vehicle Act, subsection 90 (3) “The traffic authority may also mark lanes for traffic on street pavements at such places as he may deem advisable, consistent with this Act and may erect traffic signals consistent with this Act to control the use of lanes for traffic.”

BACKGROUND

On October 20, 2015, Halifax Regional Council approved the installation of a bi-directional protected bikeway on Rainnie Drive. The bike lanes extend from the Citadel Hill driveway near the Cogswell Roundabout through to the intersection of Gottingen Street. There is a short segment of eastbound painted bicycle lane that continues down Gottingen towards Brunswick Street and ends in advance of the intersection. This was Halifax’s first segment of protected bike lane.

The facility was developed as part of the North Park Intersection Redesign Project that saw the installation of two new roundabouts on North Park Street. This project resulted in changes to Rainnie Drive, particularly that it was no longer connected to the intersection with North Park, Cogswell, Ahern and Trollope and was no longer viewed as necessary for moving motor vehicles to and from downtown. Rather, Rainnie Drive was converted to a cross-section that has a one-way vehicle lane in the east-bound direction, two sides of on-street parking, and the bi-directional bikeway hugging the south side of the shortened street, next to Citadel Hill.

As part of the planning of the North Park Intersection Redesign Project the issue of the future of Rainnie Drive, (the bike lane, the travel lane and parking) was deferred with a commitment to monitor the current configuration and conduct further public consultation before a final recommendation is brought to Council.

The bi-directional bikeway is separated from motor vehicle traffic by a painted 0.8m buffer and plastic bollards. Initially the plastic bollards were placed closer to the middle of the buffer. Many of the bollards have signs on them indicating that parking is to the left and the bike lane is to the right.

The issue of vehicles parking in the buffer has existed since the bike lane was installed. It is particularly problematic in the spring when some of the bollards are not in place due to winter damage.

In 2017, the bollards were reinstalled at the outer edge of the buffer, closer to where the cars park. This appeared to result in more cars parking outside the buffer, however, some incursions have been observed.

Bicycle counts in spring 2016 and spring and fall 2017 found that about 20 people per hour were using the Rainnie Drive bike lanes during the peak commuting hours of 7:00-9:00am and 4:00-6:00pm.

In 2017, the entire bike lane was resurfaced and repainted.

Rainnie Drive is identified in the Integrated Mobility Plan as part of the network of “all ages and abilities” bike facilities in the Regional Centre.

DISCUSSION

Staff is currently undertaking a planning and design exercise to determine the permanent configuration of the Rainnie Drive Bike lane in combination with a project to upgrade the Brunswick Street bike lane (Cogswell Street to Spring Garden Road) to an “all ages and abilities” facility. Public and stakeholder consultation will be part of this process. The planning process will be completed in time to consider construction of the full Rainnie Drive - Brunswick Street bike lane in 2019, however, exact timing will depend on budget and permission by the Province to use bike signals and cross-rides, and other factors.

A permanent bi-directional bike lane on Rainnie Drive would likely be separated from parked vehicles by concrete curb rather than bollards. It is recognized by staff that bollards bolted directly into the pavement to separate the Rainnie Drive bike lane from vehicles does not fully achieve the all ages and abilities objective.

Until a permanent facility is approved and implemented, staff will continue the current practice of placing bollards on the outside of the buffer and will replace damaged bollards as soon as possible. Staff may also use curb stops in combination with the bollards as a temporary measure should the issue of parked vehicles entering the buffer re-emerge as a problem in 2018.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications related to this issue.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There was significant community engagement in the North Park Intersection Redesign Project and also in the development of the AT Priorities Plan and the Integrated Mobility Plan. There will be further engagement on the permanent facility to be proposed here.

ATTACHMENTS

n/a

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.

Report Prepared by: David MacIsaac, Active Transportation Supervisor, 902-490-1665
