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Information Item No.4
Halifax & West Community Council
June 28, 2016

TO: Chair and Members of Halifax & West Community Council

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Bob Bjerke, Chief Planner & Director, Planning & Development

DATE: May 16, 2016

SUBJECT: Herring Cove Road Traffic Comments

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Halifax & West Community Council motion of December 2, 2013:

MOVED by Councillor Mosher and seconded by Councillor Adams that Halifax and West Community Council request a staff report addressing the work plan and safety measures for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicle traffic on the Herring Cove Road and the Purcell's Cove Road/Herring Cove Road merge lane; and that the following information be included in the report:

- (a) A response to the recent traffic study that was conducted as part of the Purcell's Cove Servicing Study; and
- (b) An update on the road networks projects from the Regional Plan, namely, the Herring Cove Widening Project.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter subsection 322(1)* states that "Council may design, lay out, open, expand, construct, maintain, improve, alter, repair, light, water, clean, and clear streets in the Municipality."

BACKGROUND

Herring Cove Widening is identified in both the 2006 and 2014 Regional Plans as a roadway network planned project. The widening of Herring Cove Road was first identified as a project by the City of Halifax in 1976, at which time functional design work was completed and property acquisitions initiated. On April 19 2016, a staff information report was presented to the Halifax West Community Council regarding the plans and potential modifications for the Herring Cove Road Corridor.

DISCUSSION

A public open house meeting was held at the Captain Spry Centre on April 18 2016. Information regarding the preliminary engineering design work for modifications to the Herring Cove Road approach to the Armdale Roundabout and five options for modifications to the Herring Cove Road/Purcell's Cove Road intersection were presented. The information was available for viewing at 5:00 pm, and a presentation and question-and-answer session occurred at 6:30 pm. Four HRM staff members were available for questioning during the viewing of the information.

More than 75 people attended the public meeting. Comment forms were provided for attendees to indicate whether they felt the proposed modifications would improve traffic flow along the Herring Cove Road Corridor. Additionally, the public presented their own issues and observations to staff during both the information viewing and the question-and-answer session. The information presented at the public meeting, as well as a contact email, was posted on Halifax.ca to provide an additional opportunity for the public to comment.

The comments collected from both the public open house meeting and via email are summarized in Attachment A.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications. The on-going work referenced in this report is funded through approved 2016-17 operating budgets. The preliminary design work and development of options was funded as part of the strategic studies project Functional Transportation Plans (cost centre R951, Order MPLAN002), funded from the Strategic Studies Reserve (Q330).

Budget Summary, MPLAN002 – Functional Transportation Plans, (R951) funded from Q330

2015/16 approved amount	\$ 172,265
2015/16 decrease (reallocating to MPLAN001)	\$(122,645)
2016/17 approved amount	\$ 68,100
Expenditures to date	<u>\$ (93,485)</u>
Balance of MPLAN002 at May 1, 2017	\$ 24,235

Q330 – Strategic Studies Reserve (June 2, 2015) Purpose of reserve is to provide funding to support organizational research for policy direction and long-term municipal planning. Reserve is funded from an annual transfer from fiscal services. Business Case Charter for this project has been approved by Council. The recommendation does not have a negative effect on the reserve as these funds have been previously committed for this study.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement occurred on April 18 2016 as described in the Discussion section above.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Public Input Summary

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Julia Mills, EIT, Transportation Student Analyst

Original Signed

Report Approved by: David McCusker, P.Eng., Transportation Planning Program Manager, 902.490.6696

HERRING COVE ROAD TRAFFIC COMMENTS ATTACHMENT A – PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

Question 1:

Do you think that widening the Herring Cove Road entry and exit at the Armdale Roundabout will improve traffic flow?

Response:

Twenty-four HRM citizens commented on question 1 regarding the widening of the Herring Cove Road entry and exit at the Armdale Roundabout. Twelve citizens believed that the widening of the entry and exit would improve traffic flow; however, three of these citizens additionally expressed concern regarding issues with future congestion and current traffic on Withrod Drive and St. Margaret's Bay Road. A suggestion was made to implement either traffic lights or a restriction on left-hand turns during peak morning hours on Withrod Drive. Another citizen believed that the changes to the entry and exit at the Armdale Rotary would dissipate the traffic issues surrounding Withrod Drive. Six citizens replied to the question stating that they were uncertain of whether the changes would improve traffic flow. One citizen believed that the traffic issues are derived "downstream" and thus the changes would produce a minimum effect. Six citizens believed that no improvement would result from the changes. Stated reasons involved the displacement of traffic issues to Quinpool Road and the development of surrounding areas. In addition, one citizen stated that widening the Herring Cove entry and exit to the Armdale Roundabout would increase the opportunity for cars to speed and, therefore, create a hazard to pedestrians.

Question 2:

Do you think that any of the proposed changes at the Herring Cove/Purcell's Cove intersection will improve traffic flow?

Response:

Varying comments were written in response to question 2 regarding the options presented for the Herring Cove/Purcell's Cove intersection. Five citizens, of the twenty-six responses, clearly stated that they believed implementing one of the options would improve traffic flow, while another five clearly stated that they did not believe improvements in traffic would occur. Concern was expressed that the problem with traffic at the intersection is derived at other locations such as Withrod Drive and at the St. Margaret's Bay Road entry onto the Armdale Roundabout. To improve traffic flow, a suggestion was made to introduce a balancing measure, such as traffic lights, at the St. Margaret's Bay Road entrance to the roundabout. Based on the comments, Option 4 (add fourth lane) received the best reception. A positive comment noted for Option 3A is that the conditions for cyclists improves with the removal of the concrete median due to the reduction in potential pinch points in the road. Suggestions for the intersection include constructing a mini roundabout, placing a restriction on left-hand turns during AM peak hours, and developing/improving transit and active transportation options.

Additional Comments:

Various comments were made regarding transportation on Herring Cove Road and the Armdale Roundabout. The following bullets summarize these comments:

- Prevent left turns onto Herring Cove Road between 7-9 am and use Cowie Hill lights to meter traffic.
- Realign the median at the Herring Cove Road and Purcells Cove Road intersection so that northbound traffic on Herring Cove Road is not directed straight into it. Additionally, push back the median further from the left-hand turn onto Purcells Cove Road.
- Modify the yellow painted no drive zone on the west side of the traffic island at Purcells Cove Road so that the reversing turn, to travel down Purcell's Cove Road, is reduced in curvature.
- Install signalization at the St. Margarets Bay Road, Quinpool Road and Chebucto Road entrances to the Armdale Roundabout during peak hours by utilizing the already installed conduits to improve traffic flow, pedestrian safety and to minimize current long wait times and unsafe driver initiated activities.
- Reconfigure the two lanes coming from Quinpool Road toward the Armdale Roundabout so that drivers wanting to enter the middle roundabout entry lane, from the two lanes, do not collide.
- Prevent vehicles from shortcutting through Clinton Avenue from St. Margarets Bay Road to the Joseph Howe Drive entry to the Armdale Roundabout.
- Enhance the ability of Herring Cove Road traffic to use the slip lane to Quinpool Road rather than entering the Armdale Roundabout.
- Build a rotary with overpasses in place of the Armdale Roundabout to improve traffic flow.
- Educate the public on safe driving speeds and on proper vehicle maneuvers within a roundabout.
- Adjust the crosswalks at the Armdale Roundabout and at the intersection of Herring Cove Road and Purcells Cove Road to improve sightlines and pedestrian safety.
- Integrate planned traffic changes with the "Transit Plan" and "Active Transportation".
- Build a painted blue bike lane between vehicle traffic lanes and pedestrian crosswalks on the Armdale Roundabout.
- Improve/develop bike infrastructure both on the Armdale Roundabout and on Herring Cove Road.