



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Item No. 12.2.1
Transportation Standing Committee
December 12, 2019

TO: Chair and Members of the Transportation Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY:

- Original Signed -
David Jackson, Chair, Active Transportation Advisory Committee

DATE: December 4, 2019

SUBJECT: Improvements on Devonshire Avenue

ORIGIN

November 21, 2019 meeting of the Advisory Committee, Item No. 8.2.1.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Active Transportation Advisory Committee, Terms of Reference:

2. MANDATE

The mandate of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee is to advise the Transportation Standing Committee on all matters relating to active transportation in Halifax Regional Municipality, using the Active Transportation Plan as a guide.

2.1 The committee will provide timely advice to the Transportation Standing Committee on matters relating to budget, infrastructure, education, policy and public awareness.

RECOMMENDATION

The Active Transportation Advisory Committee recommends that the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report recommending improvements to Devonshire Avenue for the benefit of all users by applying a "Complete Streets" approach as outlined in the Integrated Mobility Plan, including upgrading the existing bike lanes, improving pedestrian crossings, reducing vehicle speeds and beautifying the neighbourhood.

BACKGROUND

At the November 21, 2019 meeting of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, a Committee member put forward a motion recommending improvements to Devonshire Avenue, noting that the painted bike line is not appropriate for a street with high vehicle volumes and speeds and that crossing Devonshire Avenue at any intersection is challenging, given the high speed of vehicles.

For further information, please refer to attachment one.

DISCUSSION

The Active Transportation Advisory Committee passed a formal motion at the November 21, 2019 meeting and forwarded the recommendation to the Transportation Standing Committee as outlined in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report. If approved, staff will evaluate the financial implications associated with the Committee's recommendation in the requested staff report.

RISK CONSIDERATION

None identified.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Meetings of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee are open to public attendance. The agenda, reports and minutes of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee are posted on Halifax.ca.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

ALTERNATIVES

The Active Transportation Advisory Committee did not discuss alternative recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Request for Consideration Form – Jillian Banfield (Committee Member)

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: Judith Ng'ethe, Legislative Assistant, 902.490.6517



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Item No. 8.2.1
Active Transportation Advisory Committee
November 21, 2019

Request for Active Transportation Advisory Committee Consideration

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| <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda Item
(Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least 5 working days prior to the meeting)</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Added Item
(Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least one day prior to meeting)</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Request from the Floor</p> |
|--|---|---|

Date of Meeting: November 21, 2019

Subject: Improvements on Devonshire Avenue

Motion for Active Transportation Advisory Committee to Consider:

That the Active Transportation Advisory Committee recommend that the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report recommending improvements to Devonshire Avenue for the benefit of all users by applying a "Complete Streets" approach as outlined in the Integrated Mobility Plan, including upgrading the existing bike lanes, improving pedestrian crossings, reducing vehicle speeds and beautifying the neighbourhood.

Reason:

Cycling

- Although Devonshire Ave was changed in 2016 to add a painted bike lane, this type of bike lane is not appropriate for a street with high vehicle volumes and speeds. See attached picture of a typical cycling experience on Devonshire Ave.
- People regularly park in the bike lane on the section of the street where there is no parking lane. This problem has become exacerbated with the opening of a new apartment building at the corner of Young St. The bike lane has become a parking lane for residents. See attached pictures of people parking in the bike lane.
- People also drive at such high rates of speed that they veer into the bike lane on the turns of the street. See attached pictures of a driver in the bike lane.
- A protected bike lane should be implemented. Given that the street hosts an entire lane of parking on each side of the street, for almost its entire length, there is more than enough lane width to accommodate a protected bike lane. The parking is also underused and does not provide the traffic calming that was anticipated in the re-design (see attached picture of the parking lanes & a party that took place in the parking lane). Given the new connection at the southern end to the Barrington multiuse path, and the connection to the imminent North End local street bikeway, Devonshire is a key cycling connection. The 2016 staff report had indicated that the current version of the Devonshire Ave bike lane would carry through the Duffus/Novalea intersection, but that did not happen and is desperately needed to improve connectivity of the cycling network.
- A diversity of people use the Devonshire Ave bike lane (see pictures attached) and its potential would be even greater if upgraded to a much better type of infrastructure.

- Vehicles traveling eastbound on Young St and Russell St regularly disregard the stop signs at Devonshire Ave. Additional protections for people walking and cycling near those intersections should be considered.

Walking & Placemaking

- Crossing Devonshire Ave at any intersection is challenging, given the high speeds of vehicles. Speed data from Autumn 2017 (after the re-design was implemented) show that the 85th percentile speed is 57km/hr.
- The RA5 north of Kenny St is inappropriately placed. Safe crossings need to be placed directly at Needham Centre and at Albert St, where many children cross from Mulgrave Park and beyond to attend programs at Needham Centre. See attached pictures of the crossing at Kenny and where it continues as a heavily-used footpath to Roome St.
- The intersection at Albert St is wide, dangerous, and encourages speeding. See attached picture of the Albert St intersection.
- The Richmond St crossing is also in need of improvement, given the large volumes of people crossing, especially schoolchildren on their way to SJAM and other nearby schools. This particular intersection, the path and stairs on the west side of Richmond, offer opportunities for placemaking. Given the proximity of Mulgrave Park and the historic Richmond area, which has been neglected in recent Halifax Explosion commemoration activities, this area is very deserving of opportunities to showcase the spirit of the community and its history.
- The stairs leading up from the west side of Richmond St are also crumbling and prevent people using wheelchairs and strollers to make a more direct connection to Fort Needham park and other nearby destinations, like the walkable Hydrostone area. Opportunities to improve the accessibility of this area should be strongly considered. See pictures of the path & stairs at Richmond St.
- Along the length of Devonshire, all beg buttons need to be removed and pedestrian crossing needs to be prioritized through design.
- The intersection with the offshoot to Vincent St is bizarre and difficult to cross, with drivers taking the right onto Vincent at speed. See attached picture of the intersection. Also consider allowing bicycles to go in both directions on this one-way section of Vincent St.
- There is no sidewalk on the east side of Devonshire between Hanover and Barrington. People walk in the bike lane in this section. See attached picture.
- The lighting on Devonshire is housed in the median, meaning that it is focused on vehicles. Many sections of sidewalk are quite dark; adjusting the streetlight placement would help with re-prioritizing pedestrians.

Outcome Sought:

The Committee approve this request for consideration

Jillian Banfield

Vice Chair – Active Transportation Advisory Committee



Cycling next to a large vehicle is an uncomfortable experience



Parking in the bike lane on the east side between Young St & Barrington St



Parking in the bike lane on the east side between Hanover St & Young St



Driving in the bike lane at the Albert St bend



Wheelchair user in the bike lane



Cargo bike, with child, in the bike lane



The parking lanes are underused, except by Irving employees who flout the 2-hour restriction



Parking is so underused on Devonshire that it's possible to have a party in the parking lane



Walking across at Kenny St



People naturally continue walking down the footpath from Kenny St to Roome St



The Albert St intersection is wide, with poor sight lines



The path leading up from Richmond St



The inaccessible stairs at Richmond St



Vincent St intersection



Walking in the bike lane on the east side because there's no sidewalk