

# HALIFAX

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**Item No. 11.1.2**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**February 9, 2021**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Original Signed by 

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Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** January 20, 2021

**SUBJECT:** **Halifax's Mobility Response Plan (COVID-19) Overview and Next Steps**

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## **ORIGIN**

In spring 2020, the CAO directed staff to develop a Mobility Response Plan Task Force in light of the impacts of COVID-19 on Halifax travel patterns and access to mobility options. This report was initiated by staff to provide Regional Council with an overview of the 2020 Mobility Response Plan actions and to provide recommendations for proposed actions and required resources for 2021/2022.

## **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, section **318 (2)** In so far as is consistent with their use by the public, the Council has full control over the streets in the Municipality.

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

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to develop an implementation plan for continuing the Mobility Response Plan as outlined in this report.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2020, a task force comprised of Planning & Development, Transportation & Public Works, Halifax Transit, Corporate Communications, and Nova Scotia Public Health was established to determine Halifax Regional Municipality's response to the impact of COVID-19 on our mobility networks and public spaces. This task force identified four key areas that formed the focus of the Halifax Mobility Response Plan:

- Space to Move
- Space to Load
- Space to Queue
- Space to Support Business

Some of the highlights from this year's program include:

- Addition of temporary expanded sidewalks on Spring Garden Road and Quinpool Road to support walking and rolling while allowing residents to remain physically-distanced;
- Implementation of 16 km of Slow Streets in the Regional Centre to support active transportation on local streets and pilot several Local Street Bikeway candidate routes in the IMP;
- Closure of Argyle Street and Bedford Row, as well as other street changes, to accommodate a larger number and footprint of patios for physically-distanced dining and to encourage street life;
- Addition of temporary loading spaces in front of businesses to allow them to adapt for more curbside pick-ups and deliveries; and,
- Acceleration of a tactical protected bicycle lane on Lower Water Street to complement the AAA cycling facility built on Hollis Street this year.

### **Lessons Learned:**

The measures that staff undertook in 2020 as part of the Mobility Response Plan were inspired by actions being taken in other cities to support residents and businesses during the impacts of COVID-19. Staff were also able to build on several existing plans and programs to support the four focus areas. These actions provided the following valuable lessons that will inform the 2021 Mobility Response Plan program.

- **The use of lightweight materials in tactical installations:** Our approach this year, informed and inspired by other NACTO cities, was to use lightweight materials like signs, traffic barrels, and barricade fencing to designate spaces like temporary sidewalks and Slow Streets. While this allowed us to implement something quickly, they did not have the impact that we wanted on safety and comfort for people using active transportation and were difficult to maintain.
- **Equitable distribution of projects throughout and outside of the Regional Centre:** All of the corridors implemented in 2020 through the Mobility Response Plan were in the Regional Centre, as this was also where we had existing dedicated staff capacity to maintain and monitor temporary installations. However, these corridors were not necessarily located in communities or neighbourhoods where they would have the most impact for supporting people who may be more reliant on non-vehicular modes of travel. Identifying and prioritizing initiatives that provide more equitable access to mobility options, even through temporary infrastructure, should be the focus for the Mobility Response Plan in 2021.
- **Impacts on delivery of other programs and services:** The scope of work for the Mobility Response Plan required considerable staff time and resources from several business units to support the planning, designing, reviewing, engaging with stakeholders, coordinating, monitoring, and maintenance for on-street changes and temporary installations. However, if these projects are to be implemented to meet our goals related to equitable and sustainable mobility options, we need to ensure we have dedicated capacity to carry them out.

### **Moving Forward – 2021/22**

For the Mobility Response Plan program to continue in 2021/2022, staff have identified two potential scenarios to build on the lessons learned this year:

- **Slow Street Program:** Implement a series of Slow Street interventions using tactical materials (curbs, planters, bollards, etc.) to reduce maintenance and monitoring needs and improve overall impact for people using active transportation. The Slow Street network will have a smaller scope than in 2020 year but will be focused on prioritizing corridors based on equity criteria and outcomes within and outside of the Regional Centre.
- **Space to Support Business:** Maintain and expand on actions from the 2020 Response Plan to support businesses. This includes coordinating changes to the street like closing Argyle or sections of Bedford Row throughout patio season. It is expected that the business community will want to “do more” in 2021/22.

Regardless of the scenario, staff anticipate increased budget will be required. This is laid out in the financial implications section of the report.

### **BACKGROUND**

On March 22, 2020, the Government of Nova Scotia declared a provincial State of Emergency to help contain the spread of COVID-19. The State of Emergency has continued to be extended and is still in effect at the time of writing this report. Since April 28, 2020 (date of report request), public health directives have been evolving. Currently, and for the foreseeable future, a Health Protection Act Order and public health directives are in effect to slow the spread of COVID-19, including:

- physical distancing guidelines – stay 2 metres (6 feet) apart from other people;
- self-isolation and quarantine guidelines; and,
- reductions in business or organization operations, if required.

In April 2020, a task force comprised of Planning and Development, Transportation and Public Works, Corporate Communications, Halifax Transit, and Nova Scotia Public Health staff was assembled. This group developed the Mobility Response Plan (MRP) and were tasked with implementing adjustments to the transportation network, as part of the collective effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

On April 28, 2020, Regional Council provided direction for temporary installation of tactical bike lanes and active transportation routes in alignment with the direction in the *Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP)* and the *Active Transportation Priorities Plan*.

### **DISCUSSION**

When the MRP was developed, it was understood that the need for physical distancing would remain in place for the foreseeable future, and that transportation patterns would evolve throughout the recovery phase. As part of the Plan, the municipality was looking to identify required adaptations to the use of its streets, sidewalks and bikeways. These adaptations were intended to be deployed quickly, while also considering what will be needed over the coming months in response to Public Health directives. The implementation plan included short, medium, and long-term actions to adapt the use of public space and municipal transportation networks as a response to COVID-19 and the following April 28, 2020 motion from Regional Council:

*THAT Halifax Regional Council to request an expedited staff report on providing safe mobility through an inexpensive, tactical, and temporary installation of bike lanes and active transportation routes along the lines of the already approved minimum grid network in the Integrated Mobility Plan or nearby, easily implemented streets.*

Based on local emerging needs that were communicated to staff from stakeholders, social media posts as well as research from other jurisdictions, the municipality focused on the following key areas:

- Maintaining transportation systems to safely move all residents and goods as the city reopens
- Keeping front-line workers safe, and actively managing and supporting both operational and remote office workforces
- Accommodating delivery & pick-up needs (e.g., restaurants' new delivery models)
- Relieving crowded areas (e.g., parks and narrow sidewalks) to support health department guidance for physical distancing
- Creating clear messaging of the recovery effort as it relates to transportation

The team then further refined its focus to find solutions to create:

- **Space to Move:** With restrictions placed on transit use and transit capacity in the early days of the State of Emergency, we looked for ways to support active transportation during that time. Space to Move was focused on maintaining and improving active transportation infrastructure while still allowing people to physically distance.
- **Space to Queue:** Space to Queue was identified as a focus area because of the need to create space for people to line up or share space while maintaining 2 meters of distance.
- **Space to Load:** Due to public health directives, many businesses shifted to curbside pick-up and drop-off which allowed for customers to continue to purchase from them without entering their establishment. Space to Load was focused on providing temporary loading space to businesses to support them during this time.
- **Space to Support Business:** Because of the restrictions placed on indoor dining, restaurants and bars became more dependent on outdoor dining space and patios than they were in previous years. Space to Support Business meant looking for opportunities to expand patio and retail space using street space.

Several of the initial measures of the Mobility Response Plan were undertaken by the team and were considered “quick hits” with limited engagement, while other installations involved consultation with businesses via the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), community organizations, and residents. For a full list of organizations engaged, please see Attachment A: Halifax Mobility Response Plan – 2020 Program Overview.

The following is a brief summary of the actions taken under the Mobility Response Plan and the four focus areas in 2020. Following the summary of the 2020 actions, there is a description of the proposed program for the 2021/2022 Mobility Response Plan and the resources required for implementation.

## **2020 Mobility Response Plan Actions**

### **Space to Move**

#### ***Temporary Expanded Sidewalks***

One of the earliest COVID-19 adaptations in other jurisdictions was the expansion of sidewalk space using temporary materials (barricades, signage) to allow for physical distancing. In an effort to expand the space for people to move, the team reviewed potential locations for temporary expanded sidewalks using temporary barricades, planters, and signage. The criteria for selecting these locations included pedestrian volumes (pre COVID-19) and connection to essential services like grocery stores, pharmacies, clinics, and hospitals. After engaging with the BIDs, the following locations were selected, and temporary sidewalks were installed on May 29, 2020:

- Spring Garden Road (South Park Street to Queen Street) until September 2, 2020
- Quinpool Street (in front of Quinpool Shopping Centre property) until June 19, 2020

Following implementation, staff continued to work with the BIDs to troubleshoot arising issues and adjust as needed.

These installations provided additional space for people to walk on the street while maintaining physical distance from others. On Spring Garden Road, it also allowed HRM staff to pilot some of the design elements from the permanent streetscaping project being constructed on the street next year. These installations, however, had several challenges including the lack of accessibility and the constant moving and removal of the lightweight barricades that required considerable staff time and effort to move and replace. Two bus stops on Spring Garden Road and one bus stop on Quinpool Road were also closed to accommodate the temporary expanded sidewalks.

Overall, public perception of this measure was positive. As part of our engagement for the Mobility Response Plan, staff invited residents to place pins on an online feedback map on Shape Your City with ideas or suggestions for where interventions were needed. On this map, residents submitted several requests for temporary expanded sidewalks. To capture public opinion on this initiative, SGABA (Spring Garden Area Business Association) also posted surveys on social media (Twitter and Instagram) and asked for people to provide comments. According to the Twitter survey, approximately 67% of people who took the survey were supportive of the barriers. On Instagram, approximately 60% were supportive. Those who were supportive said that the initiative helped them to feel safer on the street and allowed for physical distancing while walking and rolling. Those who were not in favour of the temporary expanded sidewalks were critical of the money spent on them, the barriers they posed for loading and movement, or they felt that the idea was good, but the implementation was not bold enough.

### **Slow Streets**

Like temporary expanded sidewalks, Slow Streets were a response to COVID-19 that several other jurisdictions adopted to create more space for walking, rolling, and cycling. Halifax is currently a member of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), an association of 86 major North American cities and transit agencies formed to exchange transportation ideas, insights, and practices and cooperatively approach national transportation issues. Based on what we learned from other NACTO member cities implementing Slow Streets, HRM staff developed and implemented a 16 km network of corridors across the Regional Centre. The goal of this initiative was to reduce vehicle volumes and speeds on streets to create safer places for people to walk, roll, and cycle while adhering to physical distancing guidelines. This program was often referenced as a means of providing traffic-calming but was not established for that purpose.

Most of the streets where the network was implemented were largely aligned with the *Integrated Mobility Plan's* (IMP) proposed All Ages and Abilities (AAA) Regional Cycling Network and the *Active Transportation Priorities Plan*. Where possible, Slow Streets were implemented on proposed Local Street Bikeway routes or used a local street parallel to a future bikeway on a major street. Connections to existing active transportation infrastructure and overall connectivity (building a network of slow streets) also factored into the selection process. Aside from Queen Street in Dartmouth, all Slow Street corridors were focused on streets without transit service and stops.



Figure 1: Map of Slow Street network



Figure 2: Modified Slow Street set-up

To designate the Slow Streets, HRM used traffic barrels and two kinds of signage: Local Traffic Only and a Slow Street sign (designed in-house) to educate people on-site about the use of those streets. Based on feedback received after the first round of Slow Streets were implemented, staff modified the implementation of the existing and new slow streets to include an additional barrel, moving the two barrels to the side of the streets (instead of in the middle), and adding some additional signage.

The overall impact of the Slow Streets program was mixed. Anecdotally, we heard that people used the additional space for active transportation when they were first implemented but this diminished over time as the barrels were moved and damaged and people driving adhered less and less to the Local Traffic Only signage. While the public reception was positive at first, it also declined over time. From our final wrap-up survey, people largely supported the goals of the program but felt that the implementation using lightweight materials wasn't enough to have the desired impact.

Maintaining the Slow Streets posed a challenge for HRM staff. Because the materials used were lightweight, it was easy for them to be moved out of the way, removed from the street entirely, removed and relocated to another street or damaged. This also impacted people's feeling of safety and comfort using these streets for active transportation over time and resulted in less compliance from people driving.

### Space to Queue Signal Timings

From the beginning, intersections were identified as places with potential for large volumes of people to collect, making it more difficult to physically distance. In order to reduce the number of people waiting together, traffic signal timings were adjusted at intersections along major streets such as Quinpool Road, Robie Street, and Bayers Road. For a full list of streets with adjusted signal timings, please refer to Attachment A.

Adjusting signal timings had the added benefit of reducing overall wait time for crossing for people walking and rolling. However, many of the adjustments were reverted to their original state over time based on reduced pedestrian volumes and increasing traffic volumes. Traffic Management can adjust signal timings for people walking, rolling, and driving based on changing demand. Staff will continue to

monitor the demand for people walking, rolling, and driving at several major intersections and may make adjustments as needed.

### ***Queuing Outside of Businesses***

Another area with potential for people to gather and collect was outside of businesses as people waited to enter shops and restaurants with reduced capacity. In some areas, people waiting outside businesses or waiting for buses impeded the sidewalk and made it difficult for people to pass on the same sidewalk while maintaining physical distance. To address this, and to respond to requests from businesses, the business community was given permission to spray paint the sidewalk to identify and create space to queue. A one-page document was created to support businesses and provide guidance on how to designate these spaces (Attachment C).

Despite the guidance provided to businesses, there were still areas that were reported to staff where sidewalks were crowded with people waiting or queuing and it was difficult to pass while maintaining two metres of physical distance.

### **Space to Load**

With the impacts of COVID-19 on retail and restaurant operations, people and businesses began relying more on curbside pick-up and delivery service. In response, HRM staff worked with business owners to identify and designate temporary loading spaces. These spaces provided parking with a 15-minute limit to encourage turnover and ensure there were spaces for people driving or picking up deliveries to access a business more easily. To accommodate increased delivery and curbside pick-up for restaurants, we created temporary loading spaces on streets with high demand such as Spring Garden Road, Portland Street, and Alderney Drive. For a full list of streets where temporary loading spaces were added, please refer to Attachment A.

These temporary loading spaces allowed businesses to respond to increased demand for curbside pick-up, which in turn supported them through some of the impacts of COVID-19. Many of the requests for temporary loading spaces were responded to on a first-come, first-served basis, which meant that there were occasional challenges when conflicting needs from adjacent businesses arose. With the volume of requests, it was also challenging to manage expectations from businesses about turnaround time for having the loading spaces approved and implemented and if any changes or adjustments were needed, this added extra time to the process.

As the need for these curbside uses persists and will continue to shift over time, HRM staff should consider an approach that includes broad consultation with all businesses along a block or area. This would allow us to better understand the needs of each business and be more strategic about how we balance their priorities when it comes to curbside space. This also needs to be balanced with other demands on curbside space, especially along future IMP corridors for transit or active transportation priority.

### **Space to Support Business**

Because of the restrictions placed on indoor dining, restaurants and bars became more dependent on outdoor dining space and patios than they were in previous years. Many establishments who previously did not have patio spaces looked for opportunities to establish outdoor seating and tables in order to increase their capacity. This was especially crucial after restaurants were closed for weeks for eat-in dining.

In response, HRM staff worked with local BIDs to identify where additional space could be given to businesses for expanding patios and creating outdoor dining areas. In some cases, streets were able to be closed due to the low traffic levels and the demand for street space. In others, parking spaces or loading spaces were used to create additional patio space for businesses. Some actions to support business included:

- Argyle Street between Prince and Blowers Streets was closed to vehicles in early June. This provided more space for people to move while also allowing for businesses to spill out into the right-of-way to support physical distancing.
- Argyle Street between Carmichael and Prince Streets was narrowed to one lane to allow for businesses to have additional patio space and support room for queuing.
- Grafton Street between Prince Street and Carmichael Street was converted to one-way in early July to allow for businesses to expand their patios further into the right-of-way.
- Bedford Row, between the Founders Square parking garage and Prince Street, was temporarily closed to all vehicle traffic in mid-July. The street remained fully open to pedestrians and allowed for additional patio space for businesses.
- A portion of parking lot opposite Lawtons on Main Street Dartmouth was converted into a pop-up food court for outdoor dining using picnic tables, fencing, and planters.

In September 2020, a decision was made to allow for the following to remain in place until November 1, 2020:

- Argyle Street closed to all vehicle traffic between Prince and Blowers Streets;
- Argyle between Carmichael and Prince streets narrowed to one lane;
- Grafton Street, between Carmichael and Prince Streets, temporarily converted to one-way southbound; and,
- Bedford Row between Founders Square parking garage and Prince Street temporarily closed to all vehicle traffic.

In December, Regional Council approved the adoption of by-law S-1003 the purpose of which is to amend By-law S-1000, *Respecting the Regulation of Sidewalk Cafes*<sup>1</sup>, to allow businesses to apply for annual permits. This may assist restaurant and café proprietors with economic recovery from COVID-19, should such establishments choose to extend their café season.

The space provided to support outdoor dining on these streets had positive impacts on businesses, residents, and on street life. Many of the businesses were happy to have the extra space to accommodate for reduced indoor capacity and many businesses who did not previously have a patio were able to have one this year. From our follow-up survey, residents indicated that they felt these measures both contributed to their overall feeling of safety and comfort dining out and improved the street life on these streets.

Supporting space for business also had its challenges. Staff had to work to navigate conflicting needs from various businesses on streets that were closed to vehicles or whose function changed. The materials and signage used to designate some of the closed streets, like Bedford Row, were very lightweight and posed some of the same challenges as other installations in that they were easily moved and required considerable staff resources to implement, monitor, and maintain.

### **2020/2021 Response Plan Resources**

In 2020/21, HRM spent both operating and capital money on the Mobility Response Plan. A summary of the spending on the various initiatives can be found in Table 1.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/201117rc1111.pdf>



**Table 1: 2020/21 Financial Summary**

Initiative	Activity	2020/21 capital or operating budget number	Spend
Temporary Expanded Sidewalks & Slow Streets	Purchasing of barrels, design & manufacturing of pro-social signage, installation, replacement and removal of barrels and signage.	CT200008	\$20,279.05
Street Improvement Pilot Projects (Tactical Urbanism)	Materials and installation of 2020/21 projects	CT200008 & CR200007	\$349,450 + hst

The above costs are in addition to internal resources allocated to the Mobility Response Plan. Additionally, operating account R953 – Transportation Demand Management (TDM) includes \$30,000 per year to support TDM initiatives.

## Proposed 2021/22 Mobility Response Plan Actions

Responding to the impacts of COVID-19 on our mobility networks and public spaces was an unanticipated challenge for staff, residents, and local businesses. Implementing ideas and actions like the Slow Streets program, expanded patios and outdoor dining spaces, accelerated tactical bicycle lanes, and temporary expanded sidewalks resulted in some successes this year. However, these measures also highlighted what is needed to continue to deliver the Mobility Response in a more sustainable way. The following is a discussion of the staff-recommended program delivery for 2021/22.

### 2021/2022 Slow Streets Program

This year's implementation of the Slow Streets program, while experiencing some initial success, did not have the overall intended impact. The use of lightweight materials at 64 intersections over 16 kilometers of streets in the Regional Centre made it difficult to manage and monitor from a staff perspective. Public perception overall resulted in support for the goals of the program, but feedback was received through numerous channels that the materials used were not effective at deterring people driving down those streets. The traffic barrels and signs were also damaged or moved too easily to support people's comfort and safety using active transportation on those streets. The distribution of the Slow Streets across the Regional Centre, while following proposed AT corridors from the Active Transportation Priorities Plan and the Integrated Mobility Plan, also did not overtly support communities who may be more reliant on non-vehicular modes of transportation. In fact, some feedback we received indicated that the Slow Streets were exclusionary and largely implemented in areas that supported more affluent residents with many mobility options available to them already.

The focus of this year's program should be to apply equity criteria when identifying and prioritizing Slow Street projects to ensure we are providing active transportation opportunities for communities who may be more reliant on non-vehicular modes of travel. This involves prioritizing corridors for Slow Street implementation from the current proposed Local Street Bikeway routes from the IMP AAA Network as well as exploring opportunities for Slow Street installations in communities outside of the Regional Centre. This will likely require further engagement with internal staff, residents, service providers, and community groups to ensure Slow Streets installations meet the needs of communities.

The 2021/22 proposed capital budget includes \$100,000 for the Mobility Response Plan, most of which would be to provide Slow Streets as described above. The Slow Street installations will use tactical materials like paint, bollards, concrete curbs, or jersey barriers to designate Slow Streets to better support safety and comfort for active transportation users. This represents an evolution of the current approach to the overall design of Slow Streets but would be concentrated to corridors where the temporary infrastructure would support equity outcomes and the goals of creating safer and more connected spaces for active transportation.

### **2021/22 Space to Support Businesses**

Supporting business was identified as one of the priorities of Council and of the Mobility Response Plan. This year, staff worked with representatives from the BIDs to facilitate larger-scale strategic measures (like closing Argyle Street and parts of Bedford Row) to support businesses and enhance pedestrian experience on the street. These measures were largely successful but required considerable staff time to engage with the BIDs, evaluate proposed ideas, and coordinate people and resources to make decisions and implement changes. If staff were to replicate and potentially build on the measures taken this year, staffing levels will need to be taken into consideration and staff time will need to be dedicated in a meaningful way.

Staff also spent considerable time responding to business requests on a case-by-case basis to accommodate temporary loading spaces or additional patio space. Many of the requests coming from businesses happened during the patio season and there was significant pressure on staff to respond quickly to a larger volume of more complex requests in approving and inspecting patios. Expecting that the demand for patio space will be similar or expanded next summer, staff are aiming to start planning for and engaging with businesses early in order to start to understand businesses' needs and respond to applications and requests in a timely fashion.

### **Integration with Existing HRM Programs**

The proposed Mobility Response Plan actions will be implemented in a way that complements and integrates with other existing programs delivered by HRM. The following is a discussion of anticipated projects for 2021/2022 that will both support and be supported by the proposed Mobility Response Plan actions.

### **2021/22 Capital Program**

For the upcoming budget year, there are several capital projects that are already planned for construction that support the goals of the Mobility Response Plan. Implementation of these projects will work to support overall mobility and result in active transportation infrastructure for people of all ages and abilities.

As part of the IMP's AAA Regional Centre Bike Network, the following connections are being planned for construction in 2021-2022:

- Leaman/Drummond/Isleville Local Street Bikeway
- Protected bicycle lane connections on Wyse Road
- Allan Street Local Street Bikeway Phase 2
- Terminal Road bike lanes

In addition to this, the Spring Garden Road streetscaping project will begin construction in spring 2021. This will result in widened sidewalks on Spring Garden between Queen Street and South Park Street.

To complement those projects, the Street Improvement Pilot Project (SIPP) program has been established to deliver more low-cost, quick-build tactical urbanism projects. To meet the objectives of the motion<sup>2</sup> put forward by Regional Council at the April 28, 2020 session regarding the temporary installation of tactical bike lanes and active transportation routes, as well as the Space to Move focus of the Mobility Response Plan, the SIPP program will focus this year on projects that create connections aligned with the IMP AAA Regional Centre Bike Network. While staff are still working to finalize the list of SIPP projects for 2021/2022, the proposed projects for this year's program include:

- Addition of protection to the Devonshire bicycle lane with a connection to Duffus Street
- Bell Road protected bicycle lane between Sackville and Summer/Trollope including changes to the Summer/Trollope intersection to allow for bike crossing to/from the Common

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/200428rc723.pdf>

### **Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program**

Halifax's TDM program was largely put on hold in 2020 to accommodate staffing for the Mobility Response Plan and to support actions under the Space to Move focus area. Some messaging related to travel behaviour and mode choice was released in fall of 2020, but the impact was largely limited. Staff also worked to publicly release the [COVID-19 Mobility Dashboard](#), which highlights the trends in mobility and mode choice since the initial impacts of COVID-19 in March. However, the disruption on commuting traffic posed by COVID-19 is an opportunity for HRM to implement broader-scale TDM initiatives to shift transportation behaviours, especially with several major construction projects on the horizon. It will be crucial to maintain a majority of staff capacity for the TDM program in order to realize the potential that these opportunities present.

### **Proposed Resourcing for the 2021/2022 Mobility Response**

While necessary for supporting our residents during the impact of COVID-19, this year's Mobility Response Plan programming impacted the priorities and service standards for the teams represented on the task force, including but not limited to Strategic Transportation Planning and Road Operations & Construction. Based on this year's implementation, staff foresee the need for additional resources to deliver the proposed Mobility Response Plan actions for 2021/2022 without impacting other strategic programs next year. Additional staff resources will be dedicated to supporting planning, design, coordination and implementation and maintenance of temporary infrastructure projects.

To continue to lead on temporary infrastructure projects, the Strategic Transportation Planning team will require one additional staff person. Current staffing levels are not enough to sustainably support Mobility Response Plan implementation and allow for the effective delivery of other programs such as the TDM program and the Streetscaping & Street Improvement Pilot Projects programs. The Mobility Response Plan supports and is supported by these programs and an additional staff position will ensure that each of the programs can be delivered simultaneously. Even with the additional staff, dedicated time from existing staff will need to be allocated to support the delivery of the 2021/2022 program.

Along with Strategic Transportation Planning, in order to grow our capacity for delivering temporary and tactical mobility infrastructure, a small tactical team in Road Operations and Construction (ROC) is required to provide enhanced oversight, installation, inspection, modifications (as required) and maintenance services for year-round conditions. This team would also support and increase the quality of care for other newly implemented infrastructure in the right of way related to the *Integrated Mobility Plan* such as bicycle lanes, wider pedestrian infrastructure, etc., to help provide proactive inspections and maintenance.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Proposed 2021/22 Capital Budget (currently in the proposed 2021/22 capital budget)**

The Tactical Urbanism account (account no. CT200008) 2021/22 proposed Capital Budget includes \$100,000 for anticipated Mobility Response Plan projects and \$250,000 for Street Improvement Pilot Projects.

The Active Transportation - Strategic Projects account (account no. CR200001) 2021/22 proposed Capital Budget includes \$3,300,000 of which an undetermined portion will support the Mobility Response Plan projects and the Street Improvement Pilot. The amount will become more certain as projects become fully costed.

### **Proposed Operating Budget for Mobility Response Plan**

In addition to the above proposed 2021/22 capital budget ask, staff have included the required budget of \$325,000 in the proposed 21/22 operating budget for Council's consideration. This budget will support the Mobility Response Plan through staff compensation to project manage, implement and maintain the program.

The 4-year estimated financial implications are summarized as follows:

Fiscal Year	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Operating – P&D	\$85,000	\$86,700	\$88,435	\$90,200
Operating – TPW	\$240,000	\$244,800	\$249,700	\$254,700
Capital – CT200008	\$350,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000

\*The items in the table above are included in the proposed 21/22 capital and operating budgets for council's consideration during the budget process. 2% annual interest is assumed for operating budget inflation.

## **RISK CONSIDERATION**

The Mobility Response Plan provides for space within our mobility network to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and to support businesses in their operation needs in alignment with Public Health directives. The work that staff did under the Mobility Response Plan was also largely aligned with existing initiatives and goals. Public expectation is high and investment in this program is expected. If investment is cut or this program does not grow, public expectations may not be met.

Implementing any of the three scenarios outlined above pose a risk to staff capacity, as they rely on additional resourcing from staff across the organization. Staff from various teams may be impacted based on the demands of the Mobility Response Plan including:

- Road Operations and Construction
- Traffic Management
- Parking
- Strategic Transportation Planning
- Active Transportation
- Halifax Transit
- Corporate Communications and Public Affairs
- Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency
- Buildings and Compliance

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The initial actions of the Mobility Response Plan were implemented with scant engagement, as action was needed swiftly. However, these actions were informed by conversations being had on social media, in the news, and what was being done in other jurisdictions. Following the implementation of the initial projects, engagement was added to the program to confirm that the actions originally taken were effective, and to understand what more needed to be completed. As this was a new event, with no precedence, understanding the experiences of the public was important to understand what work was needed. Below is an overview of the engagement activities taken so far under the Mobility Response Plan. Please see Attachment B for full engagement results.

### **Initial Engagement**

A [website](#) on Halifax.ca was created to share information and engage with the public on next steps for the Mobility Response Plan. Part of the website shared information that included what the plan was meant to achieve and to share updates on projects and next steps. In addition to this information, an engagement portal was set up on the HRM Shape Your City website which asked residents for their input on where additional actions were needed in their neighbourhoods or along their commutes/ access to amenities. There was a map where residents could place a "pin" and provide suggestions or ideas for supporting the four focus areas of the plan. This feedback was gathered to help staff understand how moving around could be safer for residents. The team knew that the above actions were a start but wanted to gain input from residents to help determine the next steps for making temporary changes to the street as a result of

COVID-19. There were four types of pins representing the four focus areas of the plan: Space to Move, Space to Queue, Space to Load, and Space to Support Business.

Hundreds of responses were received on HRM's Shape Your City map and through emails to staff for changes to streets and sidewalks. HRM's response was focused on temporary changes and using the resources and tools on hand to address some of the most urgent needs resulting from COVID-19. There is more work to be done to improve the experience for people walking, rolling, cycling and taking transit and to improve our public spaces. Much of this work is being addressed through the *Integrated Mobility Plan and Halifax's Road Safety Plan*. In addition, while not all of these suggestions were able to be addressed through the Mobility Response Plan, many of them are related to other municipal initiatives like traffic calming, streetscaping, or active transportation planning. The feedback received for more permanent changes was collected and provided to staff working on those initiatives for future use. Staff summarized what we heard and produced a frequently asked questions document for the website and social media. This summary can be found on the project webpage ([www.halifax.ca/mobilityresponse](http://www.halifax.ca/mobilityresponse)).

### **Wrap-Up Survey**

To capture public feedback on actions taken this year under the Mobility Response Plan, a wrap-up survey was released. This survey asked residents for feedback on the Slow Street program, the expanded patios and outdoor dining areas, as well as overall feedback on the plan. In total, 207 residents responded to this survey. Full insights can be found in Attachment A: Mobility Response Engagement Results Report.

### **Media and Social Media Engagement**

With municipal facilities closed, and many print publications not publishing due to COVID-19, we did a large amount of promotion on social media, on-street signage, and via the media.

From May 25 (the first expanded sidewalk rollout) to October 31 (announcement of the extension of the Argyle Street, Grafton Street, and Bedford Row street modifications), posts on HRM social media accounts about the Mobility Response Plan were viewed a total of 458,181 times and interacted with (shared, liked, or reacted to) a total of 30,083 times. During that same time, [the Mobility Response plan webpage](#) on Halifax.ca was viewed 3,441 times and the [Shape Your City project page](#) was viewed 2,674 times.

Other forms of information sharing included:

- On June 1, 2020, staff participated in an on-camera interview with Colleen Jones at CBC to promote and educate residents about the then newly-implemented Slow Streets.
- On September 3, 2020, staff participated in the Downtown Lowdown (Episode 32) that is hosted by the Downtown Halifax Business Improvement District. The conversation included an overview of the program, the engagement process, key focus areas, and next steps.
- On June 19, 2020, staff participated in the Canadian Urban Institute 100 days of COVID: COVID Sign Post panel discussion. This discussion explored actions taken by Canadian cities in the first 100 days since the beginning of COVID-19 impacts and what was on the horizon for future action.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

This project is supportive of the sustainability objectives of the municipality as it aims to make it safer and more comfortable for residents to choose sustainable transportation options for everyday transportation purposes.

**ALTERNATIVES**

Regional Council may recommend that some or all of the recommendations not be approved or be modified. Alternatives are presented below:

1. Regional Council may recommend to not proceed with the proposed actions for the 2021/2022 Mobility Response Plan. Staff do not recommend this alternative as we have the demonstrated ability to act and respond to emerging needs and changes in demand. Failing to continue to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 on our streets and public spaces may be seen as a lack of action on our part and may erode trust in the Municipality.
2. Regional Council may recommend additional activities than what is outlined in the above actions. Staff do not recommend this alternative, as the proposed actions for this year reflect an elevated scope of work that, with the requested resources, staff feel confident that they can sustainably deliver this year. If this program and scope of work are to continue growing, staff need to ensure that they have the capacity to meaningfully deliver it each year.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Halifax Mobility Response Plan – 2020 Program Overview

Attachment B: Mobility Response Engagement Results Report

Attachment C: Information to Businesses: Space designation

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [www.halifax.ca](http://www.halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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# HALIFAX

## MOBILITY RESPONSE PLAN

2020 Program  
Overview



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## The Halifax Mobility Response Plan: Streets and Spaces

On March 22, 2020, the Government of Nova Scotia declared a provincial State of Emergency to help contain the spread of COVID-19. The State of Emergency has continued to be extended and is still in effect at the time of writing this report. Since April 28, 2020 (date of report request), public health directives have evolved, however currently and for the foreseeable future, to slow the spread of COVID-19, a Health Protection Act Order and public health directives are in effect, including:

- social distancing guidelines – stay 2 metres (6 feet) apart from other people;
- immediately self-isolate for 14 days if you or someone from your household enters, or has returned to, Nova Scotia from outside Atlantic Canada; and,
- reduce your business or organization operations, if required.

In April 2020, a task force comprised of Planning and Development, Transportation and Public Works, Corporate Communications, Halifax Transit, and Nova Scotia Public Health staff was assembled. This group developed the Mobility Response Plan and implemented adjustments to the transportation network, as part of the collective effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

When the Mobility Response Plan was developed, it was understood that the need for physical distancing would remain in place for the foreseeable future, and that transportation patterns would evolve throughout the recovery phase. As part of the Plan, the municipality was looking to identify required adaptations to the use of its streets, sidewalks and bikeways. These adaptations were intended to be deployed quickly, while also considering what will be needed over the coming months in response to Public Health directives. The implementation plan included short, medium, and long-term actions to adapt the use of public space and municipal transportation networks.

Based on local emerging needs that were communicated to staff from stakeholders and by email and social media as well as research from other jurisdictions, the municipality focused on the following key areas:

- Maintaining transportation systems to safely move all residents and goods as the city reopens
- Keeping front-line workers safe, and actively managing and supporting both operational and remote office workforces
- Accommodating delivery & pick-up needs (e.g., restaurants' new delivery models)
- Relieving crowded areas (e.g., parks and narrow sidewalks) to support health department guidance for physical distancing
- Creating clear messaging of the recovery effort as it relates to transportation

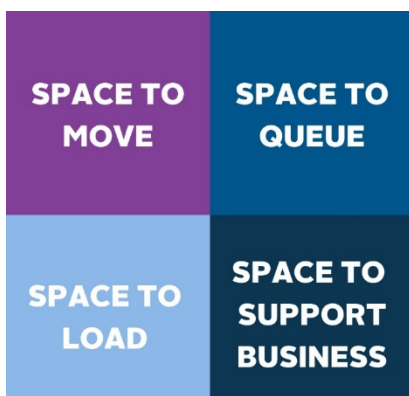


Figure 1 - Graphics used to promote four focus areas of Mobility Response Plan

The team then further refined its focus to find solutions to create:

- Space to Move
- Space to Queue
- Space to Load
- Space to Support Business

On April 28, 2020, Regional Council provided direction for temporary installation of tactical bike lanes and active transportation routes in alignment with the direction in the *Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP)* and the *Active Transportation Priorities Plan*.

Starting in early May 2020, representatives from Planning and Development, Transportation and Public Works, Halifax Transit, Corporate Communications, and Public Health met often to discuss emerging needs for the

transportation networks and public space and corresponding measures to address those needs. The team also worked together to develop a process for design, implementation, and maintenance of temporary measures. Several of the initial measures of the Mobility Response Plan were undertaken by the team and were considered “quick hits” with limited engagement, while other installations involved consultation with businesses and residents.

The team met virtually with the majority of the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), as well as with representatives from several advocacy groups to learn more about the needs from these groups and the people and businesses they represent.

BIDS included:

- Downtown Halifax Business Improvement District (DHBC);
- Downtown Dartmouth Business Commission (DDBC);
- Spring Garden Area Business Association (SGABA);
- North End Business Association (NEBA);
- Quinpool Road Mainstreet District Association;
- Sackville Business Improvement District;
- Village on Main – Main Street Dartmouth Community Improvement District; and,
- Spryfield & District Business Commission.

Advocacy Groups included:

- Halifax Cycling Coalition;
- Ecology Action Centre;
- Walk and Roll; and
- It’s More Than Buses.

## Mobility Response Plan Program Actions

The following is an in-depth description of the actions taken as part of the 2020 Mobility Response Plan program to support the four focus areas identified above.

### 1.0 Space To Move

Based on the public health directives, providing space for people to walk, roll, and cycle while still maintaining a physical distance of 2 meters emerged as a key priority in the early phase of the plan. From the beginning, we heard feedback from the community that several sidewalks were not wide enough to accommodate foot traffic without people having to move onto the roadway to maintain physical separation. We also recognized that people needed to access essential services in their communities and essential workers needed to be able to continue commuting to work safely. With restrictions placed on transit use and transit capacity in the early days of the State of Emergency, we looked for ways to support active transportation during that time. Space to Move was focused on maintaining and improving active transportation infrastructure while still allowing people to physically distance.

#### 1.1 Temporary Expanded Sidewalks

One of the earliest COVID-19 adaptations in other jurisdictions was the expansion of sidewalk space using temporary materials to allow for physical distancing. In an effort to expand the space for people to move, the team reviewed potential locations for temporary expanded sidewalks using temporary barricades, planters, and signage. The criteria for selecting these locations included pedestrian volumes (pre COVID-19) and connection to essential services like grocery stores, pharmacies, clinics, and hospitals. After engaging with the BIDs, the following locations were selected, and temporary sidewalks were installed on May 29th, 2020:

- Spring Garden Road (South Park Street to Queen Street)

- Quinpool Street (in front of Quinpool Shopping Centre property)

As part of this measure, the Mobility Response Plan team worked to develop pro-social signage to communicate the purpose of the expanded sidewalks and various etiquette for their use including physical distancing and allowing for people using mobility aids to have right of way on the sidewalk as the expansion was not accessible. This signage was a key way for us to educate on-site and encourage people to share the space courteously.

The expanded sidewalks were in place on Quinpool Road until June 19th, 2020. After hearing feedback from their businesses and residents in the area, the Quinpool BID formally requested the removal of the temporary sidewalk expansion in front of the Quinpool Shopping Centre. Based on the feedback that staff had also received, the relatively wide sidewalk that already existed on this section of the street, and the limited access to the Quinpool Shopping Centre through the front of the building, staff decided that the installation was not having the intended impact and complied with the request.

The Spring Garden Road temporary expanded sidewalk remained in place until September 2, 2020. This installation helped to accommodate the large volume of pedestrians that travel this corridor and allowed for businesses to spill out into the right of way while also testing the widened sidewalks that will be implemented as part of the Imagine Spring Garden Streetscaping project coming in 2021. The Spring Garden BID added to the design by purchasing and adding banners to the barricades and moving their planters out onto the street. HRM also supplied and installed additional planters to add to the aesthetics.



Figure 2 - Spring Garden Road: Temporary Expanded Sidewalk

#### Temporary Expanded Sidewalk Overview

##### *Benefits of Temporary Expanded Sidewalks*

The addition of the temporary expanded sidewalks, especially on Spring Garden Road, provided the following benefits:

- Provided additional space on busy sidewalks to allow for physical distancing
- Provided new opportunities for patio spaces

- Prepared residents for some of the permanent streetscaping changes coming as part of Imagine Spring Garden Road, including side street loading
- Prepared businesses on Spring Garden for next year's streetscaping and how they might activate the street

### *Challenges of Temporary Expanded Sidewalks*

Despite the benefits, residents, staff, and the businesses on the street encountered some of the following challenges:

- Barricades were frequently moved by those wanting to load/unload. Putting them back in place took staff time and response time from both operations and enforcement staff.
- Barricades had to be removed, then replaced, for protests that took place on Spring Garden Road.
- Some barricades broke and needed to be repaired/ replaced
- Staff time to move planters onto the street and then back on the sidewalk when the barricades were removed
- Expanded sidewalk was not fully accessible, although signage provided guidance
- High-demand bus stops on Spring Garden between Dresden and Birmingham and Quinpool Road in front of the Quinpool Shopping Centre were temporarily closed as they were unable to be kept accessible with the expanded sidewalks
- Beautification complaints from the BID due to temporary materials
- Complaints from businesses on lack of loading/ unloading space

### *Moving Forward*

Based on this year's experience with temporary expanded sidewalks, staff took away several lessons that will influence how we plan, design, and implement future temporary installations.

- **Prioritizing and Centering Accessibility:** Overall, the temporary expanded sidewalks posed some challenges for accessibility. Some bus stops had to be closed for the implementation of the temporary expanded sidewalks and while this allowed for more space overall, it impacted the distance that people had to travel between bus stops. For future installations, a platform or ramp solution that can be installed at bus stops to maintain access should be considered. Our expanded sidewalks themselves were also not accessible and although messaging was placed on signage along the length of the project asking people who were able to step off the sidewalk to allow for people using mobility aids to use the sidewalk space, this was not always followed. Future designs should ensure that both spaces are accessible so that everyone can use them safely and comfortably.
- **Materials:** Because of the temporary nature of the barricades that we used to delineate the temporary expanded sidewalks, it was very easy for them to be moved out of the way. With the high demand for curbside space for pickup and delivery, the barricades on Spring Garden Road were constantly moved to accommodate delivery drivers who were picking up orders from restaurants and businesses. HRM Road Operations staff received several service requests related to displaced barricades and had to move them back each time they moved. In addition, parking enforcement staff spent quite a bit of time relocating the barricades back to their original location. Heavier materials, like jersey barriers, may be more effective barricades for future installations as they cannot be moved as easily. Additionally, there is an opportunity to better use regulatory signage along with barricades to support compliance and help people to understand how to navigate these kinds of installations.
- **Criteria for Locating Infrastructure:** Because of the rapid implementation of the temporary expanded sidewalks, part of our consideration for locations in addition to higher pedestrian volumes and connection to essential services was ease of implementation. The Spring Garden and Quinpool locations were relatively easy to implement, either because we had existing plans in place (as was the case with Spring

Garden Road) or there was space with very few conflicts (as on Quinpool Road in front of the Shopping Centre). However, this does not take into account where these kinds of installations would have the most impact or be most needed. When considering future temporary measures, staff should include criteria to strategically evaluate proposed locations to determine where these kinds of installations are needed most and understand the trade offs.

### *Engagement Results*

Before the implementation of the temporary expanded sidewalks, HRM staff consulted with the Spring Garden Area Business Association (SGABA) and the Quinpool Road Mainstreet District Association to discuss proposed locations and get their buy-in. Due to the urgent nature of the initial response, staff were only able to conduct limited engagement.

After the initial round of measures were in place, the Mobility Response Plan team launched a Shape Your City page to better engage with the public about changing needs related to COVID-19 and its impact on mobility and our public spaces. The initial round of engagement included a Places map where residents could drop pins to suggest ideas for future measures. Overall, we received 25 requests for other temporary expanded sidewalks. For the full list, please see Attachment A: Mobility Response Engagement Results Report.

Following implementation, we continued to engage with SGABA and the Quinpool Road BID about the temporary expanded sidewalks and troubleshoot solutions for issues that arose. When the temporary expanded sidewalks were removed, this was done either at the request of the BID or in conjunction with the BID based on the feedback and concerns surrounding the lightweight barricades and the level of maintenance needed to keep them in place.

To capture public opinion on this initiative, SGABA posted surveys on Twitter and Instagram and asked for people to provide comments. According to the Twitter survey, approximately 67% of people who took the survey were supportive of the barriers. On Instagram, approximately 60% were supportive.

Those who were supportive said that the initiative helped them to feel safer on the street and allowed for physical distancing while walking and rolling. Those who were not in favour of the temporary expanded sidewalks were critical of the money spent on them, the barriers they posed for loading and movement, or they felt that the idea was good, but the implementation was not bold enough.

## 1.2 Slow Streets

Like temporary expanded sidewalks, Slow Streets were a response to COVID-19 that several other jurisdictions adopted to create more space for walking, rolling, and cycling. Based on what we learned from other NACTO cities implementing Slow Streets, HRM staff developed and implemented a 16 km network of corridors across peninsular Halifax and Dartmouth. The goal of this initiative was to reduce vehicle volumes and speeds on streets to create safer places for people to walk, roll, and cycle while adhering to physical distancing guidelines. However, this program was not meant to provide traffic-calming for all streets.

Several criteria were used to select Slow Street corridors and create a north-south and east-west grid where possible in Halifax and Dartmouth. Most of the streets where the network was implemented were largely aligned with the *Integrated Mobility Plan's* (IMP) All Ages and Abilities (AAA) Regional Cycling Network and the *Active Transportation Priorities Plan*. Where possible, Slow Streets were implemented on proposed Local Street Bikeway routes or used a local street parallel to a future bikeway on a major street. Connections to existing active transportation infrastructure and overall connectivity (building a network of slow streets) also factored into the selection process. Aside from Queen Street in Dartmouth, all Slow Street corridors were focused on streets without transit service and stops.

To designate the Slow Streets, HRM used traffic barrels and two kinds of signage: Local Traffic Only and a Slow Street sign (designed in-house) to educate people on-site about the use of those streets. For people who were driving, only those that lived, were visiting, or were accessing a business on these streets were considered local

traffic. Otherwise, people were encouraged to use an alternate route. Due to the availability of resources, barrels and signs were placed at key intersections but not on every intersection along the corridor.



Figure 3: Map of Slow Street Corridors

The following streets were designated as Slow Streets:

#### Halifax

- Leaman, Drummond, and Isleville streets between Leeds and Almon street
- Connolly Street between Windsor Street and Chebucto Road
- Elm Street between Chebucto and Quinpool roads
- Beech Street between Quinpool and Jubilee roads
- Peter Lowe Avenue between William Hunt and George Dauphinee avenues
- Liverpool Street between Connaught Avenue and Windsor Street
- Oak and Allan streets between Connaught Avenue and Windsor Street
- Welsford Street between Windsor and Robie streets
- Vernon Street between Pepperell and Watt streets
- LeMarchant Street between Watt Street and University Avenue

- Norwood Street between Connaught Avenue and Preston Street
- Shirley Street between Preston and Robie streets

#### Dartmouth

- Chappell Street between Pinehill Drive and Wyse Road
- Slayter Street between Albro Lake Road and School Street
- Dahlia Street between Victoria Road and Crichton Avenue

In response to feedback we received from the Shape Your City website and community groups (more information below in the engagement section), on Friday, June 19, 2020, the following streets were added to the list of Slow Streets.

#### Halifax

- Maynard Street from North to Cogswell streets
- Creighton Street from North to Cogswell streets
- Fuller Terrace from Bloomfield to North streets
- Northwood Terrace from Bloomfield to North streets
- Charles Street from Windsor to Gottingen streets

#### Dartmouth

- Pine Street from Thistle to Ochterloney street
- Irishtown Road from Ochterloney to Queen street
- Queen Street from Alderney Drive to Irishtown Road

Based on the same feedback, we also modified the implementation of the existing and new slow streets to include an additional barrel, moving the two barrels to the side of the streets (instead of in the middle), and adding some additional signage.



Figure 4: Modified Slow Street set-up

Maintaining the Slow Streets posed a challenge for HRM staff. Because the materials used were lightweight, it was easy for them to be moved out of the way, removed from the street entirely, removed and relocated to another street or damaged. At first, HRM staff were visiting the locations three times a week to check on them and move barrels back into place, or replace them if they had been damaged. Eventually, staff reached out to community members to be stewards for the installations and to let staff know if any had been damaged or moved. Despite this level of monitoring, it was difficult to keep the materials in place and in a good state of repair.

In late September, ahead of predicted high winds due to Hurricane Teddy, the Slow Street barrels and signs were removed and were not put back out afterwards as the winter season was approaching.

#### Slow Street Overview

##### *Benefits of the Slow Street Program*

Some of the benefits experienced as a result of the Slow Streets program include:

- Allowed staff to test ideas for the implementation of IMP AAA Regional Centre bike network and other planned projects
- Provided an opportunity to educate the public about Local Street Bikeways, their design, and their function in a cycling network.
- Increased the people walking and cycling along these corridors and compliance from people driving initially. However, this seemed to decrease after the first few weeks.
- Highlighted the demand for more slow streets and traffic calming across HRM.
- Highlighted our ability to test ideas and adjust as needed after receiving feedback and insights about the impact of a pilot.
- Allowed us to provide guidance and inspiration to other jurisdictions, some which emulated large portions of our program (e.g.: PEI).



### *Challenges of the Slow Street Program*

The model that staff used for Slow Streets had several challenges, including:

- Time and effort required to maintain Slow Street implementation. Staff and community members volunteered time to move barrels, monitor streets, and replace missing or broken barrels. Despite the level of monitoring, several of the installations were damaged or moved regularly either on the original street or to nearby neighbouring streets.
- Damaged and missing barrels were not aesthetically pleasing and created a negative perception of the program.
- Anecdotally, the impact of the Slow Street installations diminished over time. While people driving observed the signs at first, feedback from residents indicate that they felt that traffic volumes and speeds increased after the first few weeks. Similarly, more people were using the space to walk, roll, and cycle when the barrels were first installed, but stopped using it the longer the barrels were in place.
- Impacts on equity. The Slow Street network mirrored the proposed IMP AAA Regional Centre Bike Network, but this does not mean that it necessarily served residents who rely most on active transportation.
- Misconception around who could use the streets. Residents sometimes confused “local traffic only” for private streets and felt excluded.
- Inconsistency around where the barrels were put back. Staff, volunteers and the public returned the barrels to different parts of the street and in some cases, barrels were moved to nearby neighboring streets that hadn’t been included in the program
- Constraint around engagement capability. Rapid deployment of the program meant that we were less able to have conversations with residents and community groups about the program and where to locate Slow Streets.
- Public concern that what we do on one street impacts neighbouring street (traffic from slow street would travel on neighbouring street instead, thereby having the potential to increase vehicle volumes on those neighbouring streets).
- Contingency planning for weather events, such as hurricanes.
- Public complaints about lack of enforcement for “local traffic only”.
- Competing interest of streets. Some residents wanted the streets closed completely, others wanted the signs removed so that they could drive down them.
- Barrels and signage didn’t provide enough protection for all ages and abilities to feel comfortable using the Slow Street corridors, especially over time.

### *Moving Forward*

Based on this year’s experience, HRM staff learned some valuable lessons that would support any future iterations of a Slow Street Program. They are as follows:

- Explore alternative designs and materials to enhance user comfort. The lightweight nature of the materials we used to designate Slow Streets became less effective over time and required extensive time and effort from staff and community volunteers to maintain. Future versions of a Slow Street program should incorporate more immovable materials like we use in the Street Improvement Pilot Project Program such as concrete curbs or jersey barriers, bollards, and paint. This is in-line with recommendations coming from other cities like New York and Oakland, who also used lightweight materials in their programs this summer. While curbs and bollards can be more costly up-front, they are also much more durable and can be used year-round, providing the potential for a higher value over the life of the installation.
- Dedicate staff time, resources, and budget to planning, designing, and monitoring Slow Streets. Because of the conditions that existed this year related to COVID-19, the amount of resources that were available

for this program were relatively low. This meant that we were not able to conduct more meaningful engagement for the program, monitor the impacts of the barrels and signs on the Slow Streets and neighbouring streets, or be more iterative with the designs and materials used. Having dedicated staff time and budget would allow for a more responsive program that is able to adapt more quickly and use more data and evidence to make decisions on implementation.

### *Engagement Results*

The first set of Slow Streets were implemented with very little public engagement. However, in the planning for the second set of streets for implementation, staff engaged with several advocacy groups to discuss concerns and issues with the first iteration and gather feedback for how adjustments could be made. In the case of the Creighton/Maynard corridors, further outreach was conducted because of an ongoing functional planning and engagement process in place for those streets. Residents were notified in the area by mail that changes happening on the street did not preclude the existing engagement process and that all changes being made were temporary. In addition to these efforts, feedback was also used from the Shape Your City online map to select additional corridors for the Slow Street network.

Before the Slow Streets were removed ahead of a predicted weather event, staff received 180 requests for additional or extended Slow Streets on various streets in the municipality. Many of these requests were based on the desire for traffic calming on neighbourhood streets, especially ones that were lower down or not on the HRM Traffic Calming Capital Program list. We also received several emails from residents and community stakeholders about the state of repair of the Slow Street infrastructure.

In a final survey, residents were asked about Slow Streets and their feedback on the program. Over 65% of survey respondents were at least somewhat supportive of the initiative. However, many felt that the implementation of Slow Streets was not bold enough to make residents feel safe and comfortable walking, rolling, and cycling. For more insight from the engagement process, please see Attachment A: Mobility Response Plan What We Heard Report.

### **1.3 Street Improvement Pilot Project**

The [Street Improvement Pilot Project \(SIPP\)](#) is Halifax's tactical urbanism program, which was first established in 2019. The goal of this program is to implement infrastructure improvements for walking, rolling, and cycling in a way that is quicker and easier to install and is typically low-cost. The IMP supports the use of pilot projects to test new street design and placemaking strategies to improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

The projects that were implemented this year were planned in advance of COVID-19 but supported the other initiatives, like Slow Streets, as part of the Mobility Response Plan. For example, the installation at the intersection of Young, Kaye, and Isleville Streets provided additional traffic calming and protection for people using active transportation along the Isleville Slow Street corridor. Some projects, like the Lower Water Street Bikeway, weren't planned for this year but were fast tracked to support other work in the area. These projects included the installation of temporary features (like concrete curbs, bollards, and paint) that are designed to improve the safety and comfort of those walking, rolling, cycling and driving.

Projects implemented this season include:

- Young/Kaye/Isleville Intersection
- Robie/Quinpool
- Crichton/Oakdale
- Ochterloney/Victoria
- Rainnie- to-Brunswick bikeway
- Artillery Place at Queen Intersection
- Lower Water Street Bikeway

There are already several projects being considered for next year's Street Improvement Pilot Project program. In order to expand the Slow Streets program and deliver them using the same kinds of materials as we do for the Pilot Project program, additional resources in the form of staffing for planning, design and coordination, as well as budget would be required.

## 2.0 Space to Queue

Physical distancing requirements changed the number of people who were able to occupy a space at any given time. This had an impact on both private and public spaces. Space to Queue was identified as a focus area because of the need to create space for people to line up or share space while maintaining 2 meters of distance.

### 2.1 Signal Timings

From the beginning intersections were identified as places with potential for large volumes of people to collect, making it more difficult to physically distance. In order to reduce the number of people waiting together, traffic signal timings were adjusted at major intersections including:

- Quinpool Road
- Oxford Street
- Robie Street
- Joe Howe Drive
- Bedford Highway (Bayview Road to civic #50)
- Dunbrack Street
- Almon Street/Connaught Avenue
- Bayers Road (Oxford Street to Windsor Street)
- Young Street

### 2.2 Information for Businesses

Another area with potential for people to gather and collect was outside of businesses as people waited to enter shops and restaurants with reduced capacity. In some areas, people waiting outside businesses or waiting for buses impeded the sidewalk and made it difficult for people to pass on the same sidewalk while maintaining physical distance. To address this, and to respond to requests from businesses, the business community was given permission to spray paint the sidewalk to identify and create space to queue. A one-page document was created to support businesses and provide guidance on how to designate these spaces (Attachment B).

#### Space to Queue Overview

##### *Benefits of Providing Space to Queue*

Some of the benefits of creating space to queue include:

- Provided shorter crossing wait times for people walking and rolling
- Allowed people to maintain physical distance while waiting to enter businesses
- Allowed for queues outside of businesses without impeding sidewalk in areas with very wide sidewalks

##### *Challenges of Providing Space to Queue*

Some of the challenges experienced include:

- Maintaining changes in signal timings once traffic levels started to return to pre-COVID levels
- Queues outside of businesses impeded sidewalk in areas with narrower sidewalks and in heavy transit corridors where transit stops are busier

#### Moving Forward

Traffic Management has the ability to adjust signal timings for people walking, rolling, and driving based on changing demand. The signal timing adjustments that were made at the beginning of the Mobility Response were based on the lower levels of vehicular traffic and the demand for space to queue for people walking and rolling. Staff have continued to monitor these intersections and have adjusted signal timings at several of them to accommodate for increasing traffic levels. However, with cases of COVID rising in the Central region as we head into the second wave, staff will continue to monitor the demand for people walking, rolling, and driving at several major intersections and may make further adjustments as needed or requested.

### **Engagement Results**

A lot of our initial engagement related to Space to Queue was with businesses who were eager to designate queuing space outside of their shops and restaurants for waiting patrons. Based on the feedback we heard from them, HRM staff permitted and developed guidance for them to paint markings on the sidewalk.

On the online feedback map on Shape Your City, there was a total of 15 responses and requests that were categorized as 'Space to Queue'. The most common request was to create queuing spaces so that pedestrians could adequately maintain physical distance while on sidewalks. Most complaints regarding queuing space related to lineups of customers crowding sidewalks as they waited to be served by businesses. This issue was most prevalent on Barrington St, with concerns about transit users impeding pedestrian traffic and/or waiting at building entrances in an attempt to maintain physical distance.

### **3.0 Space to Load**

Due to COVID-19 impacts and public health restrictions, many businesses were forced to close their doors to the public and have since reopened with limited capacity. As a result, these businesses shifted to curbside pick-up and drop-off which allowed for customers to continue to purchase from them without entering their establishment. This was especially crucial for restaurants, who were reliant on take-out orders to maintain sales.

In response, HRM staff worked with business owners to identify and designate temporary loading spaces. These spaces provided parking with a 15-minute limit to encourage turnover and ensure there were spaces for people driving or picking up deliveries to access a business more easily. To accommodate increased delivery and curbside pick-up for restaurants, we created temporary loading spaces in the following locations:

- Spring Garden Road (south side, between South Park and Brenton)
- Clyde Street (north side, just west of Queen Street)
- Dresden Row (east side, between Spring Garden and Artillery Place)
- South Park Street (east side, between Clyde and Spring Garden)
- Portland Street (north side, between King and Prince)
- Portland Street (south side, between Dundas and Victoria)
- Prince Street (east side, near Portland Street)
- King Street (west side, between Ochterloney and Queen)
- Alderney Drive (east side, between Portland and Queen)
- Charles Street (north side, between John and Agricola)

#### **Space To Load Overview**

##### *Benefits of Additional Temporary Loading*

Some of the benefits of designating temporary loading spaces include:

- Helping businesses navigate increased demand for curbside pick-up.
- Supporting businesses through COVID-19 impacts. For some businesses, the ability to accommodate curbside pick-up was the difference between staying open and having to close.

### *Challenges of Additional Temporary Loading*

Some of the challenges that resulted from temporary loading spaces include:

- Managing expectations for turnaround time. It takes staff time to get loading spaces designed, approved, and the associated signage installed.
- Taking requests on a first-come, first-served basis. This made it challenging to navigate when different businesses had conflicting needs.
- Adapting spaces after installation. Some businesses asked for modifications to the loading spaces after installed to better accommodate their needs which resulted in additional staff time.
- Managing competing interests and uses for limited curbside space including temporary sidewalks, space to queue, transit and active transportation lanes, etc.

### *Moving Forward*

Our initial approach for designating temporary loading spaces was on a first-come, first-served basis. This resulted in a sense of unfairness for some businesses, who perhaps had differing needs than their neighbours. As the need for these curbside uses persists and will continue to shift over time, HRM staff should consider an approach that includes complete consultation with all businesses along a block or in an area. This would allow us to better understand the needs of each business and be more strategic about how we balance their priorities when it comes to curbside space. This also needs to be balanced with other demands on curbside space, especially along future IMP corridors for transit or active transportation priority.

### *Engagement Results*

Several of the temporary loading spaces were designated at the request or in consultation with local businesses and BID representatives. HRM staff conducted several walkthroughs with BID members to understand where additional loading spaces were needed to support their businesses.

On the online feedback map on Shape Your City, there were a total of 13 responses that were categorized as 'Space to Load'. However, many of these comments were related to existing problem areas like Gottingen or Lower Water Streets where people pull vehicles onto the sidewalk or block travel lanes for loading. One of the most common suggested solutions to alleviate issues caused by loading included designating loading spaces on side streets.

## **4.0 Space to Support Business**

Because of the restrictions placed on indoor dining, restaurants and bars became more dependent on outdoor dining space and patios than they were in previous years. Many establishments who previously did not have patio spaces looked for opportunities to establish outdoor seating and tables in order to increase their capacity. This was especially crucial after restaurants were closed for weeks for eat-in dining.

In response, HRM staff worked with local BIDs to identify where additional space could be given to businesses for expanding patios and creating outdoor dining areas. In some cases, streets were able to be closed due to the low traffic levels and the demand for street space. In others, parking spaces or loading spaces were used to create additional patio space for businesses. Some actions to support business included:

- Argyle Street between Prince and Blowers Streets was closed to vehicles in early June. This provided more space for people to move while also allowing for businesses to spill out into the right-of-way to support physical distancing.
- Argyle Street between Carmichael and Prince Streets was narrowed to one lane to allow for businesses to have additional patio space and support room for queuing.
- Grafton Street between Prince Street and Carmichael Street was converted to one-way in early July to allow for businesses to expand their patios further into the right-of-way.

- Bedford Row, between the Founders Square parking garage and Prince Street, was temporarily closed to all vehicle traffic in mid-July. The street remained fully open to pedestrians and allowed for additional patio space for businesses.
- A portion of parking lot opposite Lawtons on Main Street Dartmouth was converted into a pop-up food court for outdoor dining using picnic tables, fencing, and planters.

In September 2020, a decision was made to allow for the following to remain in place until November 1, 2020:

- Argyle Street closed to all vehicle traffic between Prince and Blowers Streets;
- Argyle between Carmichael and Prince streets narrowed to one lane;
- Grafton Street, between Carmichael and Prince Streets, temporarily converted to one-way southbound; and
- Bedford Row between Founders Square parking garage and Prince Street temporarily closed to all vehicle traffic.

On September 28, 2020, an email was sent to the Mayor, CAO and Councillors, signed by the Business Improvement Districts, requesting Halifax Regional Municipality consider permitting outdoor seasonal sidewalk café patios to remain in place for the winter to help support businesses during COVID-19.

On November 17, 2020 Halifax Regional Council heard first reading on the recommendation to adopt by-law S-1003 the purpose of which is to amend By-law S-1000, *Respecting the Regulation of Sidewalk Cafes*<sup>1</sup>, to give the Licensing Authority discretion to consider the factors listed in section 15, including any mitigation, when determining if an annual sidewalk café license may be issued to an applicant, and give current seasonal sidewalk café license holder the opportunity to apply for an annual sidewalk café license prior to December 31, 2020.

Therefore, if approved by Regional Council on December 15, 2020, businesses can apply for annual permits This may assist restaurant and café proprietors with economic recovery from COVID-19, should such establishments choose to extend their café season.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/201117rc1111.pdf>



Figure 5: Bedford Row Street Closure

#### Space to Support Business Overview

##### *Benefits of Space to Support Business*

Some of the benefits of the actions we took to support businesses include:

- Patio extensions for Argyle and Grafton streets were well-received by the public, especially business owners and restaurant users
- Provided new opportunities for patios, new locations, winter patios, etc. (i.e. Bedford Row)
- Bedford Row closure was very successful and had the most positive reaction from the public. The closure transformed the street
- Helped businesses and improved street life
- Expanded outdoor space and helped people feel safer and more comfortable while dining out
- Helped build new relationships with how we work with other business units (e.g. Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency) and allowed us to try new opportunities in the right of way

##### *Challenges of Space to Support Business*

Some of the challenges include:

- Making a value or trade-off decision between differing uses for people and businesses
- Managing expectations from businesses regarding time it takes to get approvals
- Public felt we focused too much on supporting businesses and not enough on supporting mobility options
- Street closures or modifications to streets were concentrated to the downtown core
- Accessibility to businesses and loading needs related to the closure of Argyle Street
- Staff were required to lock/unlock gates on Argyle based on business needs
- Volume of requests for additional regulatory signage

### *Moving Forward*

Because of the exceptional circumstances posed by COVID-19 and its impacts, several requests from businesses were met that may not have been accommodated in previous years. If and when we return to a pre-COVID state, staff will need to consider how the municipality sets expectations for and works with businesses to determine how to best meet their needs while taking approval processes, safety and staff timelines into account. Clarity will be required on how the municipality is evaluating requests beyond this year in light of potential increased traffic levels and demands for street and curbside space while also considering accessibility, winter maintenance, and further safety requirements.

### *Engagement Results*

Much of the work that was undertaken to support businesses through the Mobility Response Plan was done in collaboration with the business community. The approach was to work with representatives from the Business Improvement Districts, who acted as liaisons for their respective member businesses.

In addition to the work with the BIDs and their members, HRM staff received other suggestions from the online feedback map on Shape Your City related to supporting business. Many of these were related to closing streets like Argyle to create pedestrian-only spaces for businesses and patios.

In the final Mobility Response Plan survey, residents were asked for feedback on the extended patios and outdoor dining spaces created through the Space to Support Business initiatives. Of the respondents, 73% said that the additional outdoor dining space greatly contributed to their sense of safety and well-being when dining out. People also indicated that they felt that these spaces contributed to street life, with 59% of people saying that that did so greatly and another 28% saying that they did so somewhat.



# HALIFAX

## MOBILITY RESPONSE PLAN

### Engagement Results Report



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Like many aspects of municipal service delivery, public engagement was greatly impacted by COVID-19 and the resulting restrictions. While many of our engagement tactics in the past were focused on in-person workshops and pop-ups to discuss projects with the community and receive feedback, this was not possible, especially during the early days of the Public Health restrictions.

When the Mobility Response Plan was initiated in late April, the assembled task force was directed to explore opportunities to take immediate action to support the four focus areas (Space to Move, Space to Load, Space to Queue, and Space to Support Business). Because of this, the first pieces of temporary infrastructure were implemented with limited engagement. Staff had already received feedback about areas where measures like shortened waiting times at crosswalks and temporary expanded sidewalks were needed, and this informed the initial measures under the Mobility Response Plan.

As the Mobility Response Plan evolved, engagement became increasingly important to capture feedback about how COVID-19 was impacting mobility across the region, respond to issues as they arose, gather feedback about temporary measures and adjust our approach as needed. Looking forward, this feedback was also highly valuable for forming our recommendations for what the 2021 Mobility Response Plan can and should look like and for informing other, more permanent planning and design processes for projects across the region. The following is an overview of our engagement activities and a summary of what we heard during each of these processes.

## 1. Online Feedback Map

At the beginning of our Mobility Response planning, staff wanted to get a sense of how people's mobility needs and behaviours may have changed due to the impacts of COVID-19. Staff launched a Places map on Shape Your City where residents were encouraged to place pins and provide ideas about where possible interventions may be needed. Throughout the period where the Places map was active, staff also received feedback on the Mobility Response Plan through the [planhrm@halifax.ca](mailto:planhrm@halifax.ca) email and 311. These emails and 311 requests were added to the map by staff to ensure that all feedback was captured in the same place.

A total of 361 pins with 636 requests were received between May 25<sup>th</sup> and August 10<sup>th</sup>. From these 636 requests, 57.5% (366) were related to the Halifax Mobility Response Plan, while the remaining 42.5% (270) were requests for permanent measures. The number of pins and requests relevant to the response plan were categorized as shown below:

- Space to Move – 302 pins (83.7%); 556 requests (87.4%)
- Space to Load – 11 pins (3.0%); 13 requests (2.0%)
- Space to Queue – 14 pins (3.9%); 15 requests (2.4%)
- Space to Support Businesses – 34 pins (9.4%); 52 requests (8.2%)

Each category and their respective feedback are outlined in the sections below.

### Space to Move

- From the 302 pins, there was a total of 556 requests that were categorized as 'Space to Move'.
- Of the 556 requests, 54.5% (303) were related to the Halifax Mobility Response Plan, while the remaining 45.5% (253) were requests for more permanent measures.
- From the 303 requests, 65.3% came from Halifax, 22.4% came from Dartmouth and 12.2% came from areas outside of the Regional Centre.

- From these 303 requests, 7 themes emerged. They include:
  - Designate as Slow Street:** 59.1% (179 requests)
  - Dedicate Driving Lane to AT Users:** 10.9% (33 requests)
  - Cyclist Protection Measure/Temporary Bike Lane:** 8.9% (27 request)
  - Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection with Barriers:** 8.6% (26 requests)
  - Remove Parking Lane for AT Users:** 6.9% (21 requests)
  - Designate as One-Way Street/Street Closure:** 3.0% (9 requests)
  - Extension of Slow Street:** 2.3% (7 requests)
  - More Slow Street Signage:** 1.0% (3 requests)
- The table below outlines the number of requests for each neighbourhood, along with their top 3 requests, as well as the top 3 streets with proposed requests:

Region	Neighbourhood	# of Req	(%) of Region	Top 3 Requests per Neighbourhood	Streets with the Most Requests
Halifax (198 Requests)	West End	89	44.9	1. Designate Slow Street (75) 2. Extend Slow Street; Dedicate Driving Lane for AT; Cyclist Protection Measure (3) 3. Remove Parking Lane for AT; Designate as One-Way Street/Street Closure (1)	1. Deacon St (12) 2. Windcrest St (11) 3. Willow St (10) 4. Rosebank Ave (9) 5. Chestnut St (6)
	North End	49	24.7	1. Designate Slow Street (18) 2. Cyclist Protection Measure (12) 3. Dedicate Driving Lane for AT (7)	1. Agricola St (9) 2. Charles St (5) 3. Maynard St; Isleville St; Compton Ave (4) 4. Devonshire Ave; Almon St; West St (3)
	South End	47	23.7	1. Designate Slow Street (22) 2. Dedicate Driving Lane for AT (12) 3. Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection (5)	1. Walnut Street (11) 2. Tower Rd; Young Ave (7) 3. Dalhousie St, Beaufort Ave; Wellington St; Robie St (3)
	Downtown Halifax	13	6.6	1. Removing Parking for AT (4) 2. Designate as Slow Street (3) 3. Dedicate Driving Lane for AT; Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection (2)	1. Summer St (5) 2. Spring Garden Rd; Upper Water St (2) 3. Cogswell St; Dresden Rw; Clyde St; Doyle St (1)
Region	Neighbourhood	Req	(%)	Top 3 Requests per Neighbourhood	Streets with the Most Requests
Dartmouth (68 requests)	Downtown Dartmouth	18	26.5	1. Designate as Slow Street (7) 2. Removing Parking for AT; Cyclist Protection Measure (3) 3. Dedicate Driving Lane for AT; Designate as One-Way Street/Street Closure (2)	1. Portland St (4) 2. Erskine St; Prince Albert Rd (2)
	Harbourview	17	25	1. Designate as Slow Street (12)	1. Symonds St (4)

				2. Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection (2) 3. Removing Parking for AT; Dedicate Driving Lane for AT; Cyclist Protection Measure (1)	2. Shore Rd (3) 3. Moira St; Russell St; Nantucket Ave (2)
	Southdale	9	13.2	1. Designate as Slow Street (8) 2. Dedicate Driving Lane for AT (1)	1. St. George's Ln; Murray Hill Dr (3) 2. Summit St (2) 3. Old Ferry Rd (1)
	Westphal	7	10.3	1. Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection; Dedicate Driving Lane for AT; Cyclist Protection Measure (2) 2. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. Braemar Dr; Main St (3) 2. Auburn Drive (1)
	Woodlawn	3	4.4	1. Designate as Slow Street (2) 2. Dedicate Driving Lane for AT (1)	1. Guysborough Ave; Elwin Cres; Mount Edward Rd (1)
	Crichton Park	3	4.4	1. Designate as Slow Street (2) 2. Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection (1)	1. Crichton Ave (2) 2. Oakdale Cres (1)
	Ellenvale	3	2	1. Designate as Slow Street (2) 2. Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection (1)	1. Settle St (3)
	Lake Banook Area	2	2.9	1. Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection; Designate as One-Way Street/Street Closure (1)	1. Oakdale Cres; Crichton Ave (1)
	O'Shanter Ridge	2	2.9	1. Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection (2)	1. Caledonia Rd; Fader St (1)
	Tufts Cove	2	2.9	1. Designate as Slow Street; Removing Parking for AT (1)	1. Nadia Dr (2)
	Nantucket	1	1.5	1. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. Collins Grove (1)
	Port Wallace	1	1.5	1. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. Craighburn Cres (1)

<b>Region</b>	<b>Neighbourhood</b>	<b>Req</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>Top 3 Requests per Neighbourhood</b>	<b>Streets with the Most Requests</b>
Outside of Regional Centre (37 requests)	Chocolate Lake Area	5	13.5	1. Designate as Slow Street (3) 2. Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection; Removing Parking for AT (1)	1. Melwood Ave (3) 2. St. Margarets Bay Rd; Crown Dr (1)
	Cole Harbour	5	13.5	1. Designate as Slow Street (5)	1. Delta Drive (3) 2. John Stewart Drive (2)
	Bedford	4	10.8	1. Designate as Slow Street (4)	1. Fort Sackville Rd; Camden St; Basinview Dr; Perth St (1)
	Fairview	4	10.8	1. Designate as Slow Street (3) 2. Removing Parking for AT (1)	1. Deal St; Frederick Ave; General Fairview Area; Percy St (1)
	Spryfield	3	8.1	1. Designate as Slow Street; Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection; Dedicate Driving Lane for AT (1)	1. Sylvia Ave; Leiblin Dr Herring Cove Rd (1)
	Glenbourne	2	5.4	1. Widen Sidewalk/AT Connection; Removing Parking for AT (1)	1. Parkland Dr; Belchers Marsh Park Trail (1)
	Williams Lake	2	5.4	1. Designate as Slow Street; Designate as One-Way Street/Street Closure (1)	1. Parkhill Road (2)

Waverley	1	2.7	1. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. Rolling Hills Dr (1)
Bayers Lake	1	2.7	1. Cyclist Protection Measure (1)	1. Horseshoe Lake Dr (1)
Eastern Passage	1	2.7	1. Cyclist Protection Measure (1)	1. Harbour Ln (1)
Cowie Hill	1	2.7	1. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. Limerick St (1)
Bridgeview	1	2.7	1. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. Canary Crescent (1)
Fairmount	1	2.7	1. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. Springvale Ave (1)
Lewis Lake	1	2.7	1. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. St. Margarets Bay Rd (1)
Herring Cove	1	2.7	1. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. Village Road (1)
Lower Sackville	1	2.7	1. Cyclist Protection Measure (1)	1. Sackville St (1)
Middle Sackville	1	2.7	1. Designate as Slow Street (1)	1. Rafting Dr (1)
Timberlea	1	2.7	1. Dedicate Driving Lane for AT (1)	1. Brentwood Ave (1)
Clayton Park	1	2.7	1. Removing Parking for AT (1)	1. Lacewood Drive

### Space to Load

- From the 11 pins, there was a total of 13 requests that were categorized as ‘Space to Load’.
- Of the 13 requests, 76.9% (10) were related to the Halifax Mobility Response Plan, while the remaining 23.1% (3) were requests for more permanent measures.
- From the 10 requests, 90% came from Halifax with the remaining 10% came from Dartmouth.
- The most common request was to create loading zones for vehicles making deliveries, so that they do not encroach on space in the roadway and/or sidewalk that is designated for people walking and rolling.
- Vehicles performing loading created issues for people cycling, primarily on Lower Water St., Vernon St. and Gottingen St. These complaints were focused on vehicles blocking space in the right-of-way that was designated for people cycling.
- Requested solutions to alleviate issues caused by loading involved designating loading on side streets that cross through the street with loading issues. Such was the case for Vernon St. (citizen requested loading to be moved to Pepperell St.) and Gottingen (citizen requested for loading to be moved to any side street).
- Considering the low volume of requests and that the feedback for each street varied, outlined below are the specific issues and requests for each street:

Region	Neighbourhood	Street	Issue	Requests
Halifax (9 Requests)	Downtown Halifax	Lower Water St	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Private vehicles park in bike lane as drivers wait to pick up people.</li> <li>2. Trucks conduct loading in the bike lane which impedes the path for cyclists.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place barriers that both protect the bike lane and prevent drivers from parking.</li> <li>2. Have delivery trucks perform loading/unloading on the nearby Emera property.</li> </ol>
		Bedford Row	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vehicular traffic causes loading to be difficult.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. During select periods, close the street to private vehicles and have designated times for deliveries only.</li> </ol>

		Vernon St	1. Delivery trucks for The Keep and both coffee shops cause traffic to back up and force cyclists into oncoming traffic.	1. Encourage loading/unloading to be done on Pepperell St.
		Spring Garden Rd	1. Delivery trucks during the day cause traffic to back up.	1. Schedule deliveries in the early morning or late at night. 2. Provide less transit routes on the street.
	North End	Gottingen St	1. Delivery trucks go onto the sidewalks and create difficulties for pedestrian movement. 2. Delivery trucks also park within the bus lane and cause issues for both vehicular traffic and cyclists 3. Private vehicles park illegally within the bus lane	1. Provide more loading zones on streets that intersect Gottingen. 2. Station parking enforcement officers to reprimand both drivers of delivery and private vehicles that park illegally. 3. Provide less transit routes on the street.
		Agricola St	1. Delivery trucks often park in the cross walk on Agricola at West St.	1. Encourage delivery trucks to load/unload on West Street rather than Agricola.
<b>Region</b>	<b>Neighbourhood</b>	<b>Street</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Requests</b>
Dartmouth (1 request)	Downtown Dartmouth	Kings Wharf Place	1. Private vehicles parking poorly on the street create competition for delivery drivers on a busy street.	1. Provide loading zones specifically for deliveries and pick-ups.

### Space to Queue

- From the 14 pins, there was a total of 15 requests that were categorized as ‘Space to Queue’.
- Of the 15 requests, 80% (12) were related to the Halifax Mobility Response Plan, while the remaining 20% (3) were requests for more permanent measures.
- From the 12 requests, 83.3% came from Halifax while the remaining 16.7% came from Dartmouth.
- The most common request was to create queuing spaces so that pedestrians could adequately social distance while on sidewalks.
- Most complaints regarding queuing space related to lineups of customers crowding sidewalks as they waited to be served by businesses. This issue was most prevalent on Barrington St., which also faced concerns with transit users impeding pedestrian traffic and/or waiting at building entrances in an attempt to social distance.
- In all cases, the issue was either that the narrow sidewalks made it difficult to physically distance, or that the sidewalk was wide enough but waiting customers, mobile pedestrians or transit users were positioned in a manner that made it difficult to social distance.

- Considering the low volume of requests and that the feedback for each street varied, outlined below are the specific issues and requests for each street:

Region	Neighbourhood	Street	Issue	Requests
Halifax (10 Requests)	Downtown Halifax	Hollis Street	1. Customers at the Flynn Dairy Bar, crowd the sidewalk, when hanging out and waiting for their order.	1. Designate some additional space to accommodate the queue and give room to pedestrians.
		Barrington St	1. At the corner of Morris and Barrington, people often eat their pizza outside causing pedestrians to walk into the street to socially distance. Persons waiting at the bus stop near the entrance also adds to the number of pedestrians on the sidewalk. 2. Some restaurants closer to the South End of Barrington (such as Boneheads BBQ) are open for delivery or pickup. However, the narrow sidewalk does not allow for enough queuing space or pedestrian traffic. 3. The busy bus shelters between Spring Garden and Scotia Square has many people blocking sidewalks and/or waiting at building entrances to physically distance.	1. Designate some additional space to accommodate the queue and give room to pedestrians. 2. Widen sidewalk for people picking up food deliveries, and for food delivery workers. 3. Create markers that are lined up close to the edge of the side wall to remind people to not block the sidewalk and these entrances.
		Clyde St	1. Lineups at the NSLC and construction on the other side of the street make it difficult to get around while social distancing.	1. Limit pedestrian traffic along the street.
		Dresden Row	1. The line for Pete's makes it hard to physically distance on the street.	1. Create better queuing space for shoppers and/or remove parking on the street.
		Albemarle St	1. It is difficult to physically distance when passing the bus stops during busy periods.	1. Create more queuing space near the bus stops on this street.
	West End	Quinpool Rd	1. Due to lineups for numerous businesses on the street, physical distancing has become problematic.	1. Widen the sidewalk to accommodate queuing pedestrians and AT users.
	North End	Gottingen St	1. Customers of Ratinuad and Direction 180 need additional space for queuing, because while	1. Queuing space needs to be created to protect



			the sidewalk is wide, if persons go too close to curb, bus mirrors that encroach on sidewalk could hit pedestrians.	pedestrians from a possible accident.
	South End	Marginal Rd	1. The walking tunnel on Marginal Rd has narrow sidewalks which makes it difficult to physically distance.	1. Create signs that encourage pedestrians to yield to the oncoming individuals.

Region	Neighbourhood	Street	Issue	Requests
Dartmouth (2 requests)	Downtown Dartmouth	Ochterlooney St	1. The Two If By Sea lineup, makes it difficult for pedestrians to physically distance on the street.	1. Remove a driving lane to accommodate both queuing customers and AT users.
		Portland St	1. The Bike Peddler lineup, makes it difficult for pedestrians to physically distance on the street.	2. Create additional queuing space to allow for physical distancing.

### Space to Support Businesses

- From the 34 pins, there was a total of 52 requests that were categorized as ‘Space to Support Businesses’.
- From the 52 requests, 78.8% (41) were related to the Halifax Mobility Response Plan, while the remaining 21.2% (11) were requests for more permanent measures.
- From the 41 requests, 56.1% came from Halifax, 39.0% came from Dartmouth and 4.9% came from areas off the Peninsula.
- From these 41 requests, 6 themes emerged. They include:
  1. **Restrict Vehicles on the Street/Pedestrian Mall** (24 requests)
  2. **Dedicate Space for Patios** (8 requests)
  3. **Encourage Parking on Side Street** (4 requests)
  4. **Temporarily Widen Sidewalk for AT Users** (3 request)
  5. **Designate Deliveries on Side Streets** (1 request)
  6. **Slow Street leading to Business Area** (1 request)
- Within Halifax, 73.9% of requests pertained to the North End. Most requests related to Agricola St. and Young St., with both having numerous requests to restrict vehicular traffic/create a pedestrian mall and dedicate space for patios.
- Although requests from Agricola St. related to different segments of the street, the requests for Young St. were primarily directed towards the Hydrostone Market.
- In relation to Downtown Halifax, there were requests to restrict vehicles on Argyle St. and Granville St., as well as create an outdoor market on Cathedral Lane. There was also a request to designate deliveries on side streets for Argyle.
- All 16 requests from Dartmouth pertained to Portland St., with most respondents asking for the street to either restrict vehicular traffic and/or be converted to a pedestrian mall, as many persons noted that the increased pedestrian traffic on the street made it hard to social distance.
- For areas outside of the Regional Centre, there was one request to provide an AT connection that will make it easier to access D&Jo’s Country Market near the Timberlea Village Parkway.

The other request was to invite a business to create a patio-like space within the Lacewood Transit Terminal.

- The table below outlines the number of requests for each neighbourhood, along with their top 3 requests, as well as the top 3 streets with proposed requests:

Region	Neighbourhood	# of Req	(%) of Region	Top Requests per Neighbourhood	Streets with the Most Requests
Halifax (23 Requests)	North End	17	73.9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restrict Vehicles on Street/Pedestrian Mall (8)</li> <li>2. Dedicate Space for Patios (5)</li> <li>3. Encourage Parking on Side Streets (2)</li> <li>4. Slow Street Leading to Business Area (1); Temporarily Widen Sidewalk for AT Users (1)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Young St (8)</li> <li>2. Agricola St (7)</li> <li>3. Gottingen St (1); Kaye St (1)</li> </ol>
	Downtown Halifax	4	17.4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restrict Vehicles on Street/Pedestrian Mall (3)</li> <li>2. Designate Deliveries on Side Streets (1)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Argyle St (2)</li> <li>2. Granville St (1); Young Ave (1)</li> </ol>
	South End	2	8.7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restrict Vehicles on Street/Pedestrian Mall (2)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Henry St (1); Marginal Rd (1)</li> </ol>
Region	Neighbourhood	Req	(%)	Top Requests per Neighbourhood	Streets with the Most Requests
Dartmouth (16 requests)	Downtown Dartmouth	16	100	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restrict Vehicles on Street/Pedestrian Mall (11)</li> <li>2. Dedicate Space for Patios (2); Encourage Parking on Side Streets (2)</li> <li>3. Temporarily Widen Sidewalk for AT Users (1)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Portland St (16)</li> </ol>
Region	Neighbourhood	Req	(%)	Top Requests per Neighbourhood	Streets with the Most Requests
Off the Peninsula (2 requests)	Timberlea Village	1	50	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Temporarily Widen Sidewalk for AT Users (1)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. St. Margarets Bay Rd (1)</li> </ol>
	Clayton Park West	1	50	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dedicate Space for Patios (1)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lacewood Dr (1)</li> </ol>

## 2. Stakeholder Engagement

Between April and September, the Mobility Response Plan team met with several stakeholders from two key groups to gather feedback to shape our approach.

The first group was comprised of representatives from the Business Improvement District (BID) organizations, who acted as liaisons between individual businesses and the Municipality. These organizations included:

- Downtown Halifax Business Improvement District (DHBC);
- Downtown Dartmouth Business Commission (DDBC);
- Spring Garden Area Business Association (SGABA);
- North End Business Association (NEBA);
- Quinpool Road Mainstreet District Association;
- Sackville Business Improvement District;
- Village on Main – Main Street Dartmouth Community Improvement District; and,
- Spryfield & District Business Commission.

Engagement with the BIDs consisted of meetings with their respective staff and board members to discuss ideas they put forward for supporting businesses as well as doing physically-distanced site visits and walkthroughs to better understand the context of these ideas in the right-of-way.

The second group that was engaged were the transportation advocacy community organizations who are active in Halifax. This included:

- Halifax Cycling Coalition;
- Ecology Action Centre;
- Walk and Roll; and
- It's More Than Buses.

Staff hosted two meetings with these groups, after the first round of temporary infrastructure was deployed to get feedback for the second round and then again toward the end of the summer to further collect feedback on the revised installations. Further to this, staff presented to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) in December 2020, of which several of these groups are members. This provided an opportunity for these groups to ask further questions about next steps for the program and provide feedback on 2020's program.

What we heard from these groups was centred on (1) the temporary and lightweight nature of the materials that were used this year and how it did not adequately support active transportation, (2) the importance of monitoring and evaluation for these temporary infrastructure projects and (3) appreciation for the Municipality's approach to piloting new ideas and adapting this approach as needed.

### 3. Social Media and Media Engagement

With municipal facilities closed, and many print publications not publishing due to COVID-19, we did a large amount of promotion on social media, on-street signage, and via the media.

From May 25 (the first expanded sidewalk rollout) to October 31 (announcement of the extension of the Argyle Street, Grafton Street, and Bedford Row street modifications), we tracked engagement with Mobility Response Plan content on our social media channels:

Platform	Dates	# of posts	Reach (# of unique users that saw post)	Website Clicks	Engagement (# of actions as a result of the post)
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<b>Twitter</b>					
@hfxgov	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	41	289,862	5,437	17,863
@hfxplanning	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	5	25,829	130	637
<b>Facebook</b>					
@hfxgov	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	14	99,852	415	9,711
@hfxplanning	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	15	6,528	54	858
<b>Instagram</b>					
@hfxmoments (Posts)	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	12	36,110	n/a	1,014
@hfxmoments (Stories)	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	47	n/a (data is only stored for 24 hours)	n/a (data is only stored for 24 hours)	n/a (data is only stored for 24 hours)
<b>Total</b>		<b>134</b>	<b>458,181</b>	<b>6,036</b>	<b>30,083</b>

From May 25-October 31 we also tracked the website traffic to the Mobility Response webpage, the Shape Your City project page, the Shape Your City map, and the Shape Your City survey:

<b>Website</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Unique page views</b>	<b>Time spent on page</b>	<b>Traffic Source (how users got to the webpage)</b>
<a href="#">Mobility Response Website</a>	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	3,441	3:57	1. Google 2. Twitter 3. Direct 4. Facebook 5. Halifax Today
<a href="#">Shape Your City project page</a>	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	2,674	1:18	1. Direct 2. Halifax.ca 3. Halifax Today 4. Google 5. Twitter

Shape Your City map	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	2,351	4:20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Direct</li> <li>2. Twitter</li> <li>3. Halifax.ca</li> <li>4. Halifax Today</li> <li>5. Google</li> </ol>
Shape Your City survey	May 25-Oct 31, 2020	271	5:29	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Twitter</li> <li>2. Facebook</li> <li>3. Google</li> <li>4. Direct</li> <li>5. Halifax.ca</li> </ol>

Other forms of information sharing included:

- On June 1, 2020, staff participated in an on-camera interview with Colleen Jones at CBC to promote and educate residents about the then newly-implemented Slow Streets.
- On September 3, 2020, staff participated in the Downtown Lowdown (Episode 32) that is hosted by the Downtown Halifax Business Improvement District. The conversation included an overview of the program, the engagement process, key focus areas, and next steps.
- On June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, staff participated in the Canadian Urban Institute 100 days of COVID: COVID Sign Post panel discussion. This discussion explored actions taken by Canadian cities in the first 100 days since the beginning of COVID-19 impacts and what was on the horizon for future action.

#### 4. Final Wrap-Up Survey

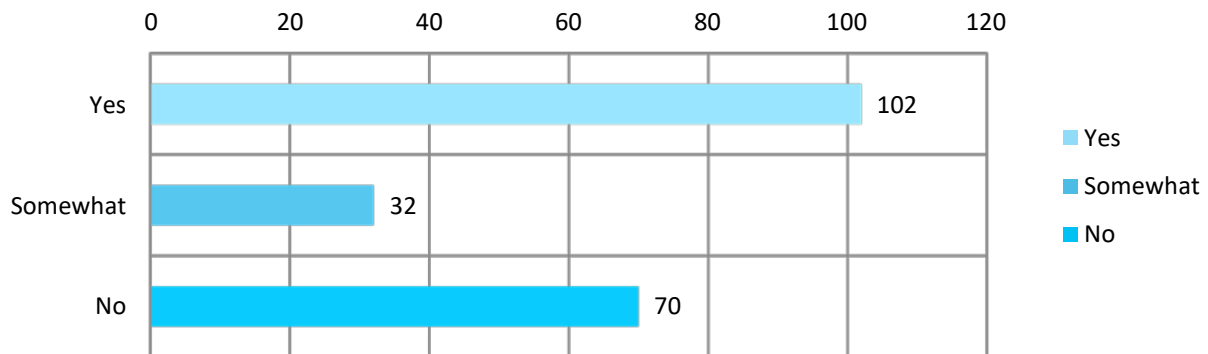
In September, staff issued a survey to capture public feedback focused on both the Slow Streets initiative and extended patios and outdoor dining areas as well as capture overall comments on implementation of the Mobility Response Plan to date. To get the word out about the survey, the link was shared with Shape Your City members via email and the survey was promoted on social media. In total, the survey received 207 responses.

#### Slow Streets

The goal of the Slow Street program was to provide space for people to walk, roll, and cycle while also allowing for physical distancing on local streets. Using routes from the IMP’s AAA Cycling Network and the 2014-19 AT Priorities Plan, 16km of Slow Streets were rolled out in two phases across peninsular Halifax and downtown Dartmouth. Traffic barrels and signage were used to delineate the streets as Slow Streets at regular intervals along the corridors.

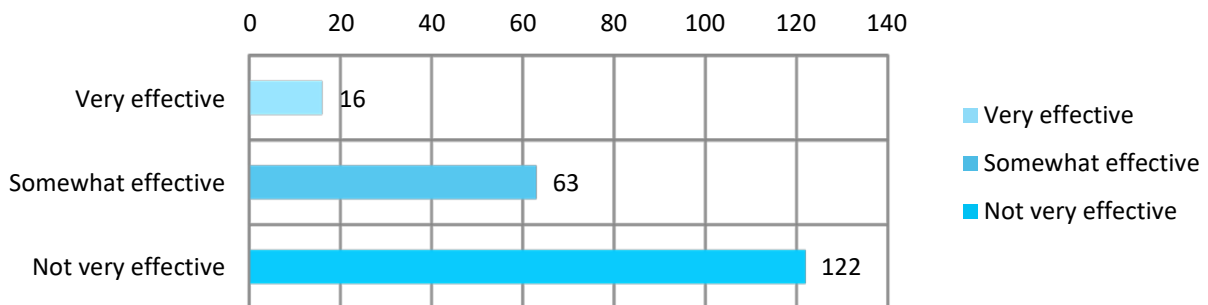
Before the Slow Streets were removed ahead of a predicted weather event, staff received 180 requests for Slow Streets on various streets in the municipality. Many of these requests were based on the desire for traffic calming on neighbourhood streets, especially ones that were lower down or not on the Traffic Calming Program list.

## Are you supportive of the goal of the Slow Street program?



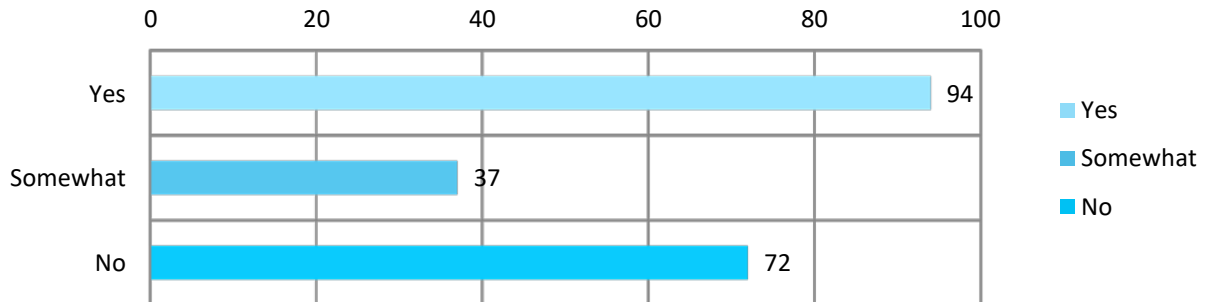
In the survey, we asked residents if they were supportive of the Slow Street initiative. Over 65% of survey respondents were at least somewhat supportive of the initiative. Based on the comments we received, some residents were unsupportive because of the perceived cost of the program, the inconvenience posed by the Slow Street barrels, and the perception that the Local Traffic Only signs meant that these public spaces were now for private use. Those who were somewhat supportive of the program generally liked the idea of Slow Streets in concept but felt that the use of traffic barrels and signage were not robust enough to uphold the goals of the program and create the experience on the street to make it feel more comfortable for people walking, rolling, and cycling. For the people who were supportive of the initiative, they also commented that more effective measures needed to be put in place and that the program needed to be expanded to make safer, more comfortable streets for active transportation.

## What was your overall opinion of the approach of using temporary materials (traffic barrels and signage) to designate Slow Streets?



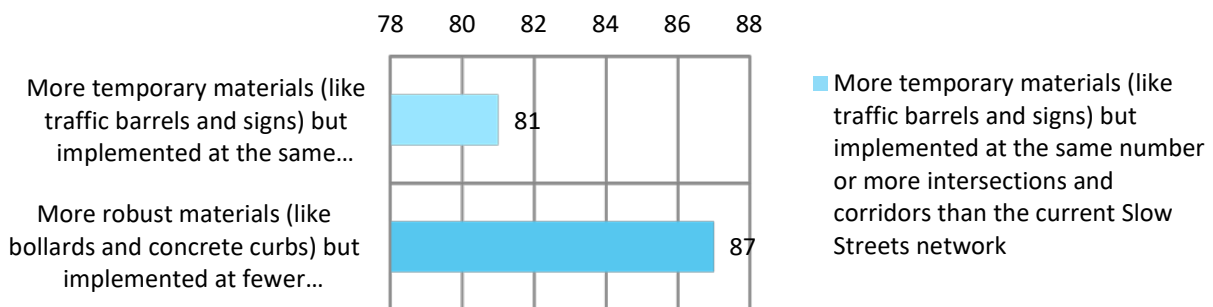
This same feedback was reflected when we asked residents if they thought that the materials (traffic barrels and signs) that we used to designate Slow Street were effective in reducing vehicle traffic and speeds. Almost 61% of respondents felt that the materials were not very effective in achieving the goals of the Slow Streets program.

If we were to build on the Slow Street program in the future, there may be an opportunity to pilot some of the Slow Streets using some of the materials from the Street Improvement Pilot Project toolbox. Is this something you would support?



Looking forward, we asked residents if they would support the use of more robust materials from the Street Improvement Pilot Project program toolbox like concrete curbs and bollards in potential future Slow Street installations. Of the residents who answered the question, 64% were at least somewhat in favour of this approach. However, of the people who were not supportive of using more robust materials, 90% of them indicated that they were not supportive of the overall goals of the Slow Street program to create more space for people using active transportation.

Using materials like bollards and concrete curbs instead of traffic barrels increases the cost of potential future Slow Street installations. If we were to use these materials, it would impact our ability maintain the same network of Slow Streets or poten



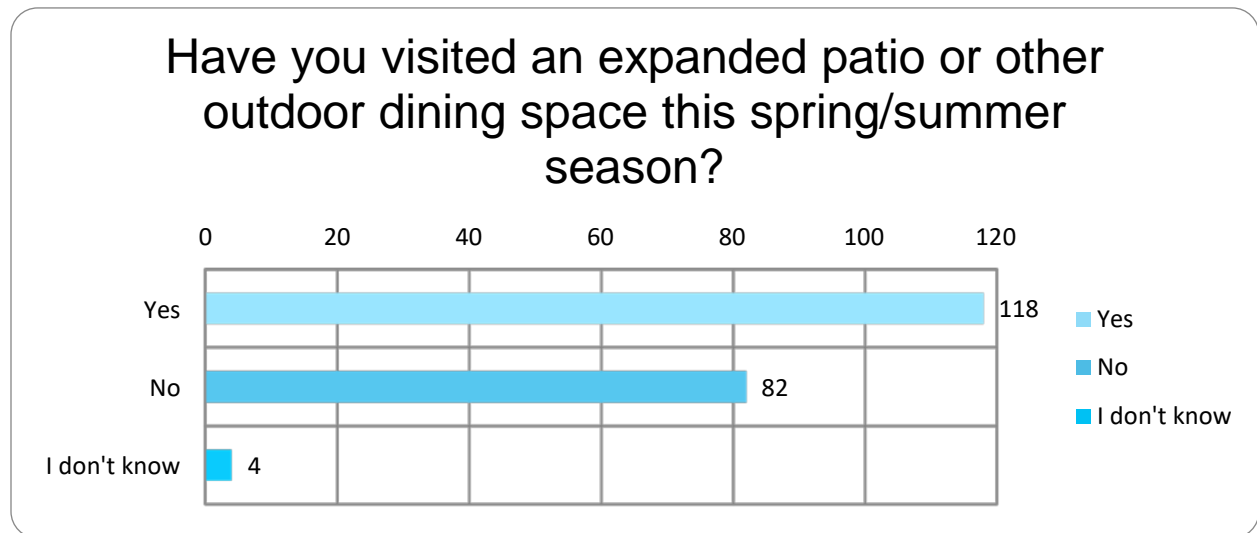
We also asked residents about the trade-offs of having the same size or larger network of Slow Streets with more temporary materials or the use of more robust materials but at fewer intersections. This was due to the higher cost of materials like curbs and bollards compared to traffic barrels and the cost of having them installed on street. Residents were largely split on this trade-off: of the people who responded, 55% preferred more robust materials and 45% preferred more temporary materials. Many respondents commented that they felt this question posed a false dichotomy and expressed that they'd like to see us build on and expand the program budget so that we could add robust materials at more intersections along more corridors, not less.

### Summary of comments received about Slow Streets:

- I don't support Slow Streets.
- Slow Streets are a waste of money.
- Slow Streets need to use more robust materials to make them more effective.
- I support the Slow Street initiative.
- Roads are not private and the use of Local Traffic Only sends that message.
- We need a more permanent solution for making our roads safer for people walking, rolling, and cycling.
- Traffic barrels were moved too often or damaged.
- The Slow Streets were ineffective at deterring people from driving down them or driving at higher speeds.
- We need more Slow Street corridors.
- I'm worried that Slow Streets pushed more traffic onto adjacent residential streets.

### Extended Patios and Outdoor Dining Areas

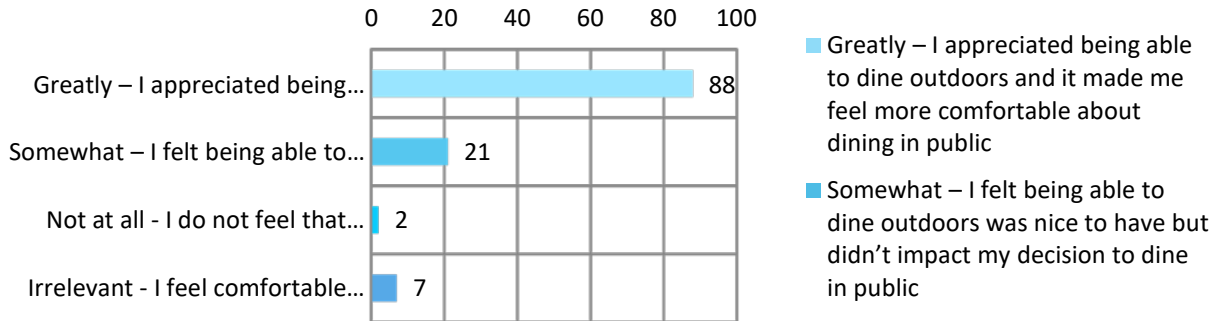
In order to provide space to support businesses, especially restaurants and bars, HRM staff worked with several Business Improvement Districts in Halifax and Dartmouth to create expanded outdoor dining areas and patios. This initiative built upon our yearly sidewalk café program and looked for opportunities to create more space to dine outside due to the restrictions on indoor capacity for restaurants. To make space for these dining areas, some streets were converted to one way or closed altogether, and others had parking spaces removed to accommodate for a patio.



Of the people who responded to the survey, 58% of them visited one of the extended patios or outdoor dining areas.

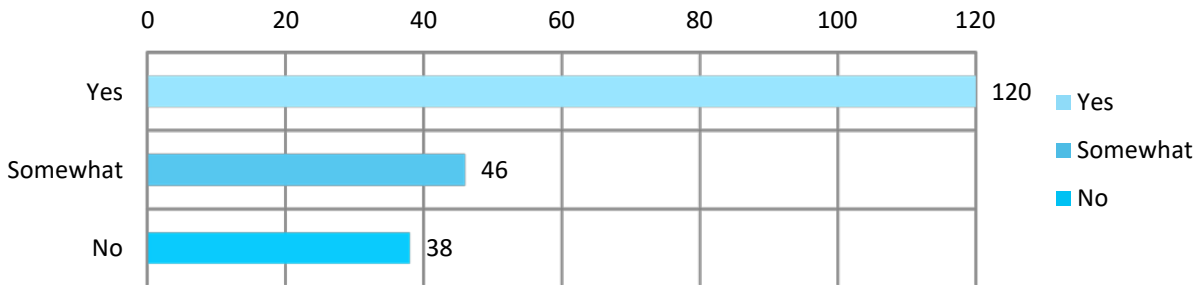


### How did expanded patios and outdoor dining spaces contribute to your overall feeling of safety and well-being while dining in public?



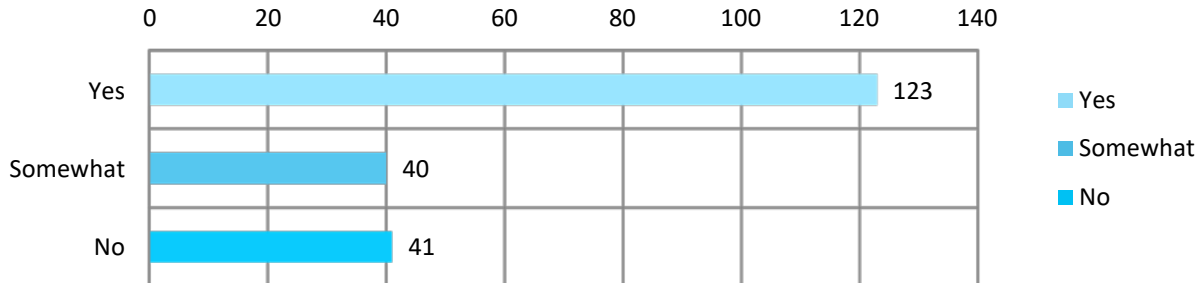
Of those people, 73% said that having the outdoor dining space greatly contributed to their overall feeling of safety and well-being while dining out.

### Do you support the use of parking and loading spaces for the use of expanded patios and outdoor dining spaces?



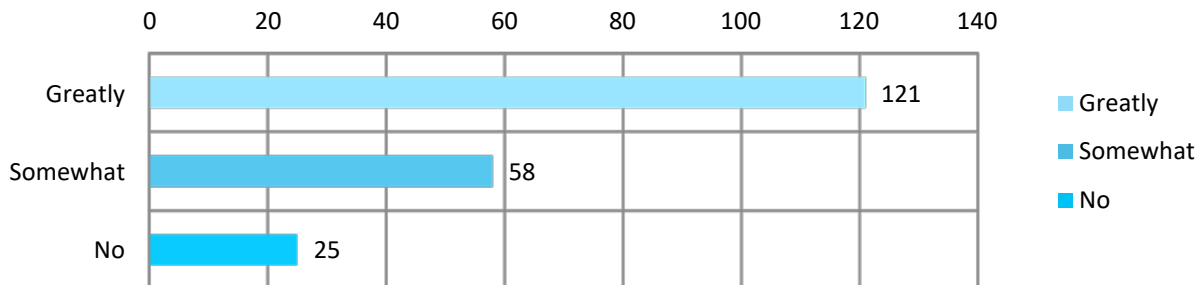
Residents who took the survey were also asked about the trade-offs and impacts of implementing the extended patios and outdoor dining areas. When asked about whether or not they supported the use of parking and loading spaces for these dining spaces, 59% of respondents were supportive and another 23% were somewhat supportive.

## Do you support the use of street space for the use of expanded patios and outdoor dining spaces?



When asked whether or not residents supported the use of street space for the same purposes, there were similar results (60% answered yes, 19% answered somewhat). In the comments, many residents voiced support for this initiative and requested that we make these changes permanent year-round. Residents who were not supportive of the street or parking spaces for outdoor dining commented that they felt that this initiative put more pressure on parking in an area where it is perceived that there is already a limited amount. People also felt like it made it harder for them to drive downtown with all of the changes and considered the initiative a waste of money.

## To what extent do you feel expanded patio spaces and outdoor dining spaces encourage more street life?



Finally, residents were asked about how these outdoor dining areas and the impact on street life. Of the respondents, 59% felt that these spaces greatly encouraged more street life and 28% felt that they did somewhat.

Summary of comments received about extended patios and outdoor dining areas:

- Extended patios took over parking in places with already limited parking.
- I want to see extended patios and outdoor dining areas all year round.
- I enjoyed the extended patios and outdoor dining areas.

- Patios need to be more accessible to patrons with disabilities.
- Continue prioritizing pedestrians over vehicles
- I feel like this initiative was a waste of money.

## **Overall Feedback on the Mobility Response Plan**

Despite the level of support for expanded patios and outdoor dining areas, several respondents commented that more street space is also critically needed for walking and cycling and to promote accessibility. Some residents felt that many of the actions under the Mobility Response Plan to date were too focused on supporting businesses and not meaningfully supporting mobility for people who rely on active transportation and transit.

The focus on supporting mobility was also reflected in the distribution of pins on the Places map in the first phase of engagement for the Mobility Response Plan. While some residents made comments about the other three focus areas, the vast majority of comments and suggestions were about the Space To Move focus area including almost 200 requests pertaining to Slow Streets.

In the second phase of engagement with the follow-up survey, some respondents commented that the Mobility Response Plan was not bold or innovative enough in its roll out and that what was done took too long to implement. These residents called for more permanent or widespread changes to meaningfully support the safety and comfort of people using active transportation and commented that they did not feel that this year's response was enough to do so. Additionally, while much of this year's response focused on supporting active transportation, some residents commented that we needed to include improving transit in our approach moving forward.

For some residents, there were concerns about the amount of money that was being spent on the program. Many respondents pointed to the fact that this year's budget was impacted by COVID-19 and that they felt that this was not the best use of the limited budget available.

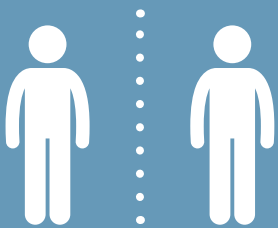
Other residents who were opposed to the measures taken through the Mobility Response Plan commented that they felt initiatives like the Slow Streets and expanded patios impacted their ability to drive and park downtown.

Examples of comments received include:

- I don't support what has been done with the Mobility Response Plan. I think it's a waste of taxpayer money.
- The Mobility Response Plan has not been bold or innovate enough in its implementation so far.
- The response to the impacts of COVID-19 through the Mobility Response Plan were implemented too slow.
- I support the Mobility Response Plan initiatives. Thank you for this work.
- There was not enough focus on accessibility or serving all people in Halifax through the Mobility Response Plan.
- We need more permanent changes to support mobility after the impacts of COVID-19, like more bicycle lanes and slow streets.

# SPACE TO QUEUE

To allow for proper physical distancing due to COVID-19, businesses may need to indicate where to queue on the sidewalk. This will help customers know where to wait when picking up items or entering the establishment. These guidelines will assist businesses in creating space to queue, ensuring a safe environment for both customers and pedestrians travelling along the sidewalk.



## **Ensure markers on the sidewalk are 2m (6ft) apart.**

This will allow for physical distancing following Public Health guidelines.



## **Space for queuing should be alongside the business's building from the entrance.**

This will allow for pedestrians using the sidewalk to pass safely.



## **Use a water-based spray paint.**

This will allow for easier removal when the markers are no longer necessary.