

January 23, 2024

HALIFAX

New Sidewalk Level Of Service

Report to Halifax Regional Council

Rationale for Report

2022/23 Public Works Business Plan (New Sidewalk Selection Process) which states:

To improve the selection process for urban, suburban, and rural* sidewalks, strategic advice will be provided to Regional Council that will:

- Update project selection criteria;
- Determine a sustainable approach to address the backlog; and,
- Develop long-term funding requirements.

** The report does not address rural sidewalks as these are part of the Rural Active Transportation Program*

Why this report now?

- Informs short and medium-term budgets (out to ten years) by setting a level of service
- Recent increases in capital budget and staff to support new sidewalk provides opportunity to update delivery approach
- Supports multiple HRM goals (Transit, growth, accessibility, road safety, HalifACT, equity...)
- Huge infrastructure deficit
 - There are roughly 800km of 'missing sidewalk' that should be built if applying today's guidelines retroactively.



Saint Margaret's Bay Road

High Need Sidewalk Gaps - Current Situation

About 155km of HRM streets have a high need for sidewalk infrastructure within the Urban Tax Boundary.

Typical contexts include:

- Former rural arterial and collectors that are now urban or suburban (~31km)
- Arterial and collectors with inconsistent sidewalk (~50km)
- Streets in communities that were more rural but are growing (~10km)
- Earlier business parks (Burnside, Bayers Lake, Bluewater) (~17km)
- Local Streets which provide access to places like schools, parks and adjoining higher-order streets (~46km)

Criteria used to determine “high need”

Evaluation Criteria

- 1) Proximity to pedestrian generators such as:
 - schools, daycares, and seniors’ centres;
 - parks, playgrounds, libraries, and recreation centres;
 - transit stops and terminals;
 - commercial areas, employment opportunities; and,
 - high-density residential areas.
- 2) Road classification
- 3) Equity
- 4) Segment connectivity
- 5) Safety

Updated Evaluation Criteria:

- 1) More weight given to social equity
- 2) Prioritize gaps on major roads

Minimal change to overall identification of high need areas.

Staff review and ground-truthing is key

Proposed approach for next ten years

- 1) Continue integration with larger road rehabilitation projects;
- 2) More stand-alone (non-integrated) projects;
- 3) Add new sidewalk with multi-modal corridor projects;
- 4) Add shorter connections for more immediate improvements; and,
- 5) Experiment with faster and less expensive infrastructure options (e.g. precast curb barriers in the street to provide pedestrian space) to provide more immediate safety improvements.

Some projects may not be feasible due to constructability factors.



Kempt Road



City of Calgary “adaptive sidewalk” (CBC)

Target and budget plan

Level of Service Target:

- 55kms of new sidewalk in high need areas in 10 years.

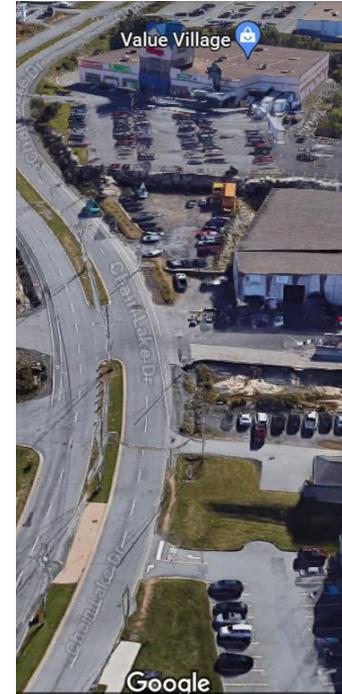
In the HRM 10-year Capital Plan:

Active Transportation Capital account

- New Sidewalk Budget ~ \$5.5M annually from 2024-28
- Ramp up to ~ \$8M annually in 2028-34
- Total Budget 2024-34: ~ \$75.5M

Multi-modal accounts (sidewalk/MUP components estimate)

- Total Budget 2024-34: ~\$21.5M
- About \$11,000 per km for maintenance
- Cost sharing opportunities will be pursued



Chain Lake Drive

Other Active Transportation Capital Project

New sidewalks would take just over half of the AT Budget over ten years. Similar proportion as past.

Remaining project categories include:

- Rural sidewalks
- AT Regional Connections
- Grants to community groups
- Tactical/short-term
- Land acquisition,
- Education and promotion
- Amenities
- Planning, studies, and designs

Future high-need areas due to growth

Planning and Development currently exploring options to share the costs of new sidewalks where the need is generated by new development. This future need not included in this report.



Herring Cove Road at Golden Way

Recommendations

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to implement those components of the 2022/23 Public Works Business Plan related to the selection of sidewalks for development with the objective of the implementation to be:

1. constructing approximately 55 kms of sidewalk on high need streets within the urban tax boundary before 2034 using funding within the existing budget plan, and other cost-sharing opportunities that may become available;
2. continuing to use an evaluation tool to identify the highest need segments and to fill those gaps as per the approach presented in the Discussion section of this report, including a greater focus on stand-alone projects on major roads; and,
3. exploring options to share the costs of new sidewalks with public and private sector organizations where the need is generated by new development.



Herring Cove Road before and after