

Transit Priority on Gottingen Street



Frequently Asked Questions

1. How many buses use Gottingen Street? How many buses will use it with the implementation of the Moving Forward Together Plan (MFTP)? How many of these buses provide service on Gottingen Street?

The number of buses per hour for current and future planned transit service for the peak and off-peak periods on Gottingen Street are summarized in the following table:

		CURRENT SERVICE (buses/hour)		PLANNED SERVICE (MFTP) (buses/hour)	
		Northbound	Southbound	Northbound	Southbound
PEAK SERVICE	All Stops	38	6	25	10
	Limited Stops	9	0	35	0
	No Stops	16	10	10	10
	TOTAL	63	16	70	20
OFF-PEAK SERVICE	All Stops	17	4	20	10
	Limited Stops	0	0	0	0
	No Stops	2	1	1	1
	TOTAL	19	5	21	11

The bus volumes described above were approved as part of the *Moving Forward Together Plan* in 2016.

2. Why don't buses use Barrington Street to access the Macdonald Bridge?

Buses do not currently use Barrington Street to access the Macdonald Bridge because they would have to use the Barrington Street Bridge Ramp, which can not currently accommodate bus use.

Halifax Harbour Bridges and Halifax Transit have been working together closely to test the feasibility of transit vehicles accessing the Macdonald Bridge from the Barrington Street ramp. HRM staff have been directed by Regional Council to provide a report that investigates the potential to move Dartmouth bound express buses off Gottingen Street, instead accessing the Macdonald Bridge via the Barrington Street bridge ramp.

3. Why not delay the Gottingen Street bus lane implementation until it is determined whether some bus routes should relocate from Gottingen Street to alternate streets?

Gottingen Street is — and will continue to be — an important transit street, even if it is determined that some routes should be relocated. The proposed peak period bus lane will provide important service enhancements that will benefit both local and limited stop routes.

4. On average, how many passengers are on buses?

The following table displays the 2015 average passenger volumes per bus in both the northbound and southbound directions for a PM peak hour and an off-peak hour.

	PM PEAK HOUR (4-5 PM) (Average # of passengers/bus)	OFF-PEAK HOUR (12-1 PM) (Average # of passengers/bus)
Northbound	24	11
Southbound	9	11

5. How will parking and loading be impacted?

Implementing a peak period northbound bus lane requires changes to pavement lane markings that affect parking and loading in the following way:

- No stopping in the southbound curb lane at any time
- No stopping in the northbound curb lane during peak periods (Weekdays 7-9 AM and 3-6 PM)
- Parking and loading permitted in northbound curb lane during off-peak periods (Weekdays before 7 AM, 9 AM-3 PM, after 6 PM and weekends). The parking and loading configuration is being determined through the detailed design process.

The following table displays the existing and proposed number of off-peak parking spaces on the East and West side of Gottingen Street.

	EXISTING (# of parking spaces)	PROPOSED (# of parking spaces)
East Side	24	45
West Side	28	0
TOTAL	52	45

The time-restricted nature of the on-street parking and increased parking enforcement will promote higher turnover of parking spaces, which will improve access to parking during off-peak periods.

6. Will Emergency Service vehicles be able to stop/park in a no stopping zone?

According to the Motor Vehicle Act, emergency service vehicles are not subject to parking/ stopping restrictions if they are being used in an emergency.

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7. Will Access-A-Bus be permitted to stop in no stopping zones?

Access-a-Bus vehicles are not allowed to stop in no stopping zones, but may stop in loading zones or at bus stops.

8. How will waste collection be impacted along Gottingen Street?

Where possible, waste collection will occur on side streets off Gottingen Street. If it is not possible, waste collection will be completed during off-peak periods, as is typical on many arterial and collector streets in Halifax.

9. Will the sidewalk be reduced in size or removed?

No. The sidewalk will not be reduced in size or removed as this project does not involve widening the road or right-of-way.

10. Will crosswalks be impacted by the project?

Crosswalk distances across Gottingen Street will not change. The road is not being widened as a result of this project, but the way the space is allocated will change. During peak periods, pedestrians will cross two mixed-traffic lanes and one bus lane. During off-peak periods, pedestrians will cross two mixed-traffic lanes and one parking lane. Currently, pedestrians walk across two mixed traffic lanes and two parking lanes.

11. Will new signalized pedestrian crossings or 'half signals' be included in the project?

Not at this time. Conceptual plans for the project considered the potential for signalized pedestrian crossings at two locations; however, they are not being included in the current design. This project will consider the potential to shorten the crossing distance on some of the side streets that intersect with Gottingen Street using 'curb extensions'. These enhancements would improve pedestrian safety and comfort.

12. How can complete streets elements improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians?

Complete streets elements including landscaping (i.e. planters and trees, curb extensions, and public art) are being considered for the Gottingen Street project. These elements have the potential to improve pedestrian safety and comfort by acting as a buffer between pedestrians and vehicles, promoting reduced vehicle speeds, and adding aesthetically pleasing elements to the pedestrian zone.

13. Will cyclists be impacted by this project?

Northbound cyclists will be permitted to use the bus lane during peak periods. During off-peak periods, they will ride in mixed traffic next to the on-street parking and loading areas. Southbound cyclists will be required to ride in mixed traffic in the southbound lane at all times.

14. How will the effectiveness of the project be evaluated?

Council has directed staff to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for the Gottingen Street dedicated bus lane. Results of the monitoring plan will be presented to Regional Council within 1-year of implementation.

The monitoring and evaluation plan is currently being developed, and will be presented to council alongside the detailed design in a report to Regional Council. The following list provides a few examples of the metrics that will be measured before and after implementation to inform the evaluation of the project.

- Average travel time for buses
- Average travel speed (transit and private autos)
- Motor vehicle collision incidence (by type and severity)
- Utilization of on-street parking and loading
- Public experience (all street users)
- Transit operator / rider experience