

Hollis Street Bicycle Lane Project

Debrief of June 2014 Public Engagement ¹

(Open House at AGNS Thursday June 26, 2014 from 12- 2pm and 4-6pm)

This document includes the responses of municipal staff to issues raised by stakeholders (abutting property owners, cyclists) and the general public.

Comments /Concerns from CYCLISTS

<i>a</i>	<i>Comment/ Concern:</i> • Could the extra wide vehicle lanes be narrowed to make wider bike lanes? • Consideration should be given to building a protected bicycle lane. • Could bike boxes be added to facilitate left turns? • To reduce the risk of “dooring” incidents between Morris and South street, can consideration be given to: 1/ putting the bike lane between the parking lane and the curb; 2/ removing the parking entirely beside the bike lane between Morris and South; or 3/ including a painted buffer in the ‘door zone’? • This bike lane should be more connected with 1/ the Barrington Greenway to the North; 2/ the Ferry Terminal; and 3/ Barrington Street south. • Consider painting bike lanes bright green where they interface with other lanes (e.g. at intersections). • Seaport market, NSCAD and Point Pleasant Park are popular cycling destinations - consideration should be given to treatments that improve safety/ priority for cyclists at Terminal Road. • Have you considered a left side bike lane? There is very little daytime parking, fewer meters to remove, and most destinations for cyclists riding Hollis are on the left. I ride on the left already as it feels safer. • Consideration should be given to creating protected intersections for the bike lane. • Provide guidance through the intersection at Morris to guide straight through vehicle traffic away from the bike lane as it shifts away from the curb south of the intersection. • Concern that Ambassatours buses may ‘stand’ in the bus stops, not just ‘stop’. <i>Response:</i> Halifax will be revising its plans regarding the bicycle lane, looking at different options and will consider the above comments in the revision. The plan is to share the revised plans when they are ready and target implementation of the bike lane in 2015.
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¹ This included two public open houses as well as an opportunity to provide feedback online at <http://shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/hollis-street-bicycle-lane> .

Comments /Concerns from ABUTTING PROPERTIES AND OTHER STREET USERS

a	<i>Comment/ Concern</i> • The “no-stopping anytime” outside Four Points Sheraton will be a major issue every day for many hotel guests. With the bike lane on the right and no-stopping anytime, guests will need to load and unload across the street and then cross the street with luggage. This may be especially challenging in the winter. Tour buses unload on the passenger side and represent a growing percentage of business – we don’t know what they will do. Daily hotel deliveries happen at this location as well, and will need to be relocated too. We support the bike lane, but would like the municipality to consider what could be done to address our concerns. • Concern that with ‘no stopping anytime’ moving trucks serving apartments on the block between Bishop and Morris will have to load/ unload from across a busy street with a lot of truck traffic. There is a lot of moving happening in the summer months at our building - please consider a solution that allows some loading on the right from time to time. • NSCAD’s loading doors and freight elevator are on the first block and there are about 60 pick-ups/ drop offs per week each of which average from 5- 15 minutes each. There are also about 7-10 pick-ups per week for garbage and recycling which take about 20 minutes each. Canada Post delivers on a daily basis at that door. Some of the deliveries are pallets and quite heavy, so they take longer (an hour or more). NSCAD would like to find a solution as many students bike and NSCAD supports the bike lane overall. • Consideration should be given to adding some off peak parking meters on the other side of the street from the bike lane on between Cogswell and George Streets. • Concern that relocating the accessible parking spaces will make walking distances to their destinations too far for people who have requested those spaces. Also a concern that motorized ramps for wheelchair users tend to be on the right side of the vehicle. Relocating accessible parking to the left side of the street will mean motorised ramps would go right into traffic. <i>Response</i> Halifax will be revising its plans regarding the bicycle lane, looking at different options, including whether off-peak loading can occur in the bike lane and will consider the above comments in the revision. The plan is to share the revised drawings when they are ready and target implementation of the bike lane in 2015.
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Comments /Concerns from the GENERAL PUBLIC

a	<i>Comment/ Concern:</i> Consideration should be given to adding on-street bicycle parking corals to make the presence of people on bikes more “ever-present”. <i>Response:</i> HRM’s “Request a Rack” program http://www.halifax.ca/cycling/ will install bike racks in the space between the sidewalk and the curb where possible. At this point, demand for bicycle parking in this area does not seem to warrant a need to remove additional vehicle parking for a bicycle parking corral and develop an entirely new program to manage bicycle racks on the road surface. We are aware that there are numerous precedents for this type of facility in other cities, and will be pleased to investigate doing this in the future if demand for bicycle parking begins to outstrip supply and staff resources allow.
b	<i>Comment/ Concern:</i> It is good to see that the new daytime parking that will go in will be metered. This is better for downtown businesses than the free daytime parking that was left on Lower Water with the one way project three years ago. <i>Response:</i> HRM is in the process of reviewing our approach and our role in parking management. We are also exploring new technologies to pay for on-street parking such as “pay and display” or “pay by plate” in lieu of meters. Once a decision is made, the temporarily free parking downtown (such as on Lower Water) will revert to paid parking.
c	<i>Comment/ Concern:</i> Hollis is a busy street and not good for bicycles because it is 1/ one way; 2/ a major truck route; 3/ the city needs parking. Consideration should be given for choosing another street or creating a bike lane by the water. <i>Response:</i> 1/ Yes the street is one-way, but three years ago a bike lane was installed on Lower Water in the opposite direction. 2/ Yes it is a truck route, but trucks are not speeding, and the bike lane will be wide, providing good separation of bicycles from motor vehicles. Based on the feedback we received from cyclists (above) we will now be investigating options to provide some physical separation from vehicles. 3/ There were over 100 additional parking spaces created downtown as part of the project in 2011 to convert more streets to one-way – this was part of what made it possible to consider parking removal on Hollis to create a bicycle lane.
d	<i>Comment/ Concern:</i> Consideration should be given to restricting bicycle use entirely east of Brunswick Street as streets are too narrow and with all the new development happening there is not enough space. Many cyclists are rude, unpredictable, and break the law.

	Response: Bicycling is permitted under the NS Motor Vehicle Act on all roads, except for a few controlled access highways. The municipality's Active Transportation Plan encourages cycling as a good way to get around that is sustainable and efficient, especially for short distances and in dense-mixed use areas such as downtown Halifax. Nearly 15% of residents in some census tracts in central Halifax ride to work. Hollis Street is not too narrow, and with all the new development happening downtown the municipality needs to make it easier to get around the area by foot and by bike because if everyone drove, there certainly would not be enough space! Unfortunately we too have observed undesirable behaviours in many road users. Providing a network of bicycling facilities may help to reduce instances these types of behaviours and improve road safety for all users.
e	Comment/ Concern: Consideration should be given to cancelling the bike lane project and leaving the 50 daytime parking spaces in place. Concern that there will be nowhere to park when we come downtown to visit art galleries and restaurants. Response: There will still be a net gain in parking spaces downtown after this bicycle lane project as it is the third and final phase of the Downtown Network Street Changes project that was implemented in 2011 and generated over 100 new on-street parking spaces downtown. As a result of comments received from this exercise, we will be exploring putting the bicycle lane on the left side of the street, which will have even less of an impact on daytime parking. Also, studies have shown that there are lots of places to park downtown off-street: there are numerous parkades and surface parking lots which frequently have vacancies. Please continue to shop and enjoy your downtown!