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Item No. 11.2.1

Halifax Regional Council
January 8, 2008

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sheila Fougere
Councillor Sheila Fougere, Chair
Bikeways Advisory Committee

DATE: December 5, 2007

SUBJECT: Bikeways Advisory Committee Annual Report

ANNUAL REPORT

BACKGROUND

The mandate of the Bikeways Advisory Committee (BAC) is to advise staff on priorities for the allocation of the Capital Budget as it relates to bicycle infrastructure using the Blueprint for a Bicycle Friendly HRM, a document adopted in principle by Regional Council in December 2002, as a guide. BAC's advisory capacity is to ensure thought is given to incorporate cycling requirements during ongoing construction services and projects that are traffic related in terms of design standards and also to advise Regional Council on matters relating to cycling.

Committee members: Councillor Sheila Fougere (Chair), Councillor Patrick Murphy, Councillor Stephen Adams, Leslie Dubinsky, William Webster, Ward Skinner, Candace Stevenson, Peter Williams, Laena Garrison (TRAX), Friedemann Brauer (BNS), Cheryl Bidgood (HDBC). Staff support includes: Roxane MacInnis (Regional Planning), Tanya Davis (Design & Construction), Ken Reashor (Traffic Authority), Roddy MacIntyre (Traffic & R.O.W.), Sherryll Murphy (Municipal Clerk's Office).

DISCUSSION

Key Committee Decisions / Activities

Bikeway Connection to the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge : The Committee was given a presentation outlining the results of a consultant study that explored options for improvement to the Halifax end of the ALM Bridge Bikeway.

The study outlined several potential design options. Public consultation was undertaken as part of the design study which resulted in three preferred options being identified for further consideration. Preliminary designs with cost estimates were presented for the preferred options.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the preferred options and decided on one of the three to bring forward as the endorsed design. The committee passed a motion to endorse their preferred option and recommend that funding options for this special project be explored through infrastructure, green initiatives, or similar project funding to supplement the already existing funding being held in reserve.

Movement Toward An Active Transportation Advisory Committee : With the adoption of the Active Transportation Plan, the Committee began to look at changes to the terms of reference for the Bikeways Advisory Committee that would adjust the Committee's focus toward all modes of active transportation, not just cycling.

A draft terms of reference was circulated to the Committee for review. Discussions took place over multiple meetings addressing such things as the connection between the goals of the Committee and the Active Transportation Plan, active transportation versus active recreation as well as the current role of the Committee and the potential future role that would result from the change in focus. Some concern was noted in that the new Committee may be seen as a loss to the cycling community.

Visiting Speaker - Marc Penneton of the Ministere des Transports du Quebec : The Committee hosted a public presentation by Mr. Penneton outlining the Route Verte bicycle network in Quebec. Mr. Penneton discussed the work that went into the planning and construction of this world class network. He noted the substantial financial commitment by the Province of Quebec in 1996 of approximately \$90 million over ten years that was instrumental in the realisation of the Route Verte.

Capital Works Projects

In conjunction with various capital works projects as well as initiatives solely pertaining to cycling infrastructure, more than 10 km of new bicycle lanes/paved shoulder were constructed this past year in the following locations :

- St. Margaret's Bay Road - 1.8 km of new bike lane (outbound) between Northwest Arm Drive & Prospect Road.
- Kearney Lake Road - 1.5 km of new bike lanes (both sides) between the old Halifax City Limits & Highway 102.

- Main Street (Dartmouth) - 1.5 km of new bike lanes (both sides) between Ridgcrest Drive & Dave's / Ben's stores.
- Williams Lake Road - 0.9 km of new bike lane (one side) between Purcell's Cove Road and Civic #49.
- Old Sambro Road - 0.5 km of new bike lanes (both sides) between MacIntosh Run & Sussex Street.
- Westwood Boulevard - 1.0 km of new bike lanes (both sides) from the Hubley Shopping Centre to just beyond Hemlock Drive.
- Hemlock Drive - 0.2 km of new paved shoulder (both sides) beginning at Westwood Boulevard.

There is an on-going initiative to replace parallel sewer grates automatically during renewal projects. The list of "bicycle route" streets has also been provided to Technical & Underground Services (TUGS) staff so a proactive approach can be taken to replacing parallel sewer grates along identified bicycle routes (as staff resources permit). This year, 56 plus locations along cycling routes, some requiring multiple grates to be replaced, have been addressed as a result direct input from cyclists.

Cycling Profile

The cycling profile continues to rise. Growing interest in cycling is evident by the number of cyclists on the roads and trails.

In helping to raise the cycling profile within HRM, the BAC once again formed a Sub-Committee to organize the annual Bike Week event.

Bike Week Event

Bike Week 2007 was a huge success.

Bike Week was organized by a sub-committee of the Bicycle Advisory Committee composed of dedicated staff and volunteers. Volunteers included representatives of major cycling groups in HRM (Velo-Halifax Club and Bicycle Nova Scotia), the Ecology Action Centre, as well as individual residents. Staff members from Planning, Civic Events, Traffic, and Recreation supported the volunteer committee. A high level of internal cooperation from a number of other HRM departments supported individual events held during Bike Week. These included: Metro Transit, Procurement, Police, Libraries, the Forum, Communication, and Trails.

The weather was *much* more cooperative than in previous years and almost all outdoor events proceeded as planned (with the sad exception of ten trail rides that had to be cancelled one stormy Tuesday evening). This year, the organizing committee made sure there were enough all-weather and indoor events scheduled so that a week of bad weather would not 'kill' bike week.

The committee used \$5,000 in budget from HRM to leverage \$3,250 more from various organizations including major sponsors Capital Health, KPMG, and Nova Scotia Power. These funds were used primarily to promote Bike Week events and offer incentive prizes.

Fifty events were held across HRM over nine days to celebrate, encourage, and enjoy cycling in the Municipality as a healthy way to travel, a great form of recreation, and an exciting competitive sport. More than 1300 HRM residents participated in various events including:

- ‘Bike to School Day’ (Ten schools and 330 children participated);
- HRM Police Bicycle Rodeos (Held throughout the municipality and trained 140 children);
- MEC Bike Commuter Pancake Breakfast - 68 participants;
- Workshops on Bike Maintenance, Touring across Canada, Cycling with Children, and Cycling Proficiency (Can-Bike);
- Sport events including a criterium and a duathlon;
- Creative events like ‘Yoga for Cyclists’, ‘Historic Halifax Tour’, ‘Bike Movie Night’ and ‘Bike and Boat at the St. Mary’s Boat Club’;
- Trail rides, fitness rides, and a casual Friday-after-work ride.

Local organizations and business were hugely supportive of Bike Week this year, including: the Halifax Regional School Board, C-100 FM, MEC, the Bridge Commission, Cyclesmith, the Water Commission, IWK Child Safety Link, QEII Think First, Helmet Safety Action Committee, the Economy Shoe Shop, Atlantic Filmmaker’s Cooperative (AFCOOP), Environment Canada, the Yoga Loft, Halifax Regional Trails Team, BikeAgain!, Valley Wine Tours, and individuals Tarah Wright, Robin and Kestrel Musselman, and Wayne Groszko.

Most members of the 2007 organizing committee are prepared to help make Bike Week an even bigger event in 2008. Suggestions for events the community would like to see can be forwarded to Hanita Koblents in Community Development.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality’s Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

There are no alternatives proposed at this time.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax
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490-4208.

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