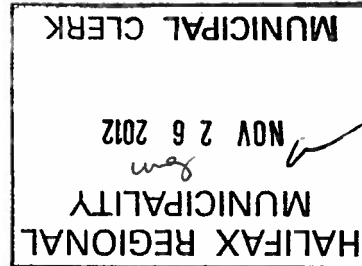




30 November 2012

Transportation Standing Committee
c/o Office of the Municipal Clerk
PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 3A5
clerks@halifax.ca



Re: North-South Cycling Route

Dear Councillor,

The Our HRM Alliance is committed to advancing the goals of a more liveable and more sustainable community. This goal is consistent with the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, as adopted in 2006, which calls for a shift away from the private vehicle into more sustainable mobility options. The Alliance, now 42 members strong, supports the Mobility Plan and has called for more investment in infrastructure for cycling and transit. This includes moving a North-South connector route for cyclists forward.

A number of people have commented to me that they would love to cycle more in the city, but without connected bike lanes, frankly they are scared to. The Alliance believes that establishing a continuous cycling lane will advance active transportation in the city – it is a wise decision for the health of residents and for the sustainability of the Municipality.

HRM Staff have lead consultations on which route should be recommended for the establishment of the Crosstown Connector. The Halifax Cycling Coalition (HCC) is promoting the route, which follows the Agricola, North Park, Bell Road and South Park corridor for a number of reasons, including:

- Connects best to residences and places where people go,
- Already frequently used, had 1400 signatures supporting it,
- Businesses along the route already cater to pedestrians and cyclists,
- Friendly atmosphere with low speed traffic,
- Flat grades, which makes cycling more convenient.

The Our HRM Alliance supports the expertise of the HCC – it is comprised of people who use or want to use cycling as a primary means of transportation. The HCC are local experts in this fields.



OURHRM
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Planning for Liveable Communities

2705 Fern Lane · Halifax · Nova Scotia · Canada · B3K 4L3
t: 902-429-0924 · f: 902-405-3716 · e: hrm@ecologyaction.ca
www.ourhrmalliance.ca

However, businesses on Agricola are hesitant to support a bike lane in front of their businesses – this may be because of the mistaken notion that cyclists shop less than car owners (a number of studies have shown that walkers and cyclists actually spend more money than do car-owners). The North End Business Association correctly brings up the concern of delivery trucks blocking bike lanes. Having cyclists swerve out of the bike lane to pass a delivery vehicle is riskier than not having a lane at all. In Montreal, the problem of bike lanes and delivery trucks is solved by simply giving the bike lane priority. Delivery trucks can park next to the bike lanes but cannot impede the bike lane. This way delivery trucks and cyclists can coexist. This type of system would require adequate signage and enforcement but is possible.

In HRM we have an opportunity to demonstrate leadership by taking an important step toward making our city a healthier, safer and more enjoyable place to live, work and play. The recommendation of a bicycle route on the Agricola-South Park Corridor (Crosstown Connector) should be seen as the first big move in implementing the Halifax Peninsula Cycling Network.

Sincerely

Jen Powley, Our HRM Alliance Coordinator