

**Halifax Regional Council**  
**May 13, 2008**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**



Cathie O'Toole, Director, Infrastructure & Asset Management

**DATE:** April 30, 2008

**SUBJECT:** **Hammonds Plains Road Widening**

---

## **INFORMATION REPORT**

### **ORIGIN**

At the September 25, 2007 meeting of Halifax Regional Council, Councillor Meade asked for a report on the widening of Hammonds Plains Road, from Kearney Lake Road to Highway 103, and to examine the use of the water main from Pockwock Road to Kearney Lake Road as an additional alternate route.

### **BACKGROUND**

Hammonds Plains Road is a controlled access two-lane rural arterial that connects St Margarets Bay Road (Trunk No. 3) to the Bedford Highway (Trunk 2). It also provides connections to Highway 103, Lucasville Road, and Highway 102. Traffic volumes on the section between Pockwock Road and Highway 102 range from 17,500 (just east of Lucasville Road) to 27,000 (just west of Kearney Lake Road) vehicles per day (vpd).

## **DISCUSSION**

Hammonds Plains Road provides access to the communities of Tantallon, Haliburton Heights, Westwood Hills, Glen Arbour, and Kingswood, which are some of the fastest growing communities in HRM. It will also provide access to Bedford West which is a major development planned for the area. As the area continues to grow, there will be pressure on HRM to widen sections of Hammonds Plains Road to accommodate the increased traffic volumes and relieve traffic congestion. Alternatively, the expected increase in traffic volumes could be mitigated through the use of alternate routes and/or programs such as rural express transit which are designed to reduce travel demand.

This report examines the future need to widen Hammonds Plains Road from Kearney Lake Road to Highway 102, and the possibility of using the watermain transmission corridor from Pockwock Road to Kearney Lake Road as an alternate route.

In 2004, a comprehensive traffic impact study was conducted for the Bedford Master Plan area to determine the impact that development would have on Hammonds Plains Road, Kearney Lake Road, and Highway 102. The study examined the impact the Bedford West development and other growth areas would have over a 20 year period. The study recommended the widening of Hammonds Plains Road to four lanes from Highway 102 to the main entrance into Bedford West. The proposed main entrance is approximately halfway between Symmonds Road and Bluewater Road.

Phase I of this project, from Highway 102 to the new RIM entrance, is scheduled to be constructed this year. Phase II (RIM to Symmonds Road) and Phase III (Symmonds Road to the Bedford West main entrance) are scheduled to be completed within the next 2-3 years subject to Council approval. The widening of Hammonds Plains Road from the Bedford West main entrance to Kearney Lake Road, a distance of approximately 2.3 km, was not recommended in the Bedford West Master Plan traffic study.

The estimated cost to widen this section of Hammonds Plains Road from two to four lanes with turning lanes at major intersections is \$3500 per metre or approximately \$8,000,000. Alternatively, Hammonds Plains Road could be widened to three-lanes for approximately \$3,500,000. The middle lane would be a two-way left turn lane. This could increase the capacity by as much as 20 percent and reduce the number of rear end collisions. Neither of these numbers consider property acquisition which, in addition to adding to the cost of the project, would create impacts for the residential properties along Hammonds Plains Road.

The use of the water main transmission corridor from Pockwock Road to Kearney Lake Road as alternative roadway has the potential to reduce traffic volumes on Hammonds Plains Road but is not supported by Halifax Water because of the real conflict between critical water main infrastructure and roadway construction.

The preferred solution for managing traffic on this corridor is a bypass highway that would shift much of the current loading. Highway 113, proposed by the province as part of the provincial highway network, would achieve that shift in traffic. There is no commitment to timing on this project, but an environmental impact assessment has been prepared and the majority of the land for the corridor has been acquired.

Until the Highway 113 solution is completed, several steps have been taken, or will be taken in the near future, to reduce loading on Hammonds Plains Road or to improve its operation:

1. The new interchange on Highway 101 at Margeson Drive, expected to be operational in 2009, will draw traffic from the Lucasville and Glen Arbour areas.
2. Rural Express Transit from Tantallon is scheduled to be implemented in Fall, 2008 and will shift some existing vehicle trips to transit trips.
3. One component of the Bedford West project will result in a vertical crest curve being cut down to improve sight distance.
4. The addition of a new traffic lane eastbound is planned between Kingswood Drive and Kearney Lake Road to improve the operation of the Kearney Lake Road intersection.
5. Over the past several years, left turn storage lanes have been constructed at all major intersections on Hammonds Plains Road.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

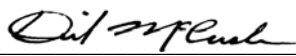
There are no budget implications at this time.

### **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.

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

Report Prepared by: Paul V. Burgess, M.Eng., P.Eng., Project Engineer, Regional Transportation Planning  
490-5578

Approved by :   
Dave McCusker, P.Eng., Manager, Regional Transportation Planning  
490-6696