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Item No. 11.1.11

**Halifax Regional Council
May 5, 2009**

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan English".

SUBMITTED BY:

Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Anstey".

Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: April 20, 2009

SUBJECT: Windmill Road Street Plan

ORIGIN

Staff.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve the Windmill Road Street Plan as shown in Attachment One of this report.

BACKGROUND

A report completed for HRM in 2006 titled "Wright's Cove Land Use and Transportation Plan" recommended, among other things, that the existing two-way centre left turn lane on Windmill Road be replaced with a curbed centre median to better manage left turning movements.

While through lanes on this section of Windmill Road become congested during peak hours, the long right turn lane in the northbound direction flows relatively smoothly. As part of the Sackville MetroLink project, modifications were made to the northbound right turn lane to allow transit buses to continue through at intersections rather than being required to turn right, as vehicles are. This modification has resulted in significant time savings for transit buses and staff would like to replicate this in the southbound direction.

DISCUSSION

While a two-way centre left turn lane can provide good traffic function in certain conditions, it is evident that speeds and volumes on Windmill Road have become too high for such a facility to continue to operate safely and effectively. Installing a centre median with openings at intersections and some driveways will better control turning movements. In October, 2006 a diagram showing a possible layout of a centre median was presented at a public information meeting held in Burnside. Although many of the attendees recognized the need to address safety problems resulting from turning movements, there was some concern expressed by businesses whose driveway would not have an opening in the median opposite them. The location of individual median openings are intentionally omitted from the plan shown in Attachment One. It is the intention of staff that Regional Council would endorse the concept of the centre median and would allow further consultation with businesses to finalize the location of median openings.

Approval of the Windmill Road Street Plan will allow HRM staff to add required street right-of-way and build an additional right turn lane on the west side of the street as development opportunities immerge. This will mirror what currently exists on the east side of the street and will not only improve function and safety for right turning traffic but will make transit more effective by allowing buses to use the right turn lane to avoid congestion in the through lanes.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate budget implications associated with approval of the Windmill Road Street Plan. Funding for future land acquisition and addition of lanes and medians will be done through the normal capital budgeting process.

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

Regional Council may choose not to endorse the Windmill Road Street Plan or to direct staff to make modifications to it.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Windmill Road Street Plan

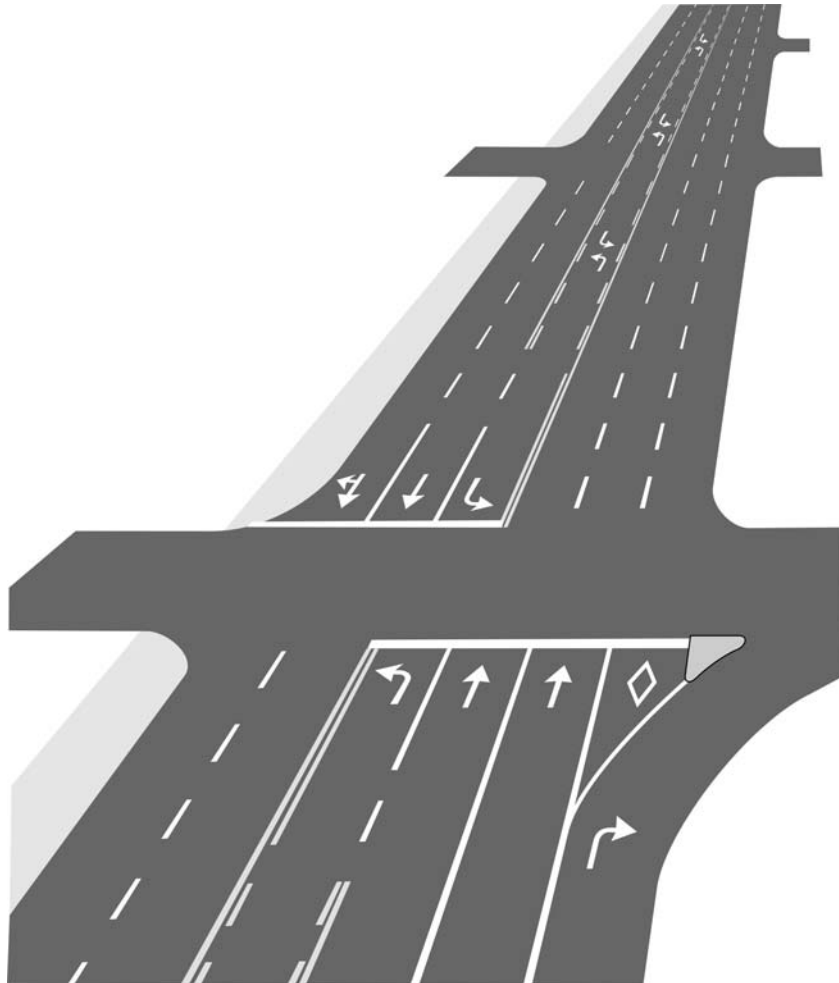
A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Dave McCusker, Manager, Strategic Transportation Planning, 490-6696



Report Approved by: Phil Townsend, Acting Director Infrastructure & Asset Management, 490-7166

EXISTING STREET



PROPOSED STREET PLAN

Replacing the existing two-way centre left turn lane with a concrete median will improve overall safety by limiting the locations where a left turn can be made.

Some driveways will not get median cuts directly opposite them. Traffic on the opposite side of the median would gain access by making a U-turn and doubling back.

Some driveways will get median cuts where left turns and U-turns can be made.

In the new curb lane, vehicles must turn right at the next intersection but transit buses may use this lane to continue through intersections.

