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Item No. 1
Halifax Regional Council
November 27, 2012

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed by Director

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Ken Reashor, P.Eng., Director, Transportation and Public Works

DATE: October 29, 2012

SUBJECT: Bicycle Racks with Advertising in Main Street BID Right of Way

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

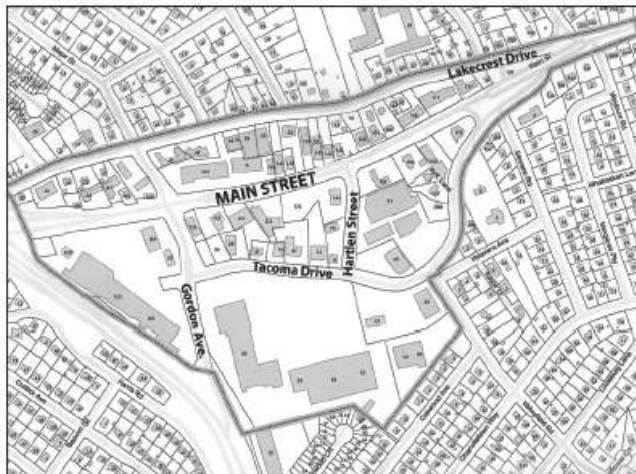
Item 12.1 raised at the October 2, 2012, meeting of Halifax Regional Council.

On October 2, 2012 Councillor Fisher initiated a motion of Regional Council for a staff report “to examine granting permission for the Main Street Business Improvement Association to place artistic bike racks in the public right-of-way near the sidewalk within the Business Improvement District and also to allow the Association to place a small 8” x 10” advertising plaque on each bike rack to assist with future upkeep and maintenance of these bike racks”.

BACKGROUND

Streets in the Main Street Business Improvement District (BID) include Main Street, Tacoma Drive, Hartlen Street, Lakecrest Drive and Gordon Avenue.

HRM provides a service through the Active Transportation Program to install bicycle racks in the Municipal Right-of-Way (ROW) upon request by property/business owners who do not have adequate space on their own property for a rack. This service is generally limited to areas where buildings have zero (or very near zero) setback from the edge of the ROW and where there are wide sidewalks. When property/business owners have space on their own property, HRM prefers to have the rack installed on private property at the owner's expense.



Generally accepted good principles for locating bicycle racks include locating the racks within 15m of the destination to be served. This principle is reflected in HRM Land Use Bylaws (where bicycle racks are called 'Class B bicycle parking'):

“17A LOCATION OF BICYCLE PARKING (RC-Jun 27/06; E-Aug 26/06)

(1) Class B bicycle parking shall be located no more than 15m from an entrance. Where there are shelters... that protect bicycles from the elements, bicycle parking may be located up to 30m from an entrance”.

When placing bicycle racks in the Municipal ROW, racks are typically placed on existing concrete surface in areas which do not conflict with other ROW uses. The first priority is ensuring that the pedestrian realm is not compromised by ensuring racks are only placed on sidewalks exceeding 2.7m (9') in width.

Furthermore, advertising in the ROW is restricted under By-law S-300 (Streets) Section 44:

“No person shall place or allow to be placed any sign or advertising board, including sandwich boards, within the street without first obtaining a permit therefor pursuant to a sign or encroachment bylaw”.

DISCUSSION

HRM staff has several concerns with placing 'ad racks' in the ROW of the Main Street BID:

1/ Sidewalks are too narrow.

Sidewalks on these streets generally range in width from 1.5m (5') to 2.4m (8') which does not meet the minimum width for bicycle rack placement. Placing the racks on the

existing sidewalks will unnecessarily impede pedestrian movements, posing a safety issue because there is not enough right-of-way to safely accommodate them. Pouring concrete to widen the sidewalks will add about \$1,000 to the cost of each rack (which normally only cost about \$150). There is one exception along Tacoma Drive between Hartlen Street and Gordon Avenue with 2.7m (9') wide sidewalks, but there appears to be space for these businesses to install bicycle racks on their own properties, as per #2 below.

2/ Racks on the sidewalk would be too far from most building entrances.

Almost without exception, properties in the Main Street BID contain buildings set back away from the street and from other buildings. The best location for bicycle parking is within 15m of the entrance to the building. Bicycle racks farther than this tend not to be used as people will find other objects (trees, poles) to lock to. It is the opinion of HRM staff that bicycle racks in the ROW in this location would **not** get used. In areas with large building setbacks, bicycle racks would be most useful on private property, close to the destinations to be served.

3/ Right of Way advertising should be limited.

Under existing by-laws, HRM manages against a proliferation of advertising within the street right-of-way. High concentrations of advertising messages can be unsightly, as well as a potential distraction to drivers and pedestrians.

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, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement was not required as this report is only providing Council with information.

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.

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Original Signed

Report Approved by:

Taso Koutroulakis, Acting Manager, Traffic and Right-of-Way (490-4816)
