

Halifax Regional Council
August 27, 2002

TO: His Worship Mayor Peter Kelly and
Members of Halifax Regional Council

FROM: Original signed

Councillor Sheila Fougere, Chair
Peninsula Community Council

DATE: August 22, 2002

SUBJECT: Neighbourhood Short-cutting - Romans Avenue

ORIGIN

Peninsula Community Council July 8, 2002

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the chicanes on Romans Avenue, as outlined in the June 24, 2002 Information Report and as depicted on Attachment One of the report, be made permanent.
2. That staff follow up with an investigation and additional treatment for the area between the south chicane and the intersection at Mumford Road and Romans Avenue.
3. That staff respond with an effort to address the issues on the north side of Romans Avenue.
4. That staff study the issues around trucks on Mumford Road and MacDonald Street.

BACKGROUND

A public meeting to consider the making permanent of the trial installation of two sets of traffic chicanes (traffic islands) installed on Romans Avenue in early December of 2001 was held on July 8, 2002.

DISCUSSION

Peninsula Community Council heard representation from area residents and, after discussion, approved the above recommendation. Note should be made that the staff report relative to this matter which was distributed to Council for this meeting, agrees with Part 1 of the Community Council recommendation while addressing Parts 2-4.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

N/A

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT/BUSINESS PLAN

N/A

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

June 24, 2002 Information Report re Neighbourhood Short-cutting - Romans Avenue
Draft Extract of July 8, 2002 Peninsula Community Council - Public Meeting Minutes

Additional copies of this report and information on its status can be obtained by contacting the office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208. Report prepared by: Sherrill Murphy, AMC, 490-6517.
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HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL
July 2, 2002

PLEASE RETAIN FOR PUBLIC MEETING

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed
John Sheppard, P.Eng., Director, Public Works & Transportation

DATE: June 24, 2002

SUBJECT: NEIGHBOURHOOD SHORT-CUTTING - ROMANS AVENUE

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Neighbourhood Short-Cutting Policy.

BACKGROUND

A project under the Neighbourhood Short-Cutting Policy was initiated for the Romans Avenue corridor in 1999. A trial installation of two sets of traffic chicanes (traffic islands) that narrowed the usable width of Romans Avenue was installed in early December of 2001.

DISCUSSION

The next step in the process, as stated in the Neighbourhood Short-Cutting Policy, is to hold a public meeting of Council to receive input from the general public. This meeting will be part of the agenda of the July 8 Peninsula Community Council meeting. Although all comments from the meeting will be recorded and summarized for the final report to Regional Council, all Council members are encouraged to attend.

A trial installation of two sets of traffic chicanes (traffic islands) that narrowed the usable width of Romans Avenue were installed in early December of 2001. One set was located between Vaughan Avenue and Ward Avenue and the other set between Cook Avenue and Archibald Avenue. The set of islands between Vaughan and Ward was recently removed to allow for replacement of the sidewalk and curb and gutter in this area of Romans Avenue. HRM staff is of the opinion that enough of a trial has been done to show fairly the effects of the chicanes. Traffic counts taken before the chicanes were installed and repeated recently have shown an approximate 20 to 40 percent reduction in traffic volume. Speeds are also decreased. The trial has succeeded according to the criteria in the Halifax Regional Municipality Neighbourhood Short-Cutting Policy.

A "Permanent Installation Vote of Residents and Businesses on the Problem Streets" as required under Section 6.7 of the Neighbourhood Short-Cutting Policy was held recently. The results were counted on May 27, 2002. There are 68 addresses eligible to receive ballots. A minimum return of 50 percent or 34 ballots is needed for the vote to be valid. 48 ballots were returned by the deadline of May 27, 2002. Of the 48 ballots received, 34 were in favour of making the chicanes permanent and 14 were opposed. This is more than 50 percent plus one vote, therefore HRM staff must consider whether to recommend proceeding.

HRM staff recommends that both sets of chicanes be made permanent, subject to a minor change from the test. During the test some problems for pedestrians were noted at the intersection of Romans Avenue and Cook Avenue. One of the sets of trial chicanes was located just south of this intersection. It is proposed that the permanent chicane be instead located between Cook and Ward, not as close to the intersection of two roads as the trial installation. A sketch of the proposed permanent locations is part of this report as Attachment One.

Following is a table showing traffic counts, and a discussion of the results seen to date:

**Trial of Traffic Chicanes - 2001-2002
Weekday 24 Hour Traffic Count Results**

location (street block)	average traffic volume before test began	traffic volume during test period	change in daily traffic volume during test period	OK?
Romans southbound just south of Vaughan Avenue	2653	2086	-567 (-21%)	yes
Romans southbound between Cook and Ward	3319	1961	-1358 (-41%)	yes
Romans northbound between Cook and Ward	3281	2559	-722 (-22%)	yes

Romans southbound just south of Vaughan Avenue These counts were taken by a traffic loop (part of the traffic signal control system) located just south of Vaughan Avenue. The counts show a decrease of 21 percent of the before-test volume. These counts were taken on October 4, 2001 to October 19, 2001, and March 8, 2002 to March 22, 2002. The results show the chicanes have successfully reduced Romans Avenue traffic.

Romans southbound between Cook and Ward These counts were taken by an automatic traffic counter (with hoses across the road) on November 8, 9, 12, 13, 15 and 16 and again on June 11, 2002. Southbound traffic on this block fell by about 41 percent of the before-test volume.

Romans northbound between Cook and Ward These counts were taken with an automatic traffic counter on November 15 and 16, 2001 and again on June 11, 2002. Northbound traffic on this block fell by about 22 percent during the test period.

Summary: The results of this analysis show an appreciable decrease in traffic on Romans Avenue during the period of the test.

Public Comments: While the trial has been under way there has been some comment received from members of the general public. Some complained the chicanes were unsafe but no collisions related or near to the chicanes were reported during the trial period. We have on file seven written submissions. Of these, three support the chicanes and four are opposed. Two of those opposed mentioned their opposition was based on difficulty crossing Romans Avenue on foot at the intersection of Cook and Romans. This concern is intended to be addressed by moving the chicanes to mid-block between Cook and Ward, more remote from any intersections. This feedback should be considered in the context of the vote of residents which resulted in 34 votes in favour and 14 opposed to the measures.

No Motor Vehicle Collisions: No motor vehicle collisions were reported on Romans Avenue during the five months December 2001 through April 2002. Collision reports for May have not been checked but HRM staff is not aware of any collisions having occurred.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The cost to make the measures permanent is estimated to be between \$5,000 and \$10,000, depending on the standard of appearance chosen and the results of any tender process. Funds are available in the Neighbourhood Short-Cutting program budget.

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

Option "A" - terminate the current trial and attempt to find another solution.

Option "B" - terminate the current trial and do not proceed with anti-short-cutting measures.

Neither of these alternatives is recommended by staff.

ATTACHMENTS

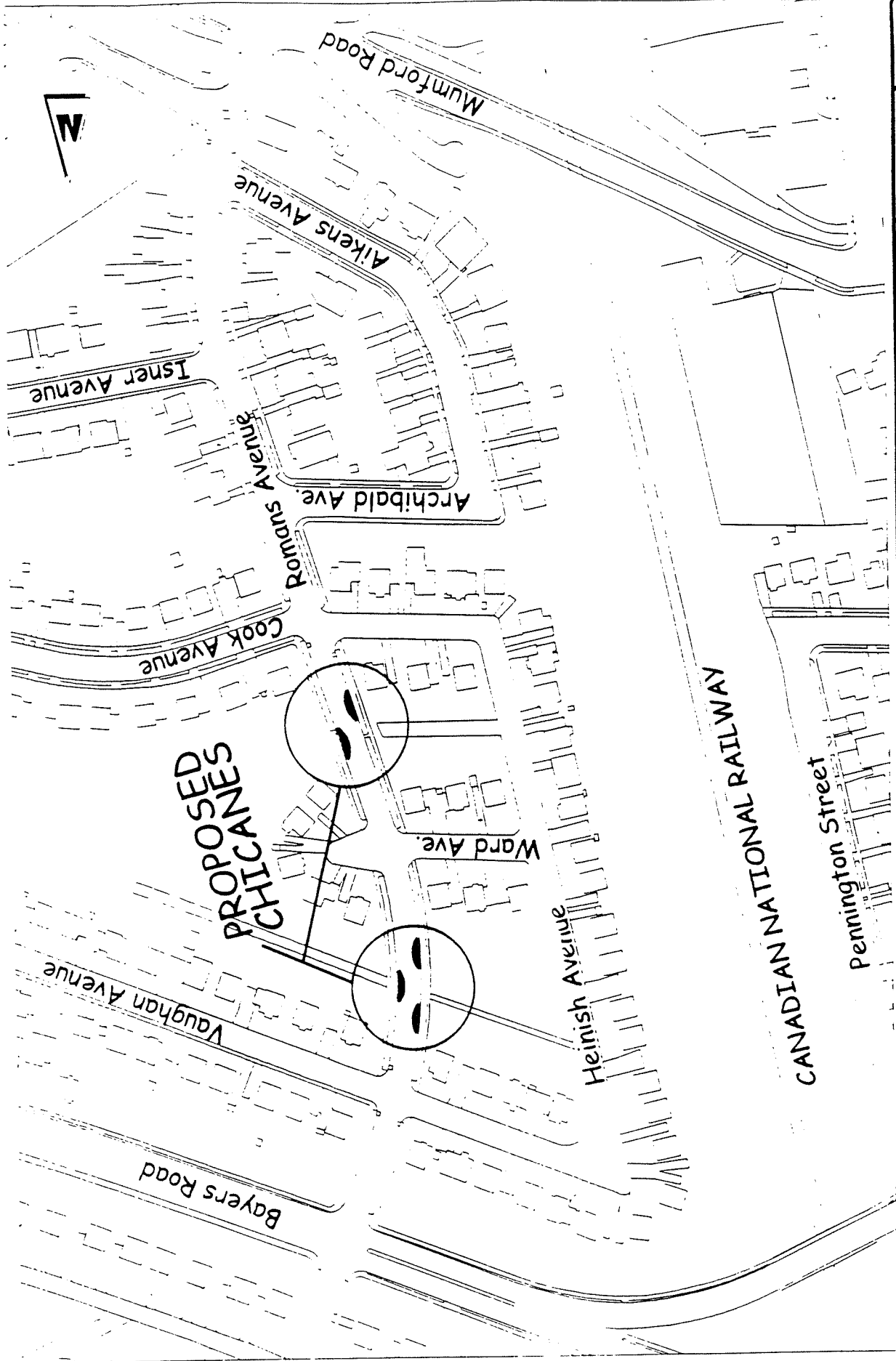
1. Sketch Showing Proposed Chicanes Locations

Additional copies of this report and information on its status can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report prepared by: Alan Taylor, P.Eng., Transportation Planner, 490-6680.

Report approved by: David McCusker, P.Eng., Manager, Traffic & Transportation Services.

ADT/bmh



**PROPOSED
CHICANES**

Neighbourhood Short-Cutting Study
Romans Avenue between Bayers and Mumford
PROPOSED PERMANENT CHICANES

3A. PUBLIC MEETING - NEIGHBOURHOOD SHORT-CUTTING - ROMANS AVENUE

- An information report dated June 24, 2002 submitted by John Sheppard, Acting Director, Public Works & Transportation was before Council for consideration.

Mr. David McCusker, Traffic Authority, briefly reviewed the process to date as set out in the Information Report. Mr. McCusker advised that staff was recommending that both sets of chicanes be made permanent. He noted that problems for pedestrians at the intersection of Romans and Cook Avenues observed during the test, will be addressed by locating the chicanes at Cook and Ward Avenues.

Councillor Uteck expressed concern that as per the Neighbourhood Short-Cutting Policy this matter had to go before Regional Council for final approval. The Councillor indicated that this was not a street closure, merely a calming of traffic and safety measures in a local area.

Mr. McCusker then responded to questions from members of Committee.

Councillor Blumenthal commented that the north side of Romans did not receive any treatment due to a lack of response from area residents. Councillor Blumenthal noted that only residents of St. Andrew's and Chisholm Streets were distributed ballots with 24 of the 28 distributed on St. Andrew's Street being returned and no returns being received from Chisholm Street. The Councillor indicated that this lack of response is not unusual in areas where there are a number of rental properties or public housing. Councillor Blumenthal expressed concern that almost two years of work had not resulted in an improved situation.

The Chair then requested members of the public wishing to speak to come forward.

Gaye Pottie, 3259 MicMac Street

Ms. Pottie indicated that she had been a member of the Romans Avenue Short-Cutting Committee. Ms. Pottie commented that neither the concerns of the residents of the north side of Romans Avenue or those of the Halifax Shopping Centre had received a response. She stressed that something must be done to respond to the concerns of the residents. Ms. Pottie noted that the residents of St. Andrew's Street had fully expected some action to be taken to calm traffic and the lack of action was very disappointing. She requested that Council not continue to ignore the north side of Romans Avenue and include all of Romans Avenue in the traffic calming treatment. In conclusion, Ms. Pottie indicated that she felt the process was unbalanced and that she did not agree with the process.

Rocky Jones, Romans Avenue

Mr. Jones addressed Council indicating that he had also been a member of the

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Neighbourhood Short-Cutting Committee. He went on to thank staff for their work with regard to this issue. Referring to previous comments, Mr. Jones indicated that he felt there had been opportunity for the concerns of residents from both sides of the street to be addressed. Speaking specifically to the south side of Romans Avenues, Mr. Jones indicated that he was hoping to convince Council to go a bit further with regard to traffic calming. He noted that speed on Romans Avenue is now an issue as motorists manoeuvre through the chicanes. Mr. Jones recommended that speed bumps be installed between Isenor and Archibald Streets. Referring to difficulties emergency vehicles have with speed bumps, Mr. Jones noted that emergency vehicles rarely use Romans Avenue.

Ann Monahan, 6870 Chebucto Road

Ms. Monahan addressed Council objecting to the barriers erected on Romans Avenue noting that the barriers had created a safety issue on Chebucto Road. Ms. Monahan referred to the change on Joseph Howe Drive and noted that until that time the flow of traffic from Highway 102 was very smooth. She commented that allowing the expansion of the Halifax Shopping Centre and the choking off of traffic seemed to be somewhat contradictory. Ms. Monahan went on to indicate that traffic was a regional problem and without addressing improved transit and encouraging cyclists, the problems would not be resolved. Ms. Monahan urged Council to address the larger issue and not to go street by street. In conclusion, Ms. Monahan commented that certain streets in the city should not be given special consideration to the detriment of others. She indicated that although she did not want speed or unsafe conditions, she did want the traffic to flow.

Manuel Escobar, 7059 Mumford Road

Mr. Escobar addressed Council indicating that traffic should be permitted to flow. He went on to indicate that he was opposed to changes to any of the existing accesses to the Halifax Shopping Centre. In conclusion, he requested that Council let the traffic find its own way.

Rosemary Mooney, 6951 Cook Street

Ms. Mooney addressed Council commenting that although she enjoyed the decreased traffic, she was still concerned with speed. Noting that there were other streets in the city that presently have speed bumps, Ms. Cuney suggested that speed bumps should be considered for the opposite end of Romans Avenue. In conclusion, Ms. Cuney noted that drivers must be considerate of residents of the city.

Reg Allen, Romans Avenue

Mr. Allen addressed Council expressing concern regarding remarks of a previous speaker with regard to the process. He noted that he had been very surprised with the outcome of the vote for the north side of Romans Avenue and believed that some action should be taken to address the concerns of these residents. Mr. Allen went on to note that although he was appreciative of the efforts to date, he was disappointed with the

outcome of the traffic calming. He asked that Council direct staff to take another look at traffic calming for Romans Avenue. Mr. Allen noted that since the expansion of the Halifax Shopping Centre, Romans Avenue has become inundated with trucks. He requested that No Truck Signs be installed.

Mr. Allen went on to note that Romans Avenue is a residential street, not a collector or arterial road. The standard for a residential street is 3000 vehicles per day and he would like to achieve that standard. Mr. Allen noted that a 20% reduction missed the mark significantly. In conclusion, Mr. Allen indicated that he was also concerned about speed.

There were no further persons wishing to speak.

Providing an opportunity for Councillor Fougere to address the matter, Councillor Uteck assumed the Chair.

MOVED by Councillor Fougere, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal that Peninsula Community Council recommend to Halifax Regional Council:

- 1. That the chicanes on Romans Avenue, as outlined in the June 24, 2002 Information Report and as depicted on Attachment One of the report, be made permanent.**
- 2. That staff follow up with an investigation and additional treatment for the area between the south chicane and the intersection at Mumford Road and Romans Avenue.**
- 3. That staff respond with an effort to address the issues on the north side of Romans Avenue.**
- 4. That staff study the issues around trucks on Mumford Road and MacDonald Street.**

Following a brief discussion, the **MOTION WAS PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**