


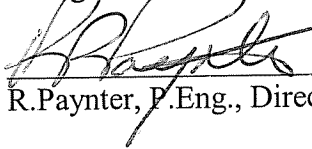
---

Halifax Regional Council  
December 10, 2002

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer

  
R. Paynter, P.Eng., Director, Public Works and Transportation

**DATE:** December 5, 2002

**SUBJECT:** **BLUEPRINT FOR A BICYCLE-FRIENDLY HRM:  
HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY BICYCLE PLAN**

---

**ORIGIN**

Transportation Demand Management Program approved in the 2001-02 Capital Budget.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Regional Council adopt, in principle, the Blueprint for a Bicycle-Friendly HRM: Halifax Regional Municipality Bicycle Plan.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Bikeways Task force was established by a motion of Regional Council in 1999. The mandate of the task force is to prepare a comprehensive Cycling Transportation Strategy for Halifax Regional Municipality, by completing the following tasks:

- Develop a Bicycle Plan that identifies a staged plan of establishing a network to optimize the safety and efficiency of bicycle transportation trips.
- Establish a Financing Strategy which is not fully reliant on municipal funding
- Engage in Community Consultation and other techniques to build community involvement.
- Utilize the process as a context for research, evaluation and training on health and community development.
- Design and organize events and pilot projects to demonstrate public support and potential utilization of bicycles for transportation.

A motion was passed by the Bikeways Task Force on May 24, 2001, to develop terms of reference and issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for qualified companies to prepare the Bicycle Plan. The RFP was made public on March 6, 2002, and the contract was awarded to EDM Environmental Design and Management Ltd., in partnership with Alta Planning Ltd., on May 14, 2002.

EDM and Alta have completed the requirements of their proposal, including field research, two rounds of public consultation, and the development of their enclosed report, entitled "Blueprint For a Bicycle-Friendly HRM: Halifax Regional Municipality Bicycle Plan".

## **DISCUSSION**

When a person chooses to use a bicycle for some or all of their daily transportation, certain benefits accrue to the individual, the municipality, and society at large. A person using a bicycle for transportation gains health benefits from physical exercise, generates very little air pollution and noise, and occupies relatively little space on roadways and in parking areas. These benefits have been previously recognized by Regional Council in its decision to form the Bikeways Task Force and in its business strategy of developing alternative transportation modes. It is fully anticipated that developing alternative modes will be a key component of HRM's Regional Plan for transportation. Therefore, adoption of a bicycle plan now will achieve an early deliverable of the Regional Plan.

In their research, EDM and Alta found that a small but significant percentage of people already use a bicycle for transportation in HRM, particularly in the more densely-populated urban parts of the municipality. Experience in other North American cities has shown that more people will be encouraged to use a bicycle if bicycle-friendly streets, multi-use pathways, training and promotion programs, and bicycle parking are available. The "Blueprint For a Bicycle-Friendly HRM" outlines a plan for development of these kinds of facilities and programs.

The consultants were asked by HRM staff to focus their study on the urban core area, primarily because HRM has ownership and management of most of the roads in the urban core, so this is the zone in which HRM could act directly and effectively to improve on-road conditions for cyclists and

therefore encourage more people to use a bicycle. The urban core area also has the greatest concentration of residences and destinations within normal cycling distances, and is therefore the most feasible area for bicycle transportation for the greatest number of people. For average cyclists, the distance of a daily bicycle trip is normally between two and fifteen kilometres (each way).

Although the focus of this plan is on the urban core area, the study also identifies the need to work with the provincial government and the community trail associations to enhance cycling opportunities throughout the municipality. Trails and provincial roads in rural areas offer potential for three kinds of bicycling: transportation within smaller communities (such as trips to the library, offices, shops, or school in a town), recreational and sport riding (such as races and charitable fund-raising rides), and tourism.

In the 2003-04 Capital Budget review process, Regional Council will be presented with a proposed implementation plan for the recommendations contained in the "Blueprint For a Bicycle-Friendly HRM", staged over a number of years. Also, the proposed 2003-04 Operating Budget for Public Works and Transportation includes one new Full-Time-Equivalent position for coordination of Bicycle Plan implementation and other Transportation Demand Management tasks.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

There are no budget implications at this time. Subject to adoption of the Bicycle Plan in principle, the fiscal impacts would require consideration and approval as part of HRM's budget deliberations over the next several years.

**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**

Council may choose not to adopt the Bicycle Plan report as presented. HRM would then continue to be without an approved plan for bicycle transportation, and be missing this early deliverable of the Regional Plan.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Blueprint for a Bicycle-Friendly HRM: Halifax Regional Municipality Bicycle Plan

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: Wayne Groszko, Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator, Transportation Services (490-6993)

Report Approved by:   
Dave McCusker, Manager, Traffic and Transportation Services (490-6696)