



Dear Mayor and Councillors,

January 27, 2025

Re: Windsor Street Exchange and the Concorde Fallacy

This letter is from It's More than Buses, Walk 'n Roll Halifax, and Halifax Cycling Coalition. Together, we represent every climate-friendly mode of transportation, the top three tiers of the inverted triangle in HRM's Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) and the most affordable and equitable means of mobility.

We are writing regarding the staff report **Windsor Street Exchange Redevelopment Project: Functional Design** (Item No. 15.1.1 on Tuesday's agenda).

It is sad that staff have spent so many years developing a design that does not meet the original objectives given by Council nor the principles of the Integrated Mobility Plan. In particular, the lack of dedicated bus lanes in the northbound direction represent an utter failure. The diminishing share of costs borne by federal and provincial governments and port authority make us question why HRM priorities are not first in line.

In the recent municipal election, voters sent a very clear message that improving transit is a top priority, second only, perhaps, to the affordable housing crisis. Yet, this design stymies the plans for the Green Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route. We will never achieve a modal shift to sustainable modes of mobility unless they are made more attractive than driving a car. With induced demand, congestion will continue to get worse and the fiscal unsustainability of our city, largely caused by ballooning road maintenance costs, will only get worse. The current design dooms us to that fate.

Even the manager of the very staff responsible for this design, Mike Connors, the HRM transportation planning manager, finally acknowledged this: "We're kind of reaching a

tipping point where ... rapid transit, we think, is really going to be necessary to keep a city of our size moving with the amount of growth that we're seeing" ¹

We urge you to take one of two actions:

1. Reject the current design. Have staff develop a design that meets the original objectives including dedicated bus lanes in both directions to accommodate BRT and separated pedestrian and cycling ways. Pursue new funding through the \$3 billion per year Canada Public Transit Fund.
2. Accept the highly flawed design, but immediately launch a new project to add dedicated bus lanes and separated walking and cycling ways. Initiate property acquisition and pursue funding through the Canada Public Transit Fund. In addition, as an immediate action, ask staff to build separated walking and cycling facilities by narrowing lane widths, even though they may have to come together in pinch points. We are also attaching HCC's just-published Policy on Multiuse Pathways to help you understand why separation is so important.

We would be happy to receive any questions from you. We sympathize that you face this difficult situation brought on by years of being “stuck” on an inferior approach. It is very similar to the Concorde Fallacy.²

Respectfully submitted,



Walk 'n Roll Halifax



Halifax Cycling Coalition



It's More than Buses

¹ CBC (Jan 6, 2025): [Halifax traffic is more congested than before the pandemic — and things could get worse](#)

² [Cambridge Dictionary definition of The Concorde Fallacy](#)