



25 October 2026

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

Halifax Cycling Coalition (HCC) advocates for safer cycling in HRM and fosters a supportive cycling community.

We always welcome proper collaboration to arrive at the best possible solutions. We appreciate the staff time that has gone into careful consideration of alternatives in Appendix A and for the recognition that the alternatives represent an increased risk to Vulnerable Road Users – meaning, if adopted, we will see increased rates of road injuries and fatalities.

However, we strenuously object that [this substantive report](#) with its sweeping recommendations for novel bike facility designs came straight to Council, bypassing the Transportation Standing Committee where more diligence and public input are possible. This represents an erosion of democracy and dismantling of established norms.

The main recommendation in this report is:

“initiate functional planning for the potential alternatives to the All Ages and Abilities (AAA) bikeway network capital projects as described in the Discussion section of this report (Table 2) and, subject to Regional Council’s approval of the associated costs in the 2027/28 capital budget, return to Regional Council with a recommended approach to implementation of these alternatives;”

This omnibus recommendation discards previous careful work on base plans, bypasses necessary consultations, and presupposes that Council agrees with all the alternatives despite degradations to safety and benefits delivered to people cycling and other road users. Each alternative needs to be considered individually in a consultative process.

We are deeply concerned that the recent Road Safety report documented increasing injuries and fatalities for people walking and cycling, so Council should reject any proposal that further degrades safety summarized from the report: (— = Maintained or Similar, or Improved)

Network segment	Safety	Directness	Connectivity	Comfort
Quingate Place	Reduced	—	—	Reduced
Vernon Street	—*	—	—	Reduced
Hwy 111 on-ramp MUP	Reduced	Reduced	—	Reduced
Alderney Dr	—*	Very Reduced	Reduced	—
Cogswell St extension	Reduced	Reduced	—	Reduced
Bell Road	Reduced	Very Reduced	Reduced	Reduced

* We assert that the alternative is less safe; for Vernon due to lack of separation southbound and for Alderney because of the shared MUP in a busy environment and navigating the parking lot without protection.



Let's put this report into a financial perspective. We are looking at about \$3 million in potential annual savings (with significant safety degradations). On the other hand, the annual roads budget is about \$140 million. A 2% belt-tightening on the roads budget would produce the same savings.

In many cases, the base plans include improvements that benefit all residents. Most importantly, major corridors are the main sites for fatalities and serious injuries in crashes and bike lanes are one of the very best ways to improve safety for all road users. Many of the base plans include streetscape improvements which are included in the bike lane budget but would be foregone in the alternative.

The report raises another risk:

"Risk related to non-AAA alternatives and the IMP objective to attract the widest possible range of users by building a network designed for all ages and abilities. To attract new "interested but concerned" riders, cycling infrastructure **must feel safe in addition to providing measurable safety benefits**. The risk of failing to accommodate users of all ages and abilities can best be mitigated by building a convenient network of bikeways **that meet AAA design criteria.**" *[our emphases]*

"Interested but concerned riders" are about 60% of the population – failing to attract them misses the point of the modal shift objective and thus fails to achieve sustainability and reduce road congestion.

On University Ave specifically, from the report:

"Interest holders included: IWK Health Centre, QEII Health Sciences Centre (Victoria General (VG) site), Nova Scotia Health, Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University, Halifax Port Authority, PSA Halifax, Emergency Medical Care Inc., Spring Garden Area Business Association, Downtown Halifax Business Commission, HRM Traffic & Road Safety, and Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency"

We are appalled that this consultation did not include a single public group representing the people who will use the facility, as if we have no "interest" in this!

We have raised concerns with due process, compromised safety, neglected benefits to all road users, comparatively negligible budget impact, lack of consultation, and failure to achieve modal shift. We also question whether violations of the recently renewed Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) should be allowed to stand. We are always open to proper consultations but we urge Council to reject the main recommendation as stated.

Sincerely,

David Trueman, Chair, HCC

APPENDIX – Initial Feedback

This is preliminary feedback, given that we have had only a few days to consider and respond to the report. This Feedback should not be treated as a substitute for proper public and stakeholder consultation.

1. Quingate Place and Vernon Street

These alternatives are assessed as a single, continuous section of the active transportation (AT) network because most cyclists travel in both directions between Vernon Street and Quingate Place, crossing Quinpool Road at the intersection.

The proposed Quingate Place and Vernon Street alternatives receive a rating of Good (Acceptable) for northbound travel but Bad (Unsafe) for southbound travel.

The Quingate Place alternative provides physical separation for northbound cyclists using flex bollards. Although this offers less protection than a raised separation, it reduces cyclists' exposure to moving vehicles.

Southbound cyclists on Quingate Place must continue to share a lane with motor traffic. This arrangement creates an unsafe and uncomfortable cycling environment, particularly for less confident cyclists. Southbound cyclists also lack a protected approach to the intersection with Quinpool Road. After crossing Quinpool Road, they must continue to share a lane with high volumes of motor traffic on Vernon Street between Quinpool Road and Pepperell Street.

Consequently, cyclists using Quingate Place and Vernon Street would encounter inconsistent levels of safety and comfort along the route. They would have to transition between protected lanes and mixed traffic and navigate an awkward intersection crossing, forcing them to repeatedly reassess traffic risks. This undermines the overall safety and usability of the route.

Safe intersection treatments are essential. The staff report identifies potential safety improvements at the Vernon Street–Quinpool Road intersection, including a leading bicycle interval and a prohibition on northbound right turns on red from Vernon Street. These treatments should be treated as necessary rather than optional. In addition, the design should prohibit eastbound traffic on Quinpool Road from making right turns on red at Vernon Street in order to provide protection for southbound cyclists who must share the high volume traffic lane on Vernon Street between Quinpool Road and Pepperell Street.

Maintain the Quingate Place Base Case and implement safety improvements at the Vernon Street–Quinpool Road intersection, including: a leading bicycle interval; a prohibition on northbound right turns on red from Vernon Street; and, a prohibition on southbound right turns on red from Quinpool Road.



2. Hwy 111 on-ramp MUP

The upgrade to the sidewalk along the 111 to a MUP has the section being raised and a tree line to provide proper separation and a beautified connection between Shubie Park and Lake Banook Trail.

This alternative does offer a connection to Mic Mac Mall, but this was already included in the designs from our understanding. It is also unclear how the local street bikeway will be implemented on Brookdale Crescent at the signalized intersection at Mic Mac Boulevard. The assumption is that the local street bikeway on Brookdale Court would become a MUP on Brookdale Crescent merging with the proposed MUP on Mic Mac Boulevard. The length of the two MUPs would be over 200m, the same length as the MUP currently proposed along Highway 111.

The Good

- Street calming from the Local Street Bikeway on Brookdale Court
- Continues to have MUP connecting from Shubie Park to Mic Mac Mall

The Bad

- The sidewalk along 111 remains uninviting, loud, and dangerous
- Prone to future development
- Unclear on infrastructure on Brookdale Crescent, especially around intersection

The Ugly

- A more direct route to the Shubie Trail and improvements to the current sidewalk along the 111 are scrapped
- The connection to Mic Mac Mall is still a pathway to a parking lot for people walking and cycling with little protection.

3. Alderney Dr / Ochterloney St

While the proposed amendment has positive elements the alternative is less safe and the circuitous route is ultimately self-defeating. Avoiding tree removal in the Dartmouth Commons and the incline on Wyse is desirable and suggests the original design can be improved. However, the new route towards Alderney Landing is unintuitive and indirect which will ultimately limit its use. Rather than continuing towards downtown Dartmouth via existing infrastructure, cyclists will either need to double back under the MacDonald Bridge or cycle away from their destination when approaching from the Dartmouth Commons. Safety will also be significantly impacted by unavoidable pedestrian and automobile conflicts along the MUP and in the Alderney Landing parking lot. **The combination of unsafe conflict near Alderney Landing and increased route length compromise the alternative design and significantly reduce its benefits.**

The Good



- Reduce impacts to Dartmouth Commons
- Increased cycling lane length
- More even grading

The Bad

- Cyclists mixed with pedestrians on busy MUP – see [HCC Position Statement on urban MUPs](#)
- Potential land acquisition adds timeline uncertainty

The Ugly

- Significant route length increase, unlikely to be used
- Cycling through parking lot is unsafe, direct conflict with cars

4. Bell Road

The originally planned base case for Bell Road was permanent one way raised protected bikeways along both sides of Bell Rd between Summer and South Park with intersection improvements at Ahern. Two alternatives are proposed in this report - 1. Keeping Bell Rd as it currently is with seasonal temporary bollard protected lanes or 2. Bollard protected bike lanes along Summer and Sackville (with the removal of 48 parking spots, some being handicapped parking, and also amounting to a *significant ongoing, yearly revenue loss*, in an exercise that purports to be trying to save dollars).

The base case of Bell Rd with permanent (not seasonal), protected, and raised (or on road), offers the *most safety, comfort and direct convenience*.

The Good

Bell Rd is direct and if set up as permanent (not seasonal), protected, and raised (or on road), it offers the most safety, comfort and direct convenience; Intersection improvements at Ahern will reduce risk of vehicle / bicycle collisions; Removing parking on Summer and Sackville to put it on-street, bollard protected bike lanes might be a network first, to prioritize bikeways over parking in such a busy zone that contains the Hospital, a Museum, Public Gardens and Wanderers Grounds.

The Bad

Summer Street has multiple hospital and museum high traffic entranceways and exits; There is a potential slip lane conflict at the junction of Veterans Memorial lane and the alternative bike lane along Summer, unless it is redesigned / removed at potentially considerable cost; Sackville Street has the Wanderers Grounds that likely has a large stadium expansion planned with associated high levels of traffic and entrance / exits to the grounds. In essence, this means the Summer / Sackville alternative is a less predictable, high traffic zone that is less safe, less comfortable and less convenient / direct.



The Ugly

The alternative Bell Rd option to continue as an inconsistent, extremely narrow in parts, seasonal only, bollard protected set of bike lanes leaves bicyclists unprotected and completely unsafe for many months of the year; The lack of consistent / permanent bollard protection will also result in less than intended use of these bike lanes due to the yearly uncertainty of when the bollards get fully reinstalled on a high volume truck and traffic route.

5. Cogswell Street Raised Two-Way Bikeway Extension

The base case is superior, although it is unclear why the two way bike lane would not be 3m on this wide street. Bike lanes should also exist on Brunswick Street between Cogswell and North Streets as a more direct route for people accessing the bridge from downtown. The loss of directness in the base case from the waterfront up to the Commons is a major gap in the cycling network. The alternative proposed does not even include any cycling infrastructure on Nora Bernard St - it simply “assumes” that this will be built at some future date.

The Good

- Extension of the ‘AAA’ bikeway from Cogswell to Nora Bernard St on Brunswick
- 28 parking spaces would be lost on Brunswick encouraging modal shift

The Bad

- No plans for bikeways on Nora Bernard street exist at present
- States that if there were a bike lane on Nora Bernard Street from Brunswick to North Park Street it would not be ‘AAA’ - “**Assumes** a bikeway would be built on Nora Bernard Street between Brunswick Street and North Park Street. There is insufficient space to accommodate a separated bikeway in both directions, so the facility would not meet AAA standards” [our emphasis].
- The two way bikeway is inexplicably less than the standard of 3m width
- The directness of the route for cyclists coming from the Cogswell exchange up Cogswell to the Halifax Commons and the bike infrastructure on North Park is very reduced, especially for people looking to travel southwards on the Ahern or Trollope Street MUPs

The Ugly

- Nora Bernard street has a high gradient from Brunswick to Gottingen Street



University Avenue Bikeway

This project replaces an already existing on-street flex-bollard protected bike lane between Robie and Le Marchant Streets (with gaps for delivery trucks) with a raised bikeway along the median. Instead of using the existing road space dedicated to the parking lane between South Park Street and Robie Street, the project embarks on a major road redesign, which escalates the costs and takes away scarce green space.

The Unknown

- There will be road space gained from the removal of the existing on-street bike lane. Will that space be converted into parking spaces? If so, this appears more like a parking lane project than a bike lane project.

The Good

- The proposed bikeway along the median avoids driveways and, with new design features, Seymour and Edward Street intersection crossings.
- Street calming measures will allow confident cyclists and many e-scooters to use the existing lanes for more convenient journeys.

The Bad

- Four bikeway stop controls between Henry Street and Cathedral Lane (within 750m) degrades journey quality relative alternatives including the existing design
- Takes away scarce green space, instead of using existing road space
- Potential pedestrian-cyclist conflict points at three major plazas
- The bikeway weaves through the median for no obvious reason
- Robie Street traffic signal bicycle phase will likely privilege vehicles over cyclists

The Ugly

- Abrupt bikeway start and end points at Le Marchant St and Cathedral Lane are recipes for disaster for people cycling with dangerous vehicle-cyclist conflicts disqualify these segments from 'AAA' ("shared cycling lane" is wordsmithing, meaning "ride in traffic at your own risk")
- Estimated design costs (\$625,000) and construction costs (\$3.5 million) are unjustifiable for 850m of paving, new traffic signal, and closure of two median openings
- The bidirectional bikeway on north side of University Avenue would have saved \$2 million (staff estimates) but this option was not recommended by staff for unknown reasons