



# District 17 Purcell's Cove - Armdale



### How to Contact Me

Linda Mosher, Councillor - District 17  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
Post Office Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3A5

Councillor's Office ..... 490-4050  
Home Office ..... 477-8618  
Cell Phone ..... 476-4117  
Fax ..... 479-4680  
City Hall Fax..... 490-4122  
E-mail .....mosherl@halifax.ca  
HRM Customer Service Centre ..... 490-4000

### Service Enhancement

## Weekly Green Cart Pick-Up

July 2 - Sept 3, 2004  
Inclusive

### Dear Residents

As I promised in my last issue of the Mosher Report, this newsletter will focus on traffic. In our district, traffic has increased at the Armdale Rotary and in many other areas. This traffic is not so much a result of development within our district, but a result of development outside the urban core of HRM. Since the Armdale Rotary is already at capacity, the slow downs are much more noticeable and frequent. I have heard the opinions and concerns from many residents on improving the rotary. After working on this issue for almost four years, I am pleased to highlight in this newsletter the proposed improvements that are currently planned. I have also included other traffic improvements that will be underway in our district in the near future.

I hope everyone has a great Summer!

### Traffic Congestion Coming Onto the Peninsula

HRM is in the midst of a Regional Planning Process, which was initiated in 2002, but will not be completed until 2005. However, we do not need years of study to tell us that the Armdale Rotary and arterials leading to the Peninsula require immediate measures to reduce traffic congestion. I, therefore, raised the issue at Council so we would not have to wait years for resolution to the Armdale Rotary traffic problem. Regional Council endorsed my request to address transportation issues in advance of the delivery of the final Regional Plan.

A comprehensive regional transportation plan will be finished within the next year. This plan will provide direction on any major, future undertakings in terms of roadway projects or transit network expansion. Over the past two years, HRM has completed local projects to improve flow. Examples near our area would be Connaught Avenue double left turning at Quinpool Road and signal control of pedestrian crosswalks on Quinpool Road.

In anticipation of receiving federal assistance for transportation projects, several other projects have been readied for implementation. One such project is a modifica

*Traffic Congestion continued from page 1*

tion to the Armdale Rotary and Chebucto Road. In this project, the rotary will be converted to the design and operating rules of a 'modern roundabout.' The other part of the project is to convert Chebucto Road so that it will have a reversing center lane similar to the section of Herring Cove Road coming up from the Rotary. To make this work effectively, the Mumford/Chebucto intersection will be modified to allow two lanes of traffic through the intersection in both directions. What this means to the Armdale Rotary is that we will essentially gain an additional lane. In the morning, Chebucto Road will be two lanes inbound and reverse to two lanes outbound during the busy afternoon commute.

## Traffic Lights at Springvale Avenue Approved

New development in the Fairmount subdivision is increasing the number of vehicles in the area. The last phase of Fairmount subdivision is developing at a rapid pace and the red apartment buildings are scheduled to be torn down in August. Other factors such as increased enrollment for the schools add to the number of cars traveling throughout Fairmount subdivision.

HRM staff previously concluded that an exit to North-West Arm Drive would greatly increase short cutting traffic from other areas, through the local streets. I fully support staff's conclusion, as this exit would only exacerbate traffic congestion within the Fairmount subdivision. Therefore, this is not an option. Based on current volumes (not even including anticipated additional vehicle counts), the Traffic Authority has determined that traffic signals on Springvale Avenue at Joseph Howe Drive are warranted. These signals will be installed as soon as they are approved as part of the Regional Council's Capital Budget, which is anticipated to be April, 2005.

## Fast Ferry Project

In 1853, Joseph Purcell established a ferry from Purcell's Cove to Point Pleasant Park. Other Purcells continued this ferry until 1971. The last operator was Bill Purcell, who is depicted on the mural on Purcell's Cove Road. At the height of the Purcell ferry, four vessels were in operation, transporting 20,000 passengers a year.

The current ferry concept has evolved tremendously since Council endorsed my request to add a ferry from Purcell's Cove to downtown Halifax to the Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure application several years ago. Originally, the ferry service was to be similar to the existing Halifax-Dartmouth ferry service. It was to operate on a \* hour frequency, being a twenty five minute trip to downtown. HRM's Transportation Manager, David McCusker, quickly evolved this concept to a high-speed catamaran type ferry.

## St. Margaret's Bay Road - New Crosswalk Approved



There have been requests dating back twelve years for an additional crosswalk on the St. Margaret's Bay Road, near the Needs store or by Keating Road. These previous requests were not approved. Recently, I made another presentation to Council and requested a staff report investigating the issue of pedestrian safety in this area. I highlighted the need for this crosswalk since more elementary students from areas off the St. Margaret's Bay Road must cross this busy street to attend Springvale Elementary. Our Traffic Authority has approved a crosswalk, pending capital budget approval. Funds will be required to construct a sidewalk on the north side of the St. Margaret's Bay Road, and a slight road realignment which is needed to allow a safe landing area for those who cross. This project has been added to the capital budget request list for next year.

The vessels we are currently evaluating are 29m long high-speed catamarans. The ferries would be similar in size to our existing ferries, but most passengers would be seated. It can operate at speeds up to 30 knots, but it is planned that it will run at 26-27 knots. At that speed, it can come to a dead stop in two boat lengths. These vessels can carry between 200 and 250 seated passengers, with storage capacity of eighteen bicycles in the bow.

The evolution of high-speed, low-wake catamaran ferries for urban commuter level travel has meant that longer routes within our harbour can be serviced efficiently and reliably. The objective of the Halifax Harbour Fast Ferry Project is to develop a commuter ferry link between the

*continued on page 3*

*Fast Ferry Project continued from page 2*

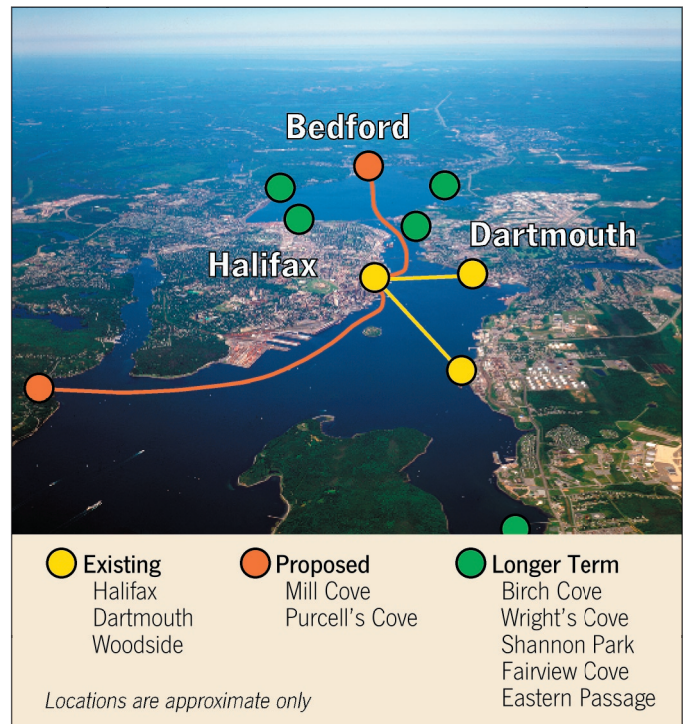
existing Downtown Halifax Ferry Terminal and Mill Cove in Bedford and secondly, Purcell's Cove in Halifax. Other areas such as Boston, San Francisco, Bermuda, New York and Australia have successful ferry services. I am confident that Halifax Regional Municipality can utilize our water courses in the same environmentally friendly manner for transportation.

The preliminary service plan being considered is for a 16 minute trip from Bedford to the downtown ferry terminal and a 10 minute trip from Purcell's Cove. A new terminal in Purcell's Cove would be similar in size to the existing bus terminal at Mumford Road. It would provide parking spaces for park-and-ride, and the bus service would be enhanced. The actual cost to ride the ferry has not been determined, but only a small premium to the regular bus fare may apply for ferry service. It will be fully integrated with the existing transit system so transfers would be applicable.

Ferries offer alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips and enhance integration with other forms of mass transportation. They reduce green house gas emissions and enhance our usage of the worlds second largest ice free natural harbour. They offer quick trip times and offer great potential to attract passengers who usually commute through the congested Armdale Rotary. What a great way to travel downtown, on a first class boat over our wonderful harbour from scenic Purcell's Cove to downtown Hali-

fax, in ten minutes! Joseph Purcell would be proud that his foresight and vision was continued to this day.

The next steps to make this ferry a reality are: market surveys to determine ridership estimates, environmental impact scoping to evaluate issues, plus facility site selection and pre-design work.



## Armdale Rotary Proposed Changes

### History

Traffic circles, or rotaries, have been documented as far back as 1905 in New York, when the first rotary was named after Christopher Columbus. These older style traffic circles were very popular until the 1950's when some of their limitations started to show. In the late '50's, the United Kingdom developed the "modern roundabout" and in 1966 made "yield at entry," also called "give way," mandatory nationwide. Since then, throughout the world, many new modern roundabouts have been developed and many older style traffic circles, or rotaries, have been changed to modern roundabouts.

HRM transportation staff have been looking at the feasibility of modifying the existing Armdale Rotary to a modern roundabout. In 2002, a local consulting firm conducted the Halifax Peninsula Traffic Capacity Opportunities Study which included an analysis of the Armdale Rotary. This

study concluded that the Armdale Rotary could operate quite well if changed to a traditional roundabout.

Recently, HRM staff attended a design course sponsored by the provincial government who brought in experts from England to teach about modern roundabouts. Prior to the arrival of the European consultants, HRM's Traffic Authority sent them detailed information including geometric and computer aided design diagrams and traffic volumes from the Armdale Rotary. The consultants also viewed the rotary while they were in Nova Scotia. Based on preliminary assessment, they have confirmed that we have the capacity to change the rotary to a modern roundabout. This analysis was based on minor modifications to the entry legs (increased entry angle) and the assumption that motorists entering the roundabout would yield to those already circulating. Further assessment is required at some of the

*continued on page 4*

*Armdale Rotary continued from page 3*

exits to ensure that they can properly remove traffic from the rotary. Computer simulations have shown a modern roundabout would decrease congestion and vehicle delay.

### What is a modern roundabout?

A modern roundabout looks very similar to the Armdale Rotary. It is a one-way circular intersection where traffic flows around a (generally) round center island. One major difference is in the rules regarding traffic flow. Drivers waiting to enter the roundabout must yield to the circulating traffic, basically waiting for a gap before entering. There is no one-on-one behaviour that often causes rotaries to slow down when one driver in the rotary allows another driver to enter (creating queues which block the exits for other vehicles). The modern roundabout allows cars to move continuously (at the same low speed, no one should have to slow down), preventing locking up at intersections.

Another major difference between rotaries and roundabouts is that roundabouts have a larger entry deflection. This requires the motorist to slow down in order to safely enter the roundabout.

Currently, the Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act regulations regarding rotaries are not clear. The Province, however, recognizes the advantages of modern roundabouts and is in the process of amending their legislation. The Province is looking at modern roundabouts in other areas of Nova Scotia and the new changes will ultimately make it illegal to stop in the rotary. If someone stopped in the rotary to let another vehicle go ahead, and an accident occurred, they would be at fault.

**Safety Data** - As we already have a defined circular rotary, it would be easier for drivers to adapt to the new rules. Roundabouts have shown to have a great reduction in motor vehicle accidents and injuries compared to previously signalized or stop signed intersections. For example, studies have shown an overall vehicular accident reduction of 39%, a 90% reduction in fatal crashes, 75% reduction in injury crashes, 30-40% reduction in pedestrian crashes and a 10% reduction in bicycle crashes.

**Costs** - It has been estimated that the entire project should be under \$2 million. This is considerably less than any other option and is the least disruptive. HRM has applied for funding under the Canada-Nova Scotia Infrastructure Act.

HRM's Traffic Authority is negotiating with a consulting firm in England to perform the final analyses and design work for the project. This firm has a great deal of experience with roundabouts, reviewing approximately 500 per

year, as well as conducting safety audits on roundabouts. The funds for this phase have already been budgeted.

### Public Information Sessions

If the final consultant report recommends changing the rotary to a modern roundabout, and we obtain funding, we would anticipate starting in early 2005. HRM's Regional Planning Transportation team and the Traffic Authority would hold information sessions for the general public and undertake a major public awareness campaign prior to any changes being implemented.

As a Councillor, I am often given suggestions about how to change the rotary to make it more effective, or am told that it functions fine so why change it? Over the years, HRM staff have assessed this issue at length. They have examined many options such as an overpass, a grade separated intersection, removing the rotary and putting in signalized intersections, bridges and tunnels.

There are many reasons why a modern roundabout is the preferred alternative over these options. To compare and contrast all options is beyond the scope and length of this newsletter, but as an example, the disadvantages of signalized intersections are: they would not necessarily offer enhanced traffic flow, they increase air and noise pollution due to increased vehicle acceleration and deceleration, they have greater accident rates versus a modern roundabout and are cost prohibitive.

Partial grade separation or "fly overs" would require a number of intersections, merging and diverging ramps, and lengthy retaining walls. Besides being cost prohibitive, this would negatively impact the aesthetics and views of the North West Arm.

Based on the extensive analysis performed by HRM staff and consultants over the years, the modern roundabout has been identified as the preferred solution for the current traffic problems of the Armdale Rotary. Assuming the consulting firm from England verifies that a modern roundabout will be an effective replacement, we will move into the implementation phase of this project.

Further information will be provided as soon as the final study is completed.



**Please  
Recycle**

#### Delivery Note:

Due to delivery routes followed by Canada Post, it is possible that some of these Newsletters may appear in other Districts. Please accept my apology for any confusion.