

Bus lane blitz: What Halifax has planned to make buses move faster in three areas

Bayers Road, Young and Robie streets and Gottingen Street are all getting transit priority measures in the coming years.



ZANE WOODFORD / METRO

A Halifax Transit Route 7 bus travels down Gottingen Street on July 20, 2017.

By: [Zane Woodford](#) Metro Published on Thu Feb 01 2018

Halifax is in the process of changing streets in three areas to make buses move faster. Both the [Moving Forward Together Plan](#), approved in 2016, and the [Integrated Mobility Plan](#), approved in 2017, recommended transit priority measures (TPMs) for the Bayers Road, Young and Robie streets and Gottingen Street.

TPMs can be bus lanes, lights to get buses through an intersection before other traffic or just signage, but these changes all involve dedicated lanes.

The municipality is at different stages of implementing TPMs in the three areas mentioned above.

Here's what's being proposed for each area.

Bayers Road

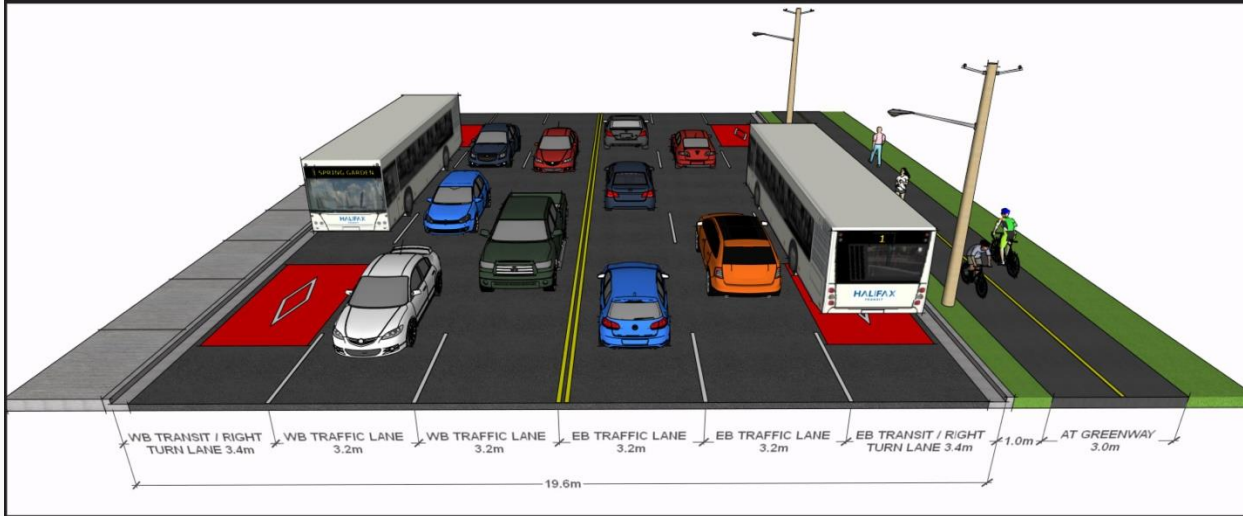
On Thursday, council's Transportation Standing Committee [approved](#) the next step for bus lanes on Bayers Road between Romans Avenue and Windsor Street.

The preliminary designs from HRM would see dedicated bus lanes along that stretch of the road, and a redesign of the intersection where vehicles enter the Halifax Shopping Centre.

The road currently has three lanes between Windsor Street and Connaught Avenue, and four lanes between the Halifax Shopping Centre and Romans Avenue.

If approved, there'd be four lanes between Windsor Street and Connaught Avenue, and the two lanes closest to the curbs would be reserved for buses or right-turning vehicles.

There'd be six lanes between the Halifax Shopping Centre and Romans Avenue, with the two lanes closest to the curbs reserved for buses or right-turning vehicles. HRM would also install a multi-use pathway for pedestrians and cyclists on the side closest to the mall.



CONTRIBUTED/HRM/WSP

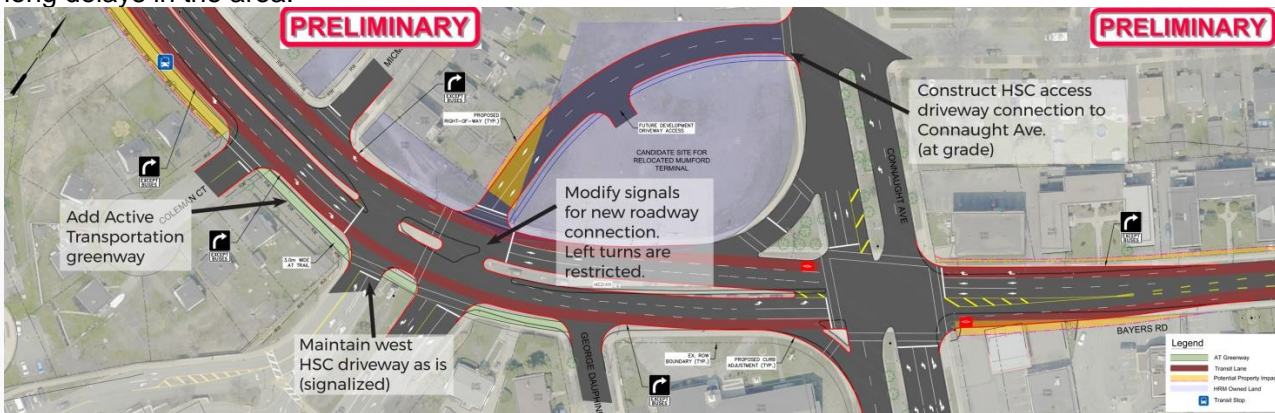
A rendering showing the preliminary design for bus lanes on Bayers Road in Halifax.

"This does go a long way to making transit a more attractive alternative," HRM transportation engineer Mike Connors told the committee on Thursday.

"This not only provides improvements in that way, but it also provides almost an advertisement for transit as people sit in traffic every day and buses whiz by them in the curb lane."

The municipality would also create a new one-way driveway for the mall, running through Bayers Road, using property it already owns at the corner of Bayers Road and Connaught Avenue.

Traffic from Bayers Road wouldn't be allowed to turn left into the mall, which was identified as a major contributor to long delays in the area.



CONTRIBUTED/HRM/WSP

A rendering showing the preliminary design of the intersection of Bayers Road and the entrance to the Halifax Shopping Centre.

HRM considered the option of building an overpass to create that driveway, but Connors said they decided it was out of character with the area and would've meant buying up more property.

After the vote on Thursday, staff will prepare a request for proposals for a detailed design, which could be done later this year. Construction could happen in 2020.

The construction cost is estimated at \$4.8 million, but that doesn't include the property HRM would need to purchase to make it happen.

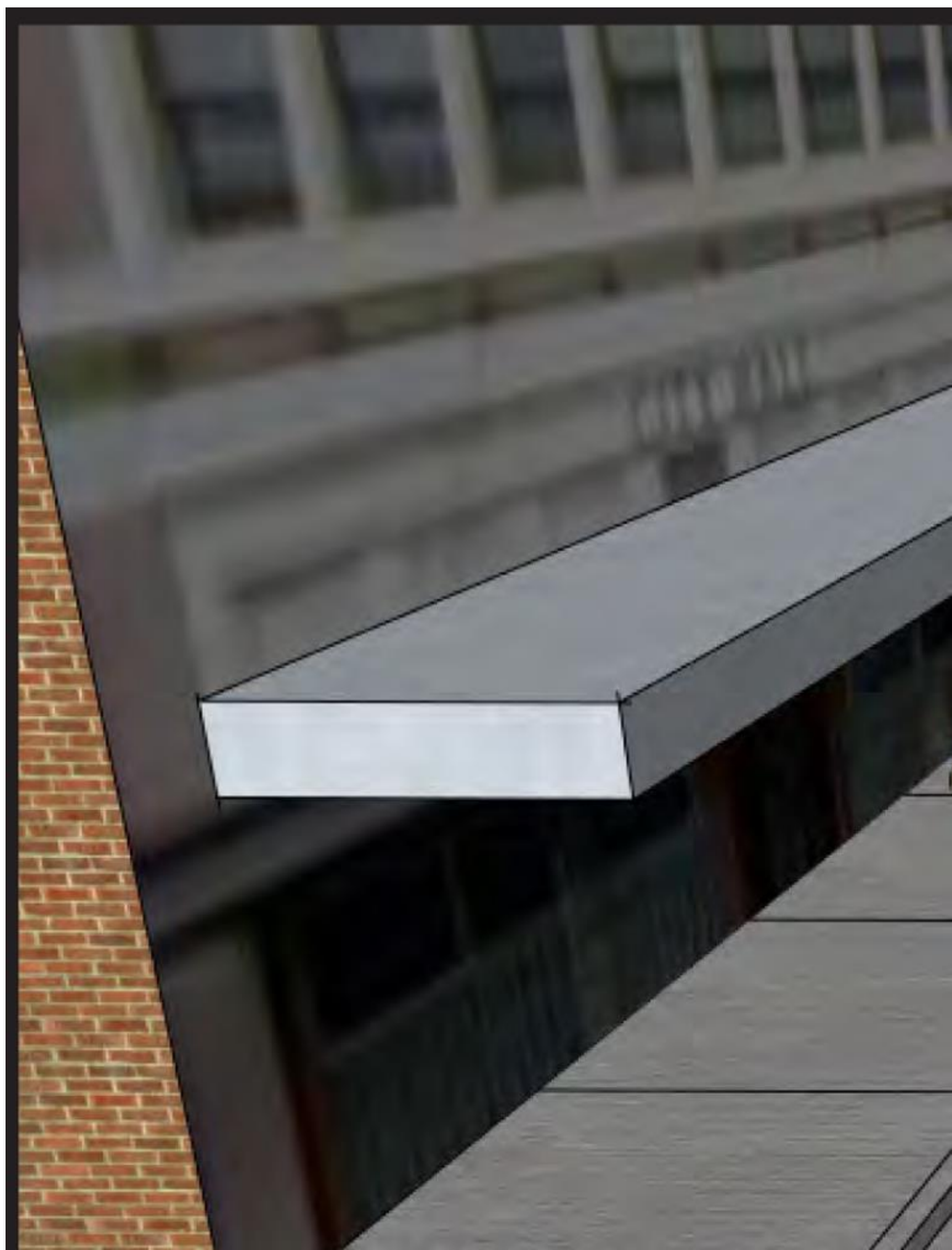
Gottingen Street

The committee agreed to defer the debate on TPMs proposed for Gottingen Street, due to a busy week for councillors, community concerns, and the absence of area Coun. Lindell Smith, who's away in the U.S.

HRM staff is proposing a continuous outbound lane for buses between Cogswell and North streets.

It would mean the loss of on-street parking in the area, and make loading difficult for local businesses.

<http://www.metronews.ca/news/halifax/2018/02/01/bus-lane-blitz-what-halifax-has-planned-to-make-buses-move-faster-in-three-areas.html>



A rendering showing the preliminary design of an outbound bus lane on Gottingen Street in Halifax.

Despite the deferral, business owners in the area came to the committee on Thursday to voice their concerns.

Edward Edelstein, a business owner and developer, told the committee that the change would be “detrimental” to businesses on Gottingen Street.

Edelstein argued the bus lane would reverse the progress made after zoning changes to allow more development in the area.

“Gottingen Street was the armpit of the city 10 years ago. It was not safe. It’s now a safe, vibrant street to walk on, and it needs support,” Edelstein told reporters after the meeting.

“Our slogan is, ‘please don’t throw Gottingen Street under the bus again.’”

The committee will debate the proposed changes at its next meeting, on Feb. 22. If it approves going to a detailed design, the project could be complete by the end of the year.

The construction cost is estimated at \$250,000.

Young and Robie streets

The municipality was scheduled to host a public meeting Thursday night on TPMs for Young Street between Windsor and Robie streets, and Robie Street between Young and Inglis streets.

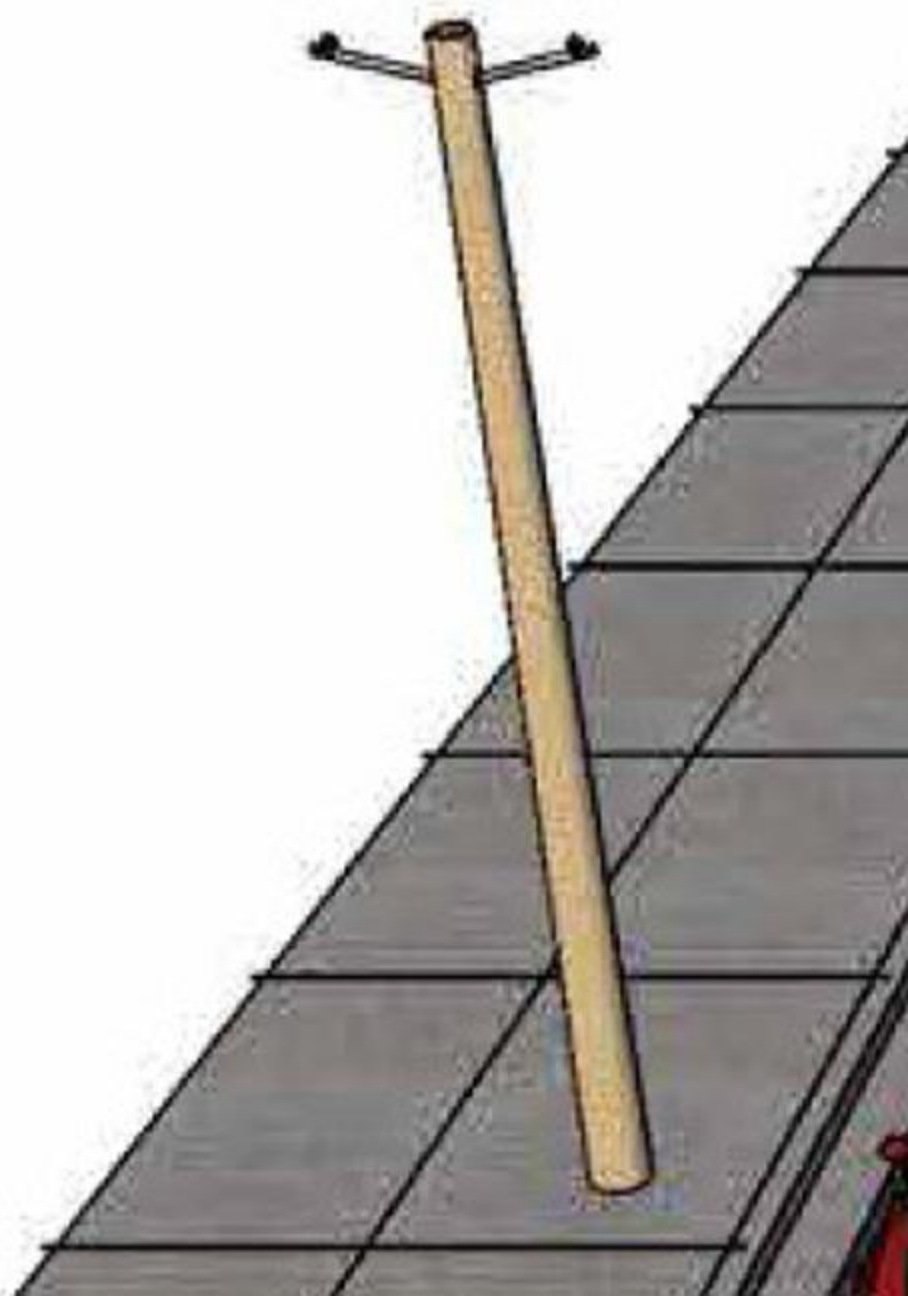
HRM is considering [varying options for bus lanes along both stretches](#).

On Young Street, those options are to install just an outbound bus lane, or inbound and outbound bus lanes, like the proposal for Bayers Road.

The proposals for Robie Street are sectioned off for each stretch of the road, and cover nearly the entire length.

The options are mostly similar: just an outbound bus lane, or inbound and outbound bus lanes closest to the curbs. But in a few areas, the bus lanes could be in the centre.

One option for the stretch between Young and Almon streets would put inbound and outbound bus lanes in the centre of the street, with a median on the outbound side.



A rendering showing the preliminary design for one option for bus lanes on Robie Street between Almon and Young streets in Halifax.

There are currently no timelines or cost estimates attached to these plans, and the municipality is looking for public feedback.

To see the plans in detail and have your say, go to shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/transit-priority-corridors.