

7. BEDFORD HIGHWAY CONNECTION - PRELIMINARY

A variety of options were considered for the connection from the COLTA and HUGA trail systems to the Bedford Highway. A number of significant constraints are present through this area including the Fairview Overpass and associated roadways, the Container Terminal truck entrance, the trackage from the CN Fairview Shops and the overall CN right of way through this area. The options included extending the trail along the Bedford Highway sidewalk (shown in blue) or adjacent to the rail tracks (shown in green, i.e. Rails with Trails). Figure 7-1 shows the area, including the primary proposed options to connect to the Bedford Highway sidewalk. A connection to the rail tracks could occur at a number of locations including: from the extension of the HUGA trail south of the CN marshalling area; in the vicinity of the Fairview interchange; or at a location closer to the container terminal. Another potential “rails with trails” option was identified as a possible extension of the Container Terminal Service Road / Seaview Park connection, though was subsequently eliminated from the analysis following discussions with HRM.

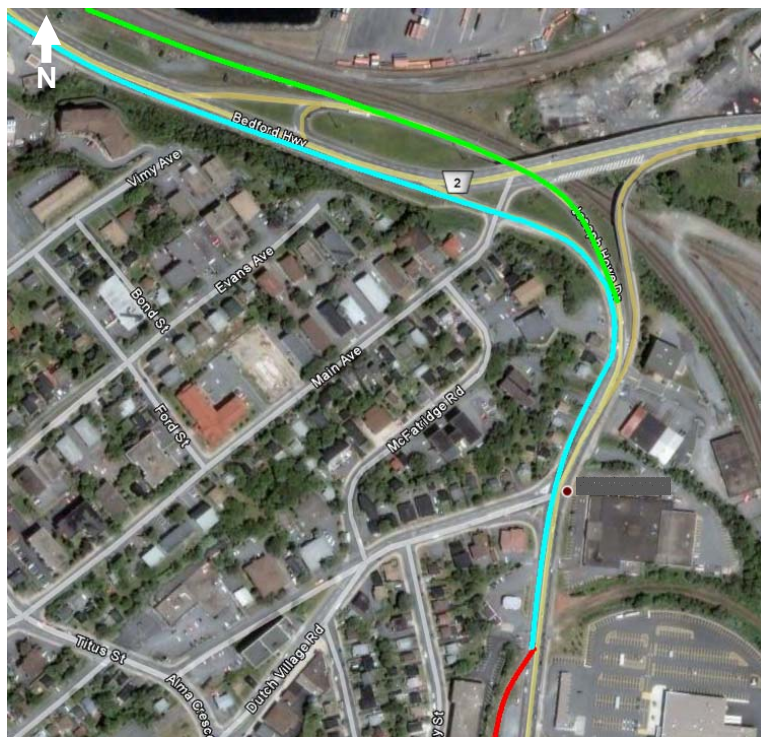


Figure 7-1: Bedford Highway Connection Options

8. BEDFORD HIGHWAY CONNECTION – FUNCTIONAL DESIGN

Through various discussions and meetings with HRM, it was determined that the preferred alternative to pursue for the purposes of this study was the direct connection of the COLTA trail to the existing sidewalk on Bedford Highway with upgrading wherever possible to a full multiuse trail width.

Functional design drawings are provided in Appendix F and described in the following sections.

8.1 SCOT STREET TO MAIN AVENUE

Following the connection to the HUGA trail which initiates at Scot Street, the COLTA trail continues to the north towards the Fairview Interchange crossing a number of commercial driveways and the busy Dutch Village Road intersection. The current COLTA trail terminates near the bus stop location and connects to the existing concrete sidewalk between the main Atlantic Superstore driveway and the Petro Canada gas station on the west side of Joseph Howe Drive. The existing sidewalk varies in cross section and is located directly on the back of curb.

It is recommended that the full 3 metre wide trail be continued along this section of roadway and that some separation of the trail from the edge of road be included. A number of other upgrades will also be required between this connection and Dutch Village Road including limiting the width of existing driveways to the gas station and providing improved refuge areas between adjacent driveways. Appropriate access management principles should be applied throughout this section of roadway during the detailed design stages of this project.

The crossing of Dutch Village Road is presently approximately 20 metres in length. A raised island is present in the southwest quadrant of the intersection which provides pedestrian refuge. The northwest quadrant currently contains a small painted island has a large radius, high speed right turn channelized lane. It is recommended that this quadrant of the intersection be upgraded to include a larger raised island for pedestrian refuge and reconfiguration of the right turn lane to promote slower right turn movements and improved Active Transportation crossing characteristics. The intersection should also be reviewed from a safety perspective to identify issues which increase risks for both vulnerable road users and vehicles to promote a higher level of safety performance. Challenges for detailed design will include the approach grades and skew angles of the intersections.

North of the Dutch Village Road intersection, the trail will pass in front of a number of older residential properties, some of which are in relatively close proximity to the roadway and existing sidewalk. That said, there appears to be adequate space to accommodate a 3 metre AT trail including a boulevard separation from the roadway. Key challenges in this area will include a number of utility poles which may have to be relocated and the large overhead traffic signs just south of the Fairview interchange. The widened trail will likely require acquisition of some

property from three or four residential properties near the Interchange, though the widened trail will have minimal impacts to the overall property as grades are relatively flat and there are no significant landscaped features adjacent to the current sidewalk.

Between these residential properties and Main Avenue, there is ample space to provide a wider AT trail, though some modifications to existing fencing and guide rail will be required. Minor upgrades to the AT crossings at Main Street should be implemented including the continuation of the trail to the west along the Bedford Highway, as well as the connection over the Kempt Road off ramp which connects to the existing sidewalk over the Fairview interchange and towards the Windsor Street Exchange. This route has the potential to reconnect to the previously identified AT trail connection to the Seaview Memorial Park.

8.2 MAIN AVENUE TO BEDFORD HIGHWAY

The first approximately 140 metres west of Main Avenue has ample space to upgrade the trail to a full 3 metre AT width. The following 200 – 250 metres of the trail would be impeded by a large overhead sign structure across the Bedford Highway, and a rock face adjacent to the south side of the sidewalk. While there appears to be space between the existing rock face and the curb line of the roadway, implementation of the trail through this areas would likely require the relocation or underground accommodate a series of overhead utilities, relocation of some advertising signage and construction of retaining walls. Careful consideration and accommodation of drainage that is currently present adjacent to the roadway and that currently comes down the front of the rock face is required.