



May 23, 2017

Mike Anderson  
Transportation Planning & Design Lead  
Arbutus Greenway Project Office  
City of Vancouver

Re: Recommendations for Improvements to the Arbutus Greenway

Dear Mike;

HUB Cycling is a charitable organization that works to make cycling better through education, events and collaboration. We are Metro Vancouver's leader in making cycling an attractive choice for everyone. We are writing with suggestions for the temporary path along the Arbutus Greenway, and ideas that could be incorporated in the permanent path when it is built.

## Overview

Two inspection rides were recently undertaken by HUB Cycling members, on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Both groups rode the entire length of the corridor. Some general comments:

- The Arbutus Greenway is an incredible addition to the greenway and cycling networks in Vancouver. The potential is huge to create a world class greenway.
- Since undertaking the rides, we understand that the City will continue to upgrade the greenway over the coming months. We look forward to:
  - Traffic lights at Burrard (now activated)
  - Traffic lights at the path alignment at Broadway, 12<sup>th</sup>, and Marine Drive
  - Signed temporary routing to the Seawall along Pine Street
  - A safer crossing at 41<sup>st</sup>, understood to potentially be a crosswalk on the west side of the East Blvd intersection
  - Improved curb cuts/dropdowns at many street crossing locations
  - More paint to highlight conflict areas, as soon as the weather improves.

We highlight here the most dangerous situations which we encountered.

- Now, there are stop signs for motor vehicles at many of the local street crossings, but the set up at many, involving jersey barriers blocking the Greenway, signals the opposite right-of-way.
- At crossings of quieter roads and lanes where greenway users are given the right-of-way, we would like to see raised crossings to make the right-of-way clear by design.

This would be especially important for the permanent design of the greenway, but trials of this treatment would be welcome as soon as possible.

- Crossings at collectors and arterials direct Greenway users to existing crosswalks at the corners. We understand that the design of these crossings presents challenges, but we feel that the current design means that Greenway users and turning drivers are less visible to each other than they would be if the Greenway continued straight. If the Greenway continued straight, drivers and Greenway users would be at right angles to each other before they crossed paths. Drivers would already have completed any turning movements where they are looking out for motor vehicle traffic. Allowing Greenway users to proceed straight across a street would provide setback space between Greenway users and drivers and create a refuge space for vehicles to stop outside of the traffic stream on Arbutus or East or West Boulevard. These elements are typical of safer Dutch intersection designs. There may also be opportunities to include protected intersections for greater safety at many of these points.
- Some sections of the Greenway pavement have temporary markings which we assume indicate the locations for median cut-outs. If so, the cut-outs will narrow each side of the path to the point where safety is impaired. Some sections only appear to allow about 2.5 m for a two-way cycle path which is inadequate, even for a temporary path.

## Fir to Broadway

We note that when we conducted our assessment rides, the section from Fir to Broadway was still a work in progress.

- The intersection designs appeared to be reasonable.
- The 6<sup>th</sup> Ave crossing should be marked with stop signs or yield signs.
- We observed cars parked along the street crossing the Greenway at 8th Avenue, blocking the Greenway. Better signage and enforcement is required. A raised crossing would help signal that such locations are not parking zones.

## Broadway to 16th

- This section includes frequent crossings of quieter roads and lanes – every half block. The current intersection design includes jersey barriers across the Greenway and signals that users do not have the right of way. Raised crossings would make the right-of-way clear by design.
- An urgent issue is that the right of way rules at laneway crossings are not clear. At a minimum, we suggest yield signs for traffic using the lanes. Also, sightlines at some crossings are blocked by trees and shrubbery, which should be trimmed back or removed.

## 16th to 33rd

- The crossing of 16<sup>th</sup> has some safety issues regarding turning vehicle traffic.
- The crossing of King Edward is problematic due to turning vehicle traffic.

- We suggest considering the creation of connecting paths between the greenway and parallel streets (East Blvd, Maple Crescent, Pine Crescent) so that they can be used as bypass routes for faster cyclists.

### 33rd to 41st

- The crossing at 33<sup>d</sup> has a marked crosswalk for pedestrian traffic but not for cycling traffic. This creates a situation where confusion easily reigns on all sides. We suggest that cycling traffic also be given a marked crossing and yield signs be put in place for 33rd Ave traffic.
- The crossing of 37<sup>th</sup> has issues with turning traffic. A better option would be to have the path go straight across 37<sup>th</sup>. A safe crossing of 37<sup>th</sup> could be created by use of stop signs, yield signs or by adding push button controlled pedestrian/cycle traffic lights. We note that motor vehicle traffic was obliged to stop at the tracks for many years, even though no trains were operating on the line. Surely, we could create a similarly safe crossing for people using the greenway.

### 41st to 49th

- We look forward to a marked crosswalk on the west side of the intersection with East Blvd. For the permanent path, consideration should be given to an underpass or direct crossing which is protected by traffic lights.
- The 45<sup>th</sup> Ave crossing is very problematic. Forcing people on bikes to cross at the 4-way stop introduces complexity and safety issues. Ramps direct users into the intersection at either East or West Blvd and are particularly hazardous for wheelchairs and those using mobility scooters. We feel that a direct crossing would prove to be much safer and more convenient. A crossing within the path alignment would be like Dutch style intersections and would improve driver visibility and reaction time.

### 49th to Marine

- The crossing of 49<sup>th</sup> Ave is problematic but this also appears to be a work in progress. The permanent path should have a direct crossing.
- The crossing of 57<sup>th</sup> Ave is unnecessarily unsafe and inconvenient. As with the intersection at 45<sup>th</sup> Ave we suggest a direct crossing with yield signs for 57<sup>th</sup> Ave traffic.
- The crossing at 64<sup>th</sup> Ave is very good. We look forward to crosswalk markings and a green carpet. This could be a model for other crossings at quiet streets.

### Marine Drive to Milton

- The crossing at Marine Drive should be addressed urgently. We witnessed a near crash between a cyclist going down the hill in the bike lane and people who were preparing to cross at the nearby traffic light. People should be alerted to the hazard.
- We look forward to a crossing that is traffic light protected at this location

- We look forward to an extension along the 75<sup>th</sup> Ave alignment. Ideally, a path would be constructed adjacent to the railway right-of-way.

We understand that this project is moving quickly, and would like to congratulate the City and the Arbutus Greenway project team for the progress to date. Some of the items noted above may have been addressed by this time. A few of them are marked as urgent, and we urge you to prioritize these intersections.

Thank you for considering these ideas. They address issues we have observed in many trips along the Greenway, and which have been made even more critical by the completion of the paving of the temporary path along the Greenway. We are very happy to see the high number of users on the new temporary path, but want to make the route as safe as possible for them. We would be pleased to meet and discuss the above at your convenience.

Sincerely,

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HUB Cycling

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