



December 21, 2016

Jennifer Locke, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

**Re: HUB Cycling submission concerning the Brunette Interchange Project**

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 have over 32,000 contacts and ten active local committees across the region, including in New Westminister and Coquitlam.

We would like to take this opportunity to provide input to the public consultation process relating to the Brunette Interchange Project (the "Project"). Our comments are based on information gathered from the Project website, the open houses held on December 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, and meetings with representatives of the City of New Westminister, the City of Coquitlam, Translink and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure ("MoTI"). The purpose of this letter is to provide you with context on the cycling routes related to the Project and guiding principles that we recommend following for project planning.

**Cycling Routes**

The immediate and surrounding areas of the Project contain a number of regionally significant cycling routes that should be maintained and upgraded as part of the Project.

- **Braid Crossing:** the cycling route along Braid Street between United Boulevard and Braid Station is a vital connection that needs to be maintained and upgraded. In particular, the Project must ensure that the crossings of the railroad and Brunette Avenue are addressed.
- **Connecting Brunette-Fraser Greenway to Lougheed Highway:** cycling infrastructure between Braid Station and Lougheed Highway needs to be built to create a connection between Braid Station and Maillardville.
- **Connecting the Port Mann Bridge and Central Valley Greenway (CVG):** a major gap in cycling infrastructure exists along United Boulevard between King Edwards Street and Fawcett Road. Filling this gap would connect communities near the project area to Port Coquitlam and existing infrastructure on the Port Mann Bridge, and facilitate active transportation in the region. This gap could also be filled by building new cycling highways as outlined below.
- **Connecting Coquitlam routes (via Braid Station) to Royal Columbian Hospital/CVG (Cumberland Street):** the current route is indirect and requires climbing significant hills. Cycling infrastructure along Brunette Avenue is needed to produce a more efficient route.

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- **Lougheed Highway:** any new infrastructure should support and improve the existing cycling infrastructure along Lougheed Highway.
- **Connecting Braid Street to New Westminster Waterfront Greenway:** The City of New Westminster’s Waterfront Vision foresees a continuous waterfront experience along the Fraser River from the New Westminster Quay to the mouth of the Brunette River. The Project should support this vision by supporting the connection between the Brunette-Fraser Greenway (Braid Street) and Sapperton Landing Park.
- **Cycling Highways<sup>1</sup>:** the Project provides an opportunity to create fast and efficient cycling highways along the south side of Highway 1 between Fawcett Road and North Road. These routes would greatly improve cycling connections, especially between the CVG and the Port Mann Bridge/Mary Hill Bypass/Poco Trail, and promote active transportation in the region.

Enclosed with this letter is a file in KMZ format, which can be used to populate a map in Google Maps to illustrate the routes outlined above.

### Guiding Principles

The Project Discussion Guide issued by MoTI states that one of the project goals is to “support cyclists and pedestrians crossing the highway”, and “improve access to Braid Street Skytrain station and between regional greenways.” To achieve this goal, we recommend that the Project planners adhere to the following guiding principles:

- Cycling infrastructure should be fit for use by people of all ages and abilities. This requires building cycling infrastructure that is separated from motor vehicle traffic, and avoids inserting the rider into dangerous situations. This includes, but is not limited to, building intersections, crossings and ramps that avoid potential conflicts with motor vehicles and pedestrians. Intersections are the most dangerous crash location for vulnerable road users, and should be minimized wherever possible.<sup>2</sup>
- All new cycling routes should be designed to make connections faster and more efficient. Cyclists are less likely to use routes if they are slow and inefficient, and do not provide direct travel from one desired location to another.

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<sup>1</sup> Cycling highway: a continuous paved path separated from pedestrians and motor vehicles and reserved for cycling. It is designed with adequate widths and curve radii, lighting and minimized stops and intersections, as well as grade-separated crossings of major roads to facilitate safe and efficient medium distance (5-20+ km) trips by bike.

<sup>2</sup> “Comparing the effects of infrastructure on bicycling injury at intersections and non-intersections using a case-crossover design” – Harris et al, 2012.



- MoTI should consider what impact closing the at-grade rail crossings at Braid Street, Spruce Street and Cumberland Street will have on existing and potential cycling routes in the area. Mitigating measures need to be implemented to ensure the closures do not impede cycling connections, and that such measures provide fast and efficient travel. In particular, under/overpasses should minimize gradient descent/ascent and have direct connections to cycling routes.
- All cycling infrastructure should create and facilitate connections to existing and planned cycling routes.
- Any new overpass should not preclude the adequate width to provide a protected bike lane on both sides of Loughheed Highway.
- MoTI should actively engage and retain cycling infrastructure experts to ensure cycling issues are fully incorporated into the project plans.
- Cycling infrastructure should be incorporated during the early planning stages in order to contribute maximally to the Project's overall success.
- MoTI should consider how the Project will increase traffic volumes on New Westminster streets, and the effects such increased volumes will have on the safety and accessibility of on-street cycling routes in the area.

### **Conclusion**

HUB Cycling supports the goals of increasing active transportation modes, and providing improved connectivity in the Project area. We are confident that if MoTI adheres to the guiding principles above, the Project will be successful in achieving these goals. As the Project progresses and more detailed plans are developed, we would appreciate the opportunity to provide you with more feedback on specific elements that involve cycling issues. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to us if we can provide any information or assistance to help move towards our shared goals.

Sincerely,

Morgan Maguire  
Chair of HUB Cycling's Brunette Working Group