



HUB Submission to Sunset Park Master Plan Process

Dec 22, 2014

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 would like to take this opportunity to provide input to the Sunset Park Master Plan process and to request that HUB Cycling be included on the list of stakeholders for consultation for the remainder of the process.

Background

Currently, Sunset Park, and key destinations within it such as the community centre and ice rink are very car oriented and not very welcoming to those arriving by bicycle or on foot. For example, this is what pedestrians, cyclists and transit users see when they wish to cross Main Street in front of the Community Centre:



We are happy that Park Board and City of Vancouver are looking at ways of improving Sunset Park. Making this area more cycling and pedestrian friendly will reduce the need for more parking and will encourage nearby residents to walk, cycle and take transit to the Sunset Community Centre. Adding a car-free connection between the two sections of park across Prince Edward Street will make the street much safer for cyclists and pedestrians. This master plan process is a great opportunity for creating safe walking and cycling routes to John Hendry Elementary School. All these improvements will help Park Board achieve its environmental and recreational goals as outlined in its Park Board Strategic Framework. In addition, improved pedestrian and cycling access will enable the community to access Sunset Park in a more equitable fashion using a variety of modes. Finally, these improvements will help Vancouver achieve its Greenest City goals.



Specific feedback to Master Plan options

- We really like the proposed upgrade of Prince Edward Street to walking/cycling only between the 52nd Ave alignment and 53rd Ave. This upgrade will improve cycling safety on Prince Edward Street bikeway and it will serve to connect the two sections of Sunset Park.
- We like the concept of a relatively direct walking path between the school and community centre along the 52nd Ave alignment.
- We urge you to take this opportunity to encourage more active and emissions free travel to and within the park by adding a bike path in addition to the proposed east-west walking path. Creating separate spaces for the two modes is important for safety and comfort, as they are moving at significantly different speeds.
- We like scenario 4 since it places the parking lot in a place where it does not divide park spaces and it provides increased safety for all park users. Motor vehicle parking space can be reduced if safe walking and cycling access to the community centre is provided, which provides cost and space savings.

Additional feedback

- A signalized pedestrian/bike crossing of Main Street at 52nd would create a safe and direct walking/cycling route from the Ontario Street greenway and would create improved access to the community centre from the west side of Main Street. A signalized crossing would also be safer for those who arrive by bus. The proposed walking and cycling paths between the community centre and the school should connect to the crossing of Main Street in front of the community centre.
- We encourage adequate numbers of bike racks at both entrances to the Community Centre as well as at the skating rink. We further encourage the provision of secure bike parking to further encourage travel to the park facilities by bike.

Conclusion

City of Vancouver transportation policy states that pedestrians and cyclists have the highest priority. Encouraging more cycling to and in city parks also meets Park Board goals of enhancing the environment, ultimately preserving green space and encouraging a very popular and accessible form of family recreation. The City of Vancouver has a bold plan to make Vancouver the greenest city on earth by 2020. These goals can be more easily achieved by encouraging more people to walk and cycle to community centres and to and within parks. This will only happen when access to community centres like Sunset Park Community Centre and to and within parks like Sunset Park is made safe, convenient and welcoming for pedestrians and cyclists.

HUB Cycling would be pleased to discuss any of our recommendations further. Please be in touch with Arno Schortinghuis at arno@telus.net (604-325-1158)