

Metro Vancouver Regional Greenways in Maple Ridge / HUB Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows assessment

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Date: Monday, October 25, 2021, 08:22 a.m. PDT

Hi Chad,

I have to apologize for not following up with you after our meeting last Fall. Jenny has had other commitments that she's been spending her time on, and so have I. Nevertheless, improving the trails, including short connections between road sections, is still up there on our list of priorities. Fortunately, we've had some new, enthusiastic and dedicated members join our committee over the past year, so we've been able to spend a fair bit of time on trails issues more recently.

As you know, Jenny and I were supposed to come up with a proposal to improve a few trail connections to improve the cycling network connectivity in east Maple Ridge. Due to the disconnected road network in east Maple Ridge, accessible AAA (All Ages All Abilities) trail connections are critical for us to provide safe east-west routes where currently we have none. We decided the most obvious and important gaps for us were:

- the Hinch Trail connecting the two sections of 124 Ave. between 240 St. and 248 St.,
- improved trail connection between Grant Ave. and 108 Ave.

However, we understand that the City is planning to put roads through in both locations (124 Ave. in the next few years, and Grant Ave. to 108 Ave. further into the future?). In both cases, the new road connections will mean that the cycling routes to the east will start seeing more motor vehicle traffic and will become less safe and thus less appealing routes for cycling.

By the way, the Hinch Trail was already improved some time ago, and it's fine now. Even if this short trail is replaced with a new trail once the road is put through, that won't solve the problem of the roads to the east (or even to the west) becoming less safe for cycling. Right now 124 Ave. where it runs through Academy Park is a lovely, quiet and peaceful road for recreational cycling. I very frequently see deer along that route. Recently, during one ride, I saw seven of them along that section! I think it's to be expected that 124 Ave. will start seeing a significant amount of truck traffic once the road is connected.

Since the road network in certain parts of Maple Ridge is so disconnected, and the main corridors are not safe for cycling, trail connections are obviously very important for us. However, many of our trails were designed and built for horses, and not for AAA cycling. Many horse trails can be used for mountain biking, but the needs and wants for mountain biking and AAA cycling are obviously very different.

Our new Trails Team thought it would be helpful to do an assessment - from the perspective of AAA cycling - of Metro Vancouver's Regional Greenways trails in the Maple Ridge area, as we feel that recreational trails can and should complement utilitarian cycling routes where possible. According to Metro Vancouver's Regional Greenways 2050 plan, these Greenway trails are "for walking and cycling, and, where possible, for horses". The Regional Greenways are now shown on the [draft Transport 2050](#) Regional Cycling Network map (p. 34/118).

As you know, last year the Maple Ridge Parks Department proposed some route changes to the Regional Greenway network, which were approved by Council and subsequently submitted to Metro Vancouver in Summer of 2020. The updated map is attached. The second attached map shows the numbered trail segments that were assessed, bookended by identical markers. The attached PDF is our completed assessment of the Regional Greenways network.

As we explored the trails, you'll see that we found significant challenges, including along sections that were updated last year by Maple Ridge. We summarized our observations in the attached document. We'd again like to point out that the Regional Greenways network should accommodate walking and cycling at minimum, and "where possible, horses". However, in some instances we found that the trails only accommodated horses. Some "trails" just consist of roads for cars, often without separation from motor vehicles. That means that those routes will become less comfortable and safe over time as traffic increases, as it tends to do as development occurs, and the road network expands and gets more connected.

Ideally, the Regional Greenways would have a consistent quality and standards throughout the network, so that users do not get any unpleasant surprises along the way (such as a water crossing and no bridge, or very challenging terrain that may lead to injuries or people getting stranded).

We are just starting to explore some of the City trails now, many of which were designed and built by developers as short neighbourhood walking routes, as well as existing longer horse trails, built by the horse community. Besides horses, these longer trails can accommodate mountain biking and hiking, but few are suitable for AAA cycling, and most probably do not belong on a

utilitarian/AAA recreational cycling map. It is very important to make the distinction between mountain biking on the one hand, and utilitarian- and AAA recreational cycling on the other, also because of the different types of bikes that are used.

It is our hope that the need to accommodate AAA cycling on our trails becomes more of a focus for the City of Maple Ridge. As the City updates its Transportation Plan, we also hope that the Parks Department and the Engineering Department will work together closely to ensure that that the language and planned routes for AAA cycling in the Plan clearly demonstrate the intent to work on completing a well-connected AAA cycling network. The trails network needs improvements, so that it can become an integral part of our combined recreational AAA and utilitarian cycling network.

We'd love to hear what you think.

With kind regards,

on behalf of the Trails Team,
Jackie Chow
HUB Cycling
Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Committee



2020 08 Updated Regional Greenway trail network .jpg
335.5kB



2021 08 Assessment updated Reg Greenway trails.jpg
188kB



2021 10 Metro Vancouver Regional Greenways 2050 Maple Ridge - assessment by HUB LC.pdf
883.2kB

Metro Vancouver Regional Greenways network in Maple Ridge

Assessment by HUB Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows - September/October 2021

“Regional Greenways 2050 is the region’s shared 30-year vision for the development of a regional network of recreational greenways for walking, cycling, and, where appropriate, horse riding.” - [Metro Vancouver Regional Greenways 2050](#)

We divided up the trail network in our area in sections. See **figure 1**. Sections are bookended by identical markers. Generally, only sections of trail were assessed that were marked as “operational” (by the City of Maple Ridge):

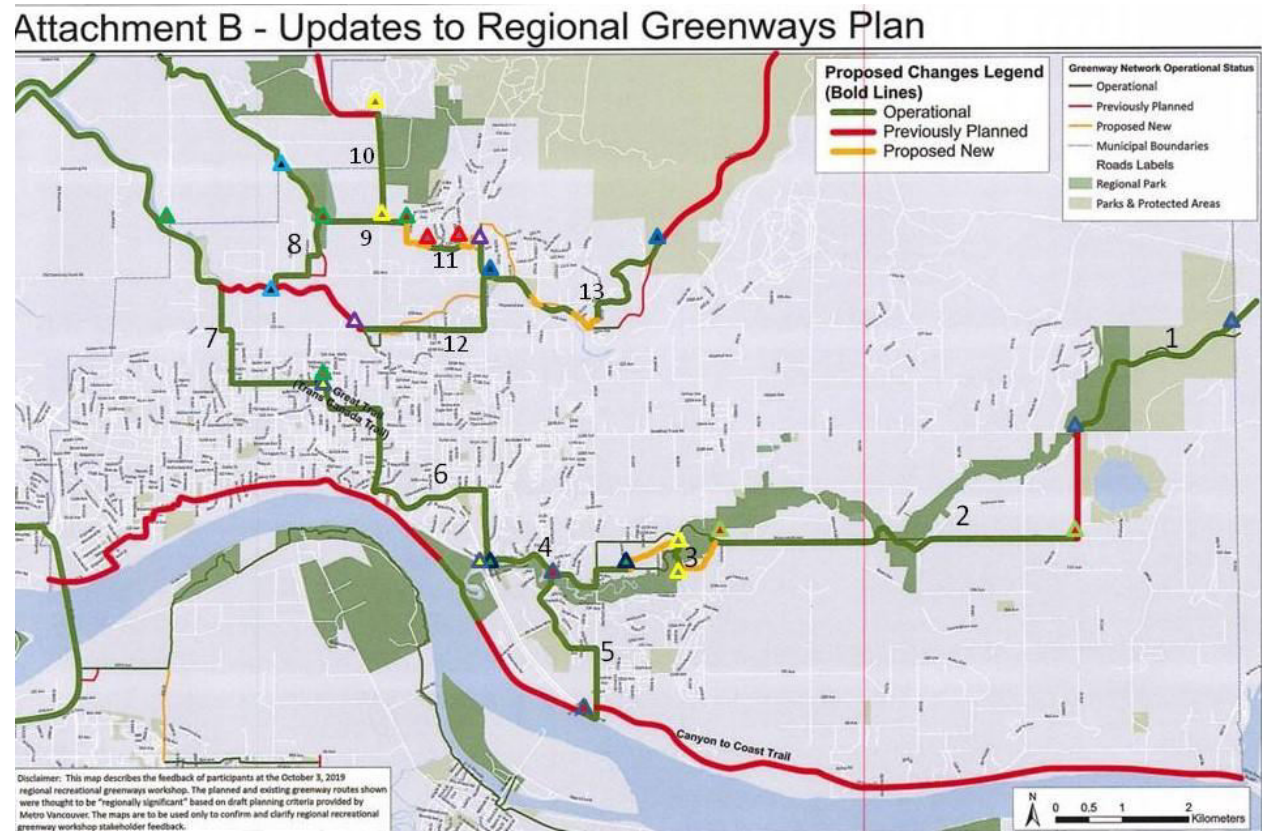


Figure 1 - Regional Greenways divided up in segments

(Section 1)

Trail in north-east direction starting north of Dewdney at 276 Street:

Rough surface but fairly flat. After about 1 km there’s a water crossing. No bridge

(Section 2)

112 Ave. from 276 St. just west of Whonnock Lake to 272 St.:

On-road. Comfortable only for some.

112 Ave. from 272 St. to Ferguson, south-west on Ferguson to dead end/beginning of trail:
On-road. Comfortable for some.

Trail from Ferguson through Kanaka Creek area connecting to 112 Ave. east of 260 St.:
2 water crossings w/o bridge. Not accessible for people walking/cycling. Possible to continue on trail to Grant Avenue then right on 260 st and left on 112 Avenue (not AAA).
See **Figure 2**.

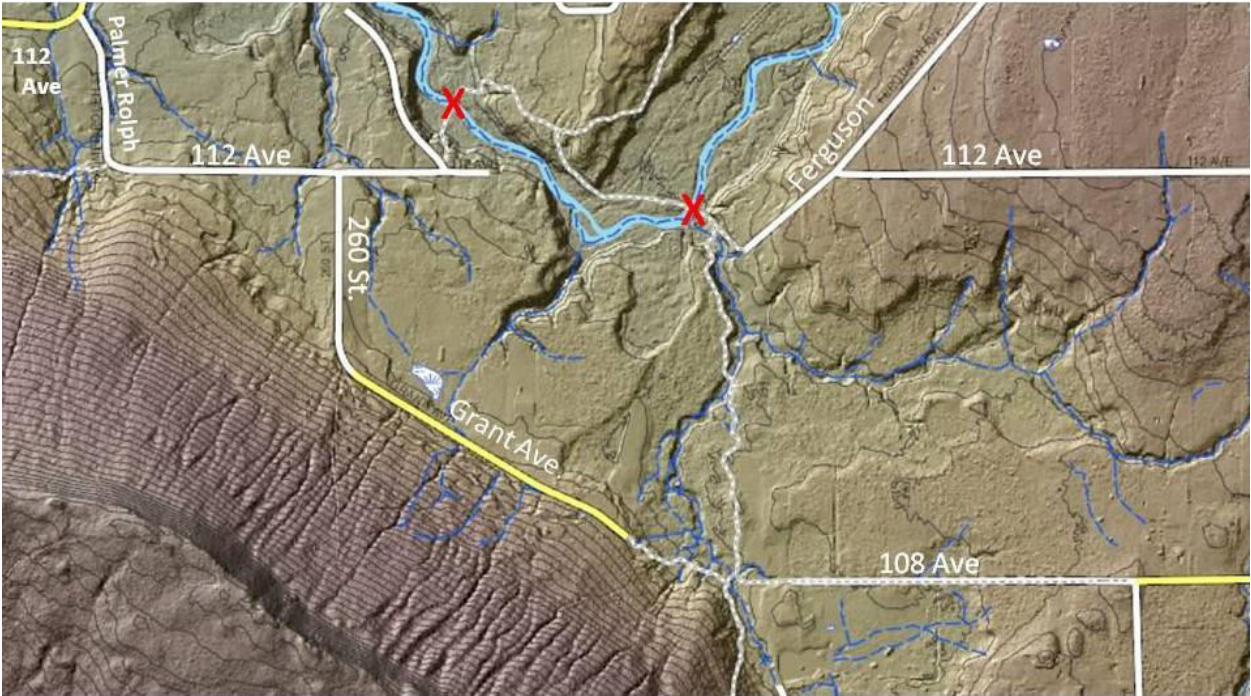


Figure 2

112 Ave. west of Kanaka Creek to where it meets Palmer Rolph:
On-road.

Trail from 112 Ave./Palmer Rolph to end of Bosonworth:
Louise Pool Memorial Trail. About ¼ km steep and very rough trail. Definitely not AAA and only for mountain bikes. Following Palmer Rolph and 112 Ave. west would be a more appropriate route (comfortable for some) until the trail is improved for AAA.

Bosonworth/112 Ave. to Lockwood/248 St.;;
On-road. Especially 112 Ave. west of Bosonworth will become increasingly busy as development happens in N-E Albion, and separated infra will likely be intermittent for some time to come.

(Section 3)

Trail going north from dead end of 110 Ave. west of 248 St.:
Short distance up to **water crossing (no bridge)**.

(Section 4)

110 Ave. east of 240th up to future trail connection to 112 Ave.:

Not clear where future trail connecting to 112 Ave. will go. Where new homes have already been built close to 240th, the road has sidewalks and parked cars. No provision for bikes or horses. Multi-purpose trail map in OCP shows this road as an existing trail. Much of the rest of the road has been broken up as it appears it's being widened to prepare for new subdivisions (most likely with street parking?). It is presently (Oct. 2021) mostly a dirt road.

240 St. between 110 Ave. and Kanaka Creek Road:

On east side: sections of multi-use path, sections of sidewalk, tiny section of bike lane, section of gravel shoulder. Comfortable for few.

Kanaka Creek Road between 240 St. and the section of Kanaka Creek Road that's closed off for cars:

Shared with cars. Comfortable for some.

Closed off section of Kanaka Creek Road and multi-use path along Kanaka Way between 237 St. and Hwy 7:

Asphalt heaves in several spots due to tree roots. Also a significant, long crack in the asphalt at Gilker Hill. Can easily be made comfortable for most with surface improvements.

Connection between Kanaka Way MUP to 232 St. via Kanaka Way/Lougheed/Hwy 7 intersection:

Very awkward and inconvenient to cross. Need to get off bike and walk on short section of sidewalk on north side (on-road is comfortable for few). New sidewalk (recently put in by MoTI) should be made multi-use.

(Section 5)

From River Road at old ferry crossing/Kingfisher restaurant going east, 240 St. going north, crossing railroad up to Lougheed intersection:

On-road. No shoulders. Comfortable for few people. Truck traffic through industrial area. Definitely can not be considered to be "operational" as greenway (as marked on map) without separated facilities. Presently the only destination to end point of greenway is the Kingfisher restaurant. Mobility hub in future?

240 St. from Lougheed intersection to 104 Ave.:

Section on 240th between Lougheed and where MUP starts south of Hill Ave. is gravel and runs into some bush which you have to go around to get onto the (hidden) MUP. No signage. Section between 104 and Hill Ave is comfortable for most, but concern about turning drivers not paying attention to people on bikes crossing in both directions. This multi-use path looks and feels more like a sidewalk at some of the intersections (especially Hill Ave. and 103 Ave.).

104 Ave. between 240th and just east of Albion Sports Fields:

Major collector. On-road for bikes. Section of gravel horse trail east of Slatford unsuitable for bikes. Very short sections of gravel 'horse trail' between driveways west of Slatford not at all suitable for bikes nor for horses. 'Trail' ends abruptly. Used by home owners to park their cars. Pedestrians have sidewalk.

Parking lot Albion Sports Fields, trail crossing Spencer Creek Bridge and along Albion dog park, behind Planet Ice:

Not at all obvious that this is a Greenway. Comfortable for most.

Trail through Belle Morse Park, crossing Jim Robson Way, trail south of Tamarack

Trail south of Tamarack: surface needs some improvement. Narrow and uneven in places, with some coarse gravel and rocks. Gets quite overgrown at certain times of the year. Frequent drainage issues at the bottom of the hill where trail crosses Tamarack.

Trail through Kanaka Creek Park north of Tamarack via Rainbow Bridge to old Kanaka Creek Road:

Steep, challenging section close to Tamarack with loose, coarse gravel. Most people will have to dismount.

(Section 6)

232 St. between Kanaka Way and Cottonwood:

Shoulder (poorly maintained) on east side only. Asphalt sidewalk with poorly visible curb on west side just north of Kanaka Way (curb was painted years ago to improve visibility at the request of one of our members who had a near miss there by a truck whose driver did not notice the curb, nor the cyclist "that came out of nowhere" in front of him. Paint has worn off). Significant hazard for people on bikes esp. in the dark. This section is comfortable for few.

Note that the crossing at Cottonwood is extremely wide and uncomfortable for pedestrians. The generous curves do not encourage drivers to slow down at all going around the corner.

232 St. between Cottonwood and 116 Ave.:

Comfortable for most. Concern about turning vehicles.

116 Ave. between 232 St. and Lougheed Hwy:

MUP completed. Comfortable for most. Concern about turning vehicles.

116 Ave. between Lougheed Hwy and Haney House:

Collector road. Very steep sections. Comfortable for few.

Pathway around Haney House between 116 Ave. and 224 St.:

Pedestrian pathway only. Not for bikes.

224 St. between Haney House and Lougheed:

On-road cycling with parked cars on both sides. Major collector. Traffic south of Lougheed likely to increase as area gets redeveloped. Comfortable for few.

224 St. between Lougheed and Dewdney:

Major collector. Significant amount of traffic. On-street cycling with parked cars. Comfortable for few.

224 St. between Dewdney and 122 Ave.:

Major collector. Section of on-road, sections of bike lane, partly along parked cars. Comfortable for few.

122 Ave. between 224 St. and 222 St.:

Collector road. Some sections of MUP completed, but mostly on-road. Comfortable for few.

122 Ave. between 222 St. and Maple Ridge SS eastern parking lot by sports fields:

MUPs comfortable for most. Letdowns could be smoother and lines of travel could be better. Concern about turning vehicles.

Pathway on east side of MRSS sports fields between 122 Ave. and 124 Ave.:

Pedestrian path. Not for bikes? Very easy to miss. Very narrow. No signage along pathway. Barrier at 122 Ave end would be easy to hit at night. Should have reflectors/lighting.

(Section 7)

124 Ave. between entrance of trail through MRSS sports fields and 216 St.:

On-road. Fairly high vehicle speeds. Parked vehicles. Comfortable for few.

124 Ave. between 216 St. and Laity St. (Shady Lane):

Sidewalk was built about ten years ago as a MUP, but is not marked as such. It's only as wide as a regular sidewalk. On-road has speed humps. Comfortable for some.

Laity St. between 124 Ave. and 128 Ave.:

Narrow shoulder on east side only, nothing on west side. Comfortable for few.

128 Ave. between Laity and dike entrance:

Comfortable for most.

Dike from entrance west of Laity to Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows border:

Comfortable for most.

(Section 8)

Short section of 216 St. south of 132 Ave.:

No shoulder. Comfortable for few.

Proposed trail: access off 216 St. closed (private property).

132 Ave. between 216 St. and Park Lane:

No shoulder. Comfortable for few.

Park Lane between 132 Ave. via parking lot north of Maple Ridge Equi Sports Centre to North Alouette Greenway:

Comfortable for most.

Alouette Greenway from parking lot north of Maple Ridge Equi Sports Centre up to Maple Ridge border (at 216 St.): - **figure 3**

Comfortable for most.

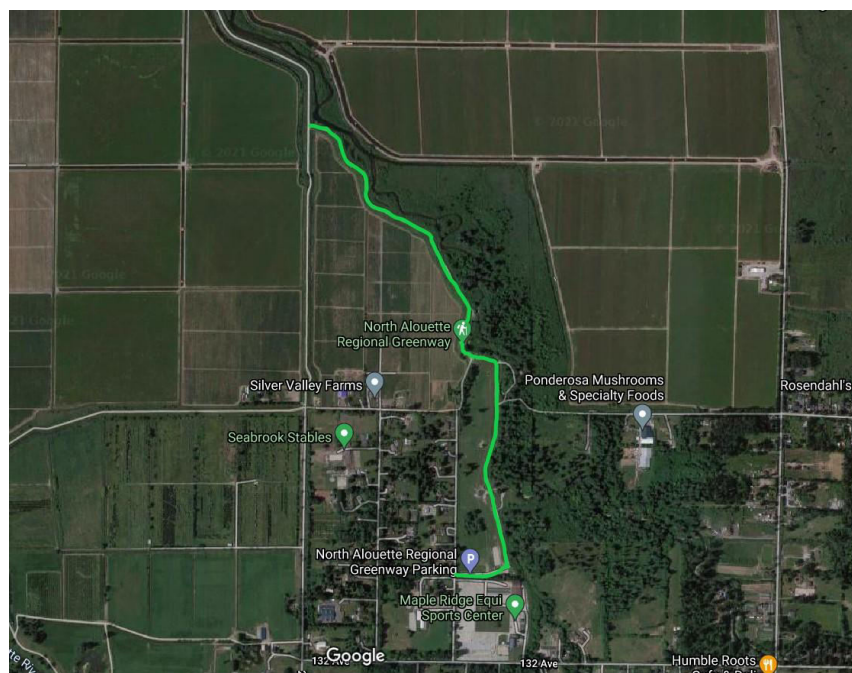


Figure 3 - Alouette Greenway

(Section 9)

Tim's Trail east of Alouette Greenway:
Comfortable for most.

136 Ave. between Tim's Trail and 224 St.:
Comfortable for most.

136 Ave. between 224 St. and Foreman Drive:
Comfortable for some. Traffic can be quite busy and fast. No separated path.

(Section 10) - figure 4

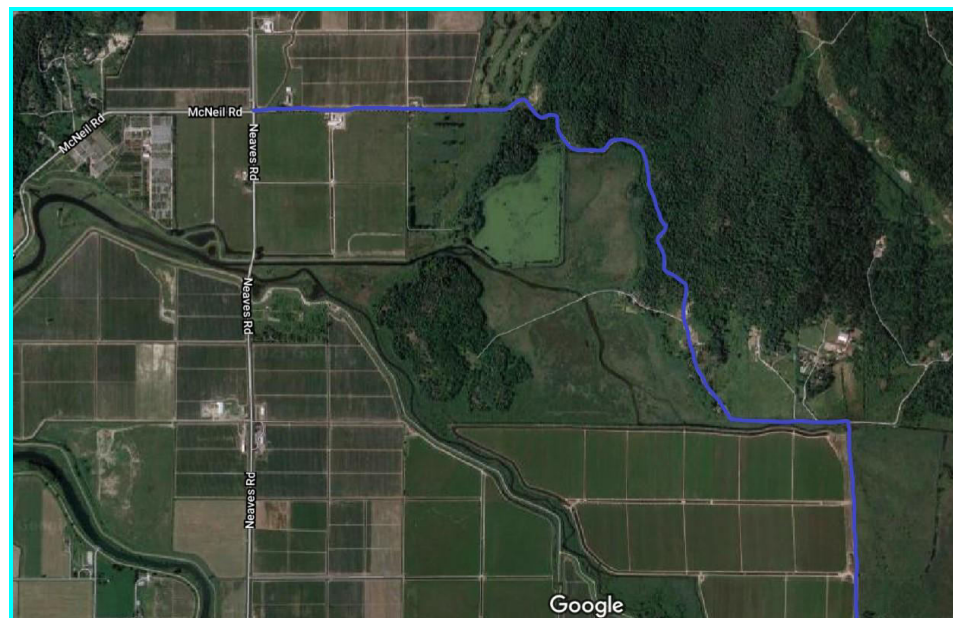


Figure 4

224 St. between 136 Ave. and 144 Ave.:
Comfortable for most, however road surface becomes increasingly rough with cracks and potholes the further north you go on 224 St.
(144 Ave. is marked as “previously planned”. Is quite rough and potholed. Blocked at private land.)

(Section 11)

Green Pond Trail:
Access eastern end of trail off 136 Ave. just west of 232 St.
Nice, mostly flat, and mostly operational trail up to development site at western end of trail (**Figure 5 - 2016-239-RZ**, which includes trail construction). Work crew explained

they're building a horse trail. As part of Metro's Regional Greenway Trail network, the surface should be suitable for AAA cycling.

(A separated path along the busy stretch of 136 Ave. from Foreman to 224 St. would provide a nice off-road connection to access the dike trails further west!)



Figure 5 - planned horse trail to complete Green Pond Trail

(Section 12)

128 Ave. between 232 St. and west of 224 St.:

On-road. At times quite busy traffic. Comfortable for few.

Leads to narrow, rough trail. Is supposed to connect to 224 St. Water crossing, no bridge at Alouette.

(Section 13)

Mill Creek Trail:

Nice trail, but has a very steep section (20+% according to Trailforks), which is not doable for most people cycling. (Would be nice, if possible, to add an alternative section of trail that's perhaps a bit longer, but a manageable grade - up to 8%?).

Conclusions in summary:

- In five cases we were not able to assess the full length of a trail due to the absence of a bridge to cross a body of water. Water crossings without a bridge make sections of trails accessible only to those on horse back and inaccessible to people walking and cycling.
- Trail standards don't accommodate AAA cycling in Maple Ridge and appear to be based on the needs of horses. Metro Vancouver should establish clear standards for the Regional Greenway network throughout the region.
- Maple Ridge trail standards appear to lead to some very poor quality, unusable "trails" in new subdivisions that are required to include horse trails. E.g. 104 Ave. west of 240 St. and east of Slatford. Another example that was, but no longer is, part of a Regional Greenway route are sections of "trail" along the north side of 112 Ave., east of 240th.
- The Regional Greenway network in the Maple Ridge area consists mostly of roads designed for cars and trails that were built for horses.
- Some of the "operational" sections of trail, both on-road and horse trail sections, should probably be re-classified as "planned".
- Progress has been made, mostly in recent years, with separated facilities along road sections (see **figure 6**)
 - 240 St. between Hill Ave. and 104 St.
 - 232 St. between Cottonwood and 116 Ave.
 - 116 Ave. between 232 St. and Lougheed Hwy
 - Kanaka Way between Lougheed Hwy and Kanaka Creek Road (important connection to 232 St. on the north side of Kanaka Way still missing)
 - 122 Ave. between 222 St. and Maple Ridge Secondary School
 - 232 St. between 132 Ave. and 136 Ave.

Attachment B - Updates to Regional Greenways Plan

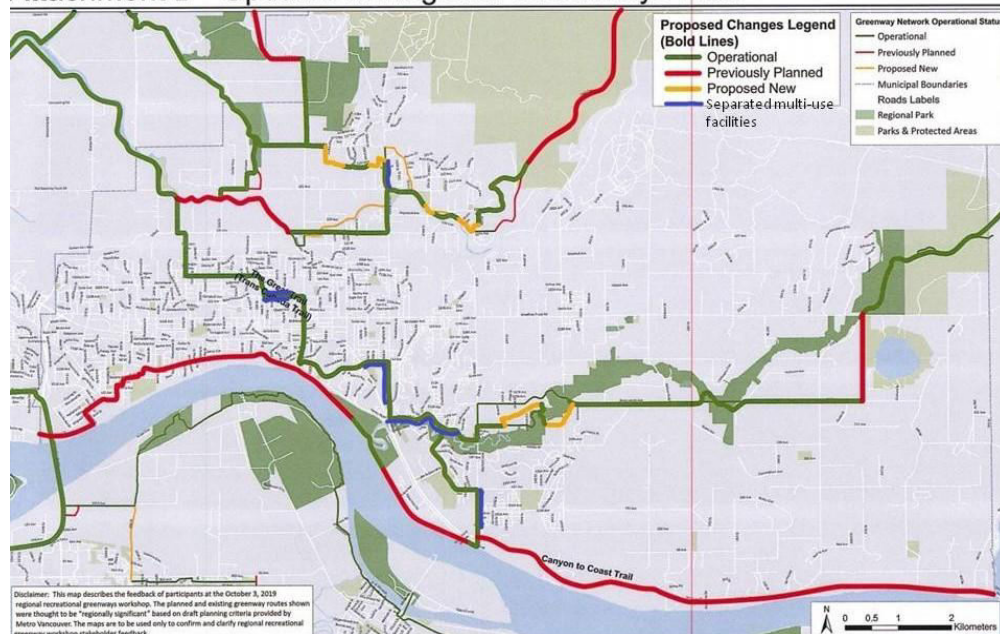


Figure 6 - separated facilities along road segments

- Certain roads will get increasingly busy with cars, and less safe for vulnerable road users, as development occurs and road connections are completed, e.g.
 - 112 Ave. in north-east Albion between 248 St. (planned) and Bosonworth
 - Bosonworth (once Grant Ave. extension is completed)
 - 128 Ave. west of 232 St. especially once the industrial development is built south-west of the 232 St./128 Ave. intersection
 - 136 Ave. between 224 St. and Foreman Drive due to further development in Silver Valley
 - New planned 276 St. just west of Whonnock Lake
- When determining where the Regional Greenway network or walking/cycling trails in general should go, the trail network should be assessed from the point of view of people walking/cycling in order to establish an interesting, comfortable and safe network that works for and appeals to all ages and abilities. Drawing a line along a busy road does nothing to make people walk or cycle more. Trails such as the Green Pond Trail are exciting additions to our trail network. We hope to see more of those.
- Steep grades, rough trail surfaces and poor maintenance make many trails inaccessible for many people cycling of all ages and abilities. It also makes trails less accessible for many people walking.

Signage:

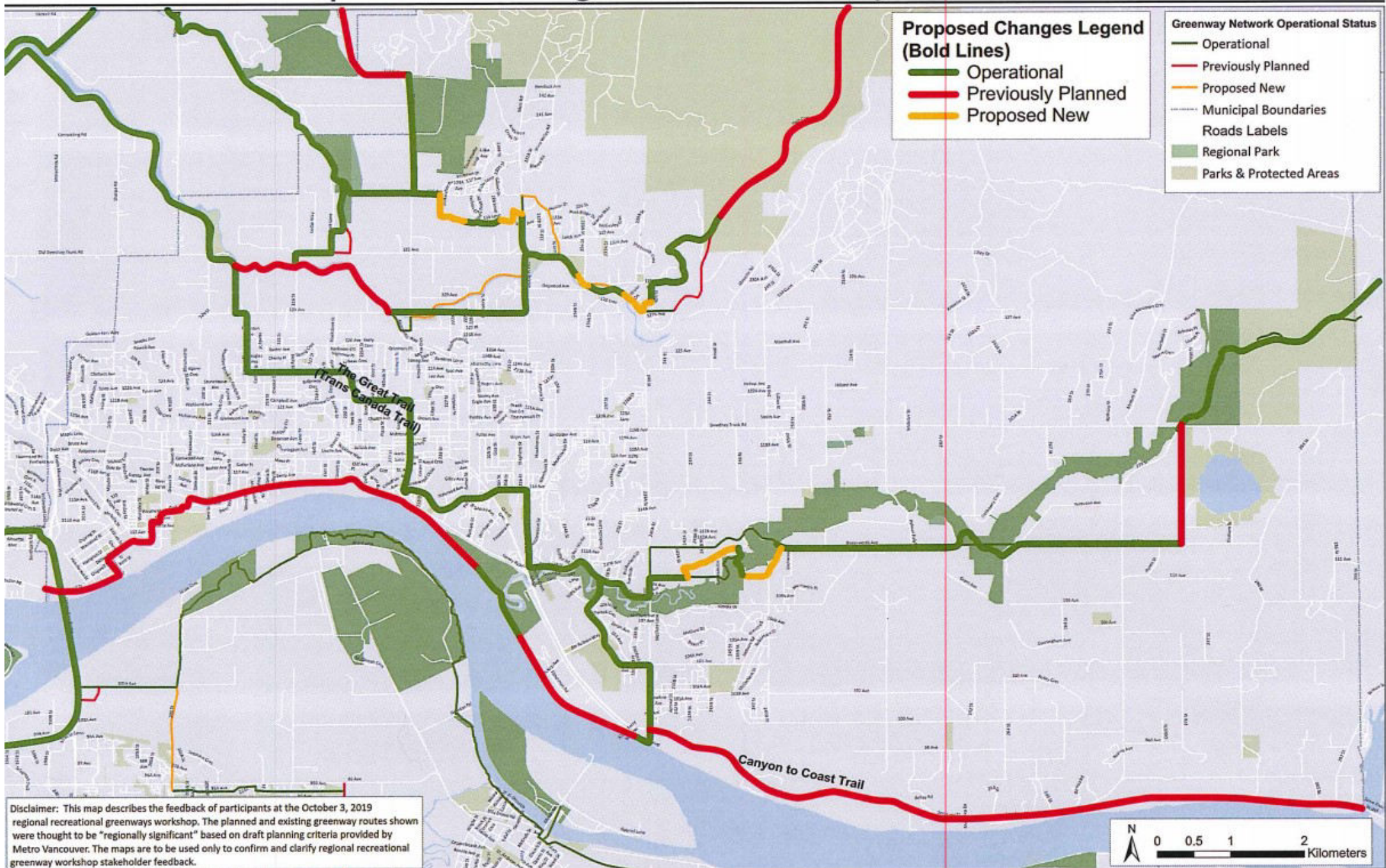
- Inadequate and very easy to miss Great Trail signage.
- No Metro Vancouver Regional Greenway signage.
- No directional signage.

A few suggestions:

Explore the feasibility of adding the following Greenways (whether Regional or not):

- Add east-west Greenway between 240 St. and 224 St. along the 118 Ave. corridor. Route: 118 Ave. - 136 St. - Cottonwood - 118 Ave. - 230 St. - 117 Ave. - Burnett - via sidewalk along Lougheed Hwy to 228 St. (until proper connection has been built between Burnett and 228 St.) - 228 St. - 119 Ave. - 226 St. - Selkirk Ave. This to provide an alternative to the steep grades on 116 Ave. south of Lougheed, as well as to connect to future West Ridge Greenway.
- Pathway (non existing) from north end of 240 St. along south side of Alouette River to the south end of 239 St., connecting via 128 Ave. to 232 St. (future MUP) and the Abernethy MUP. It appears some or all of the land south of the Alouette River there is private, but this would be a great connection to plan for in future.

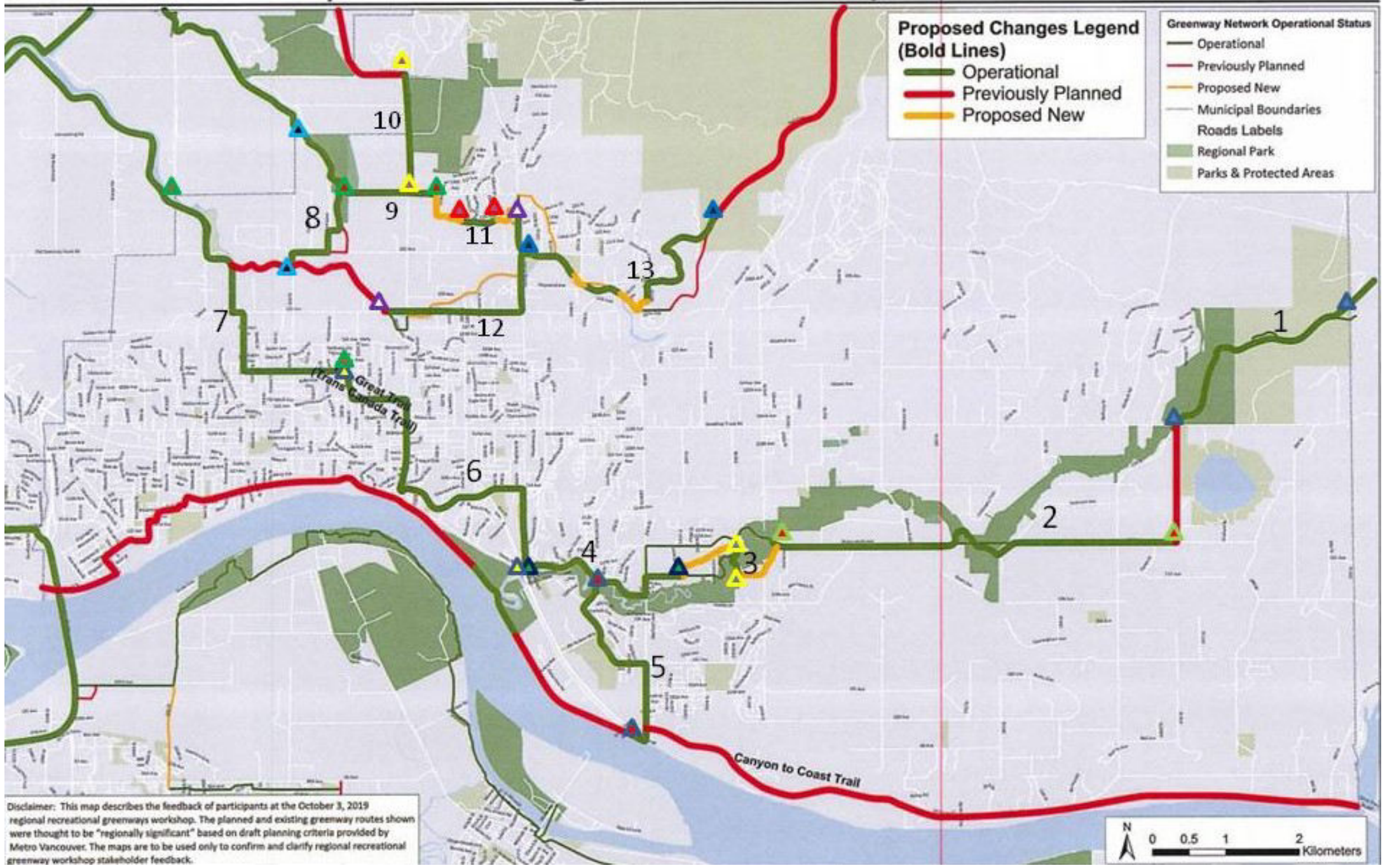
Attachment B - Updates to Regional Greenways Plan



Disclaimer: This map describes the feedback of participants at the October 3, 2019 regional recreational greenways workshop. The planned and existing greenway routes shown were thought to be "regionally significant" based on draft planning criteria provided by Metro Vancouver. The maps are to be used only to confirm and clarify regional recreational greenway workshop stakeholder feedback.



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