



April 26, 2019

Honourable Claire Trevena
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
Province of British Columbia
Minister.Transportation@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Trevena,

Re: Pattullo Bridge Replacement Project - Walking and Cycling Facilities

This is to follow up on our letter to you of December 14, 2018 and the email response from Leah Waters, your Administrative Coordinator, on February 13, 2019. HUB Cycling and the British Columbia Cycling Coalition are pleased to see the Pattullo Bridge Replacement Project moving forward under your Ministry as one of the first projects to be based on CleanBC principles. As acknowledged in the plans, this is a critical regional cycling and walking connection.

The proposed cycling and walking facilities will clearly be an improvement over the unprotected sidewalk on the existing bridge. We have been working with the MoTI Pattullo Bridge project team to review plans and provide input. We are pleased to see some of our suggestions be adopted by the project, including increasing the width of the active transportation paths on the structure, which will improve the safety of path users.

However, we are concerned that this project still does not provide direct connections to existing cycling and walking networks and relies on poor infrastructure that does not meet contemporary guidelines, in some cases forcing active transportation users to travel much further than vehicular traffic. We are also concerned that the MoTI project team dismissed our suggestion to provide a high barrier between the active transportation paths on the bridge and the vehicle traffic in order to minimize exposure to noise, dust and pollution.

Safety and Connectivity

There are three project goals for the new Pattullo Bridge:

1. *Provide a structurally sound bridge crossing to maintain a critical local and regional connection;*
2. *Improve safety for all users with modern lane widths, road curvature, centre median barrier and separated pedestrian/cyclist facilities; and*
3. *Improve connectivity, reliability and modal choice while supporting environmental objectives*

The project would significantly improve both the safety and connectivity for cyclists if it provided safe, direct connecting routes to and from the bridge, something that was included in the previous scope of the project under TransLink. Instead, the design of the project leaves significant gaps in the cycling network adjacent to the bridge on the Surrey side, as the project boundary seems to have been determined by the needs of vehicle traffic and not active transportation modes. For example, cyclists travelling on the BC Parkway would be forced to use a route that is up to one kilometer longer than the parallel vehicular route

on King George Boulevard. The project also relies on an existing pedestrian overpass over Highway 17 to connect cyclists to the bridge. This overpass does not meet design guidelines for bicycle infrastructure.

We recommend that the scope of this project include the most direct access routes, connecting to both current and future active transportation facilities and designed to meet current Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) guidelines.

Reducing the Impact of Traffic Pollution and Noise

We recommended that the project consider an air and noise pollution barrier between vehicular traffic on the bridge and the active transportation paths. Providing safe, comfortable facilities is key to encouraging more people to walk and cycle. Close proximity to high motor vehicle volumes can expose users to unhealthy and unpleasant levels of air and noise pollution and may exclude those with respiratory problems from using the paths. These barriers are commonly used in other jurisdictions, however our recommendation was dismissed on the basis of maintenance concerns.

Active Transportation and Major Projects

BC's cycling community has frequently been disappointed with the outcomes of major projects. In the cases of the Pitt River Bridge, the Sea to Sky Highway and the Port Mann Bridge, the performance specifications that we had been led to expect were not delivered. The public private partnership process excluded our input beyond the preliminary public consultation and ignored our concerns that key design standards were not being met, resulting in unsafe and inconvenient facilities that will be costly to fix. We are particularly concerned that this not be repeated on the Pattullo Bridge project.

Our members have been involved with the project process for over a year. This fall, we met with the Environmental Assessment Office and your project staff. While they seemed sympathetic to our concerns, they indicated that some of our suggestions may fall outside of the current project scope.

To ensure that the Pattullo Bridge project meets active transportation objectives and the needs of all users we respectfully ask that:

1. the project team fully examine and identify solutions to the expressed concerns;
2. the project scope be adjusted, if necessary, to incorporate best practices and optimize the value of the project to active transportation;
3. we (and other key stakeholders as appropriate) be enabled to provide input throughout the design process to help ensure that active transportation performance specifications are met.

We look forward to meeting with you, your staff and the project team to assist in maximizing the benefits of this project for the people of British Columbia. Please note that it is our understanding that your meeting with HUB staff, mentioned in the email from Leah Waters on February 13, 2019, did not include specific discussion of the Pattullo Bridge project.

Sincerely,

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Attachments: [EAO submission](#), [Submission to PBRP team](#)