

Millennium Trail / Ladner, Family Circle Tour



This report was first published in 2015.

This update is January 2019.

This route enables families to take advantage of off-road recreational trails, and take a circle tour to and from Ladner Lions Park. This City park has vehicle parking, washrooms, picnic tables and a playground located close to village services and a vibrant summer market held on Ladner streets every second Sunday June to September.

The route is familiar to me. Looking at it from the point of view of a visitor was interesting.

- The biggest problem (through a visitor's eyes) was misleading or no directional signage.

Start. Ladner Lions Park on Westminster Avenue at Elliott Street.



Westminster Avenue to Ferry Road is a Share the Road facility with parking only permitted on the south side. With the new sidewalk on the southside also, this is a huge improvement since 2014. Prior there a drainage ditch and no shoulder.



From Westminster Avenue head north on Ferry Road, which crosses River Road. Pedestrians now have a push button facility that activates flashing lights. Families with young children on bikes could dismount and use the pedestrian-controlled crosswalk if necessary.

Ferry Road north of River Road is wide and easy for cycling. Pedestrians use the off-road path which is wide enough for young children on bikes to use too, cyclists do have an on-road Share the Road facility.

- At traffic circles cycle with traffic, as bike space on road disappears.
- Close to the public boat launch can be busy with boat trailer traffic, moving and parked.



Ferry Road ends at the Woodward's Landing old ferry dock.

The bike route continues past a new washroom facility and a working boatyard. This is the start of the off-road Millennium Trail, with a welcome multi-use smooth blacktop surface circumventing new townhouses that is being developed as a linear park.



The Millennium Trail heads towards Highway 99, past land being developed with the last phase of housing, shops and community public square that will complete the Marina Garden Estates development. The multi-use path has seating areas and viewpoints overlooking the marina, Deas Island Regional Park and north shore Vancouver mountains beyond.



An alternative is to turn right off of Ferry Road onto Commodore Drive, a residential street through Marina Gardens, to Neilson Grove Elementary school and take the trail by the Marina Gardens Golf Course to meet up with the Millennium Trail at the slough bridge. This trail section has pedestrian-only signage, but serves as an informal multi-use gravel path.



Both routes lead to the slough foot bridge, that crosses the slough eastwards towards the Highway 99 underpass.



The Millennium Trail Highway 99 underpass was completed in 2003, with the help of the Millennium Trail Committee and members of the Ladner Healthy Community who solicited engineering expertise to show that an underpass path next to the tidal river was possible.

In September 2008 the Millennium Trail was finally extended to Deas Island Regional Park, after a land swap. Committee members envisioned this trail going much further, to North Delta and connect as a loop around the Delta area, via the foot of the North Delta escarpment, and along the Boundary Bay, Tsawwassen First Nation and Ladner foreshores.

The Highway 99 underpass has cautionary signs and mirrors to mitigate the conflict between walkers and cyclists.

- It needs extreme caution and better signage (e.g. Bell or Yell pictured below in Stanley Park) could remind cyclists to use bell or voice on the approaches. I find using a bike bell, going slow, and communicating my thanks to pedestrians, the best.



This Millennium Trail crossing at Highway 99 will continue to be an important connection as part of an envisaged greenway along the south arm of the Fraser River.

The Millennium Trail highway underpass is an essential link.

- The alternative road overpass on Highway 17A across Highway 99 is dangerous for cyclists.
- Plans need to be in place to accommodate cyclists during the new George Massey tunnel upgrade construction period, currently on hold.



On the east side of the underpass, one trail section used to be a curve closer to the river but no one uses it. The cut-through trail used by everyone has a lot of boulders. This section is periodically graded but the tops of stones do continually protrude and should be rehabilitated for all users.

The woodland trail that parallels Highway 99 culminates at the truncated former River Road. This road is now paved access for the housing on the east side of Highway 99, that is next to an ESA.



The Millennium Trail continues to Deas Island Regional Park. At Vassey Road you can head back to Ladner Village on a cycling route that traverses rural roads, a pathway tunnel under Highway 99, and rural and residential roads through East Ladner and over Highway 17A via a pedestrian overpass.



POTENTIAL IMPROVED DESTINATION SIGNAGE on Vassey Road from the Millennium Trail

1. HERITAGE ROUTE SUGGESTION

Continuing south on 64th St across Ladner Trunk Road is a potential circular route via 34B Avenue (Benson Road) and the new bike lanes on Arthur Drive, back in to Ladner Village.

2. NATURE and RECREATION TOUR

Continuing south on 64th St beyond 34B Avenue gives access to Boundary Bay Dike for bird watching. Turn westwards along the dike and through Beach Grove, to find recreational swimming beaches, restaurant and play area in Boundary Bay Regional Park, and all the amenities Tsawwassen offers.

The Millennium Trail is an alternative way for cyclists planning to travel on River Road east towards Tilbury and North Delta - it is a fine gravel surface, manageable for most bikes.



- In Deas Island Regional Park bike routes should be re-established, to access the land area and beaches across the George Massey Tunnel on Deas Island. In other parts of BC, regional park horse and bike trails are shared (e.g. Seal Bay, Nymph Falls and One-Spot parks in the Comox Valley Regional District).

Once in the park, cycling is only allowed on the road which extends as far as the meadow picnic ground. You cycle past heritage buildings including the Burrvilla, Schoolhouse and Agricultural Hall. To the north are panoramic views across the Fraser River to the north shore Vancouver coastal mountains.



GOOD EXAMPLE SIGNAGE

Signage along Millennium Trail between Deas Island Regional Park and Vassey Road shows direction and distance. (photos page 6 and 7).





Vassey Road looking south from the Millennium Trail. This road has a turn off to the old Delta Town and Country hotel, slated to be developed as a new casino.

- Safe passage for bikes must be maintained along Vassey Road.

For the casino development a dedicated left turn lane is proposed on Vassey Road heading north from Highway 99. A recommendation is:

- have green paint delineating bike lanes through this intersection, to serve as a warning for drivers to expect cyclists.



- Could have enhanced visual cues for highway traffic e.g. green painted lanes connecting Vassey Road and 60th Avenue through intersection, or overhead signage clearly warning of pedestrians and cyclists. This is both a local recreation, commuter and visitor route, next to the Delta Chamber of Commerce Visitor Centre.



The 64th St Bike Lane leads to a paved path agriculture and bike tunnel under Highway 99.



No bike route sign on 64th St at Burns Drive near Farm Tunnel. Require destination and distance signage.



- Mirrors are maintained.
- Lights needed?

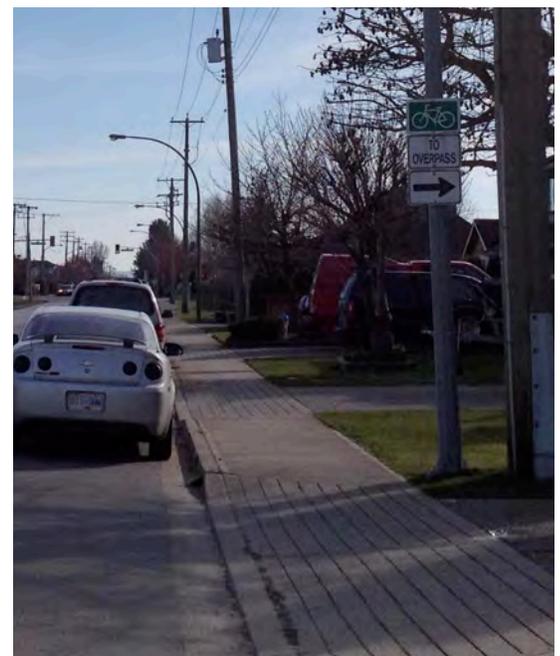
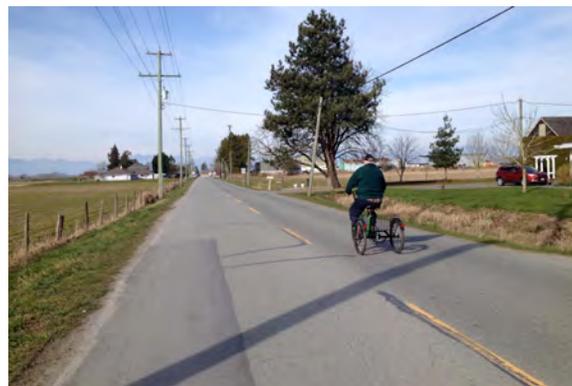


Paved trail alongside Highway 99 on west side of tunnel. Connects tunnel with 64th St, at the Delta Works Yard.



64th Street between Highway 99 and Ladner Trunk Road, East Ladner. These are weekend photos.

• This stretch is busy with work yard traffic during during work commute times and needs extended pavement to allow for bike lanes.



POTENTIAL DESTINATION SIGNAGE

1. Residential bike route to Highway 17A overpass. Add:
 - to Ladner Village
2. Continuing up 64th St across Ladner Trunk Road. Add:
 - To Boundary Bay Regional Park and Dike
 - To Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal
 - Ladner Heritage Tour via 34 B (Benson Road) and Arthur Drive Bike Route

48A St - quiet residential.

- No signage for bike route at intersections on 48A, have to assume to bike straight ahead.

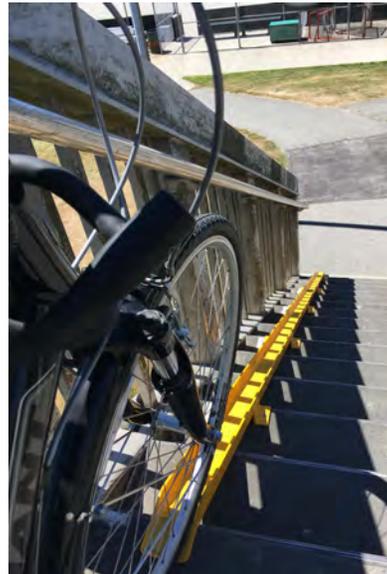


NEW SIGNAGE SUGGESTION AT 62 STREET

An alternative route across Highway 17 is by Holly Elementary School on 62 Street, on a step overpass to the Ladner Leisure Centre. In 2018 this step overpass has been upgraded with an improved bike channel to push bikes up and over easier.

On 48A Street at 62 Street, add directional signage to:

- Ladner Leisure Centre
- Ladner Bus Exchange



Continue on 48A St to Ladner via overpass without steps.

Bike rack for Highway 17A bus stop, on 601 and 620 bus routes to Bridgeport Station.



Cyclists must walk bikes on overpass, well used by pedestrians, transit users and cyclists.



Looking back toward pedestrian overpass from west Ladner side. Trucks and transit use the intersection. There is a new bike lane through this intersection on Ladner Trunk Road that parallels this family-friendly overpass. The Ladner Trunk bike lane from east to west Ladner across Highway 17A is only suitable for cyclists comfortable in heavy traffic and a wide, six lane intersection.



Bridge and west Ladner - Ladner Trunk Road. With curbside buses and fast vehicles in curbside lane.

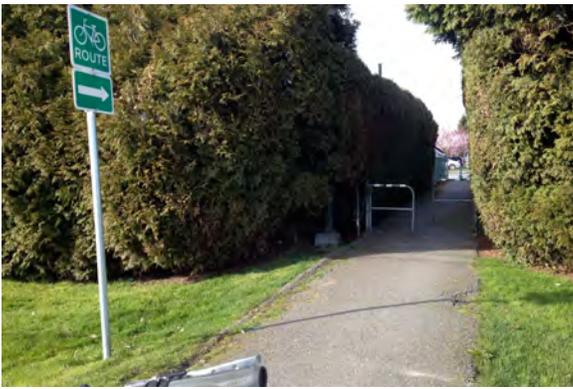
- It is necessary to bike on the sidewalk until the neighbourhood Bike Route path is reached.



Ladner Trunk Road sidewalk to bike route path, by the Ladner heron gateway sign.



Bike route sign on path. At other end of path: • No signage. Signage is needed.



48A St, new road and sidewalk that access path to bus stop at the foot of Harvest Drive on Ladner Trunk Road. Next Bike Route sign is at corner of 48A and 57A St.

• No more signage. Assume to travel straight up 57A St, but official route is in fact on 57 St.

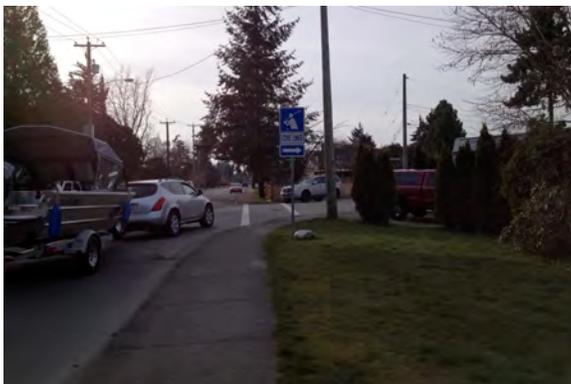
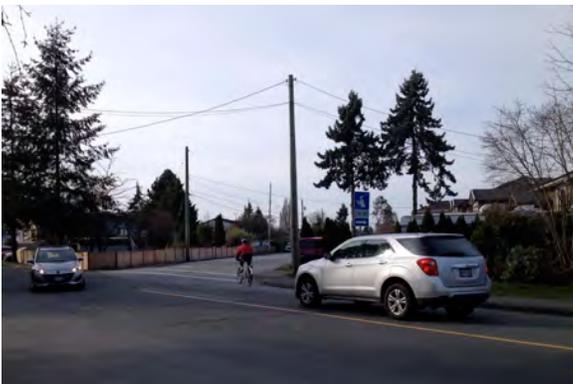


SAfer to travel up 57A St. End of 57A St at Crescent Drive. Turn left to meet official bike route.

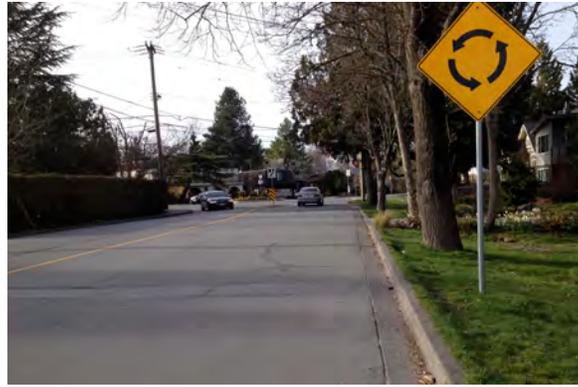


• Short stretch of narrow roadway, no signage.

Between 57 St and Crescent Drive by the dance studio is a tight and busy thoroughfare. The only directional signage is for buses and the golf course. It is also a boat trailer route, as seen in photo.



Although a bus route and thoroughfare between Marina Gardens and Ladner Trunk Road, Crescent Drive is wide for Share the Road biking. Needs caution at the traffic circle. (this cyclist is turning right onto Dowler Rd).



- The bike route sign turning south onto Linden Drive off of Westminster should add destinations. It accesses 44 Avenue via 53 Street crossing Ladner Trunk Road and past Maple Crescent Park. 44 Avenue is a cross route between all City Hall, police, recreation services and Delta Hospital to the east, and to the west Arthur Drive to get to Tsawwassen.



River Road between Elliott and McNeely Way is a wide road however, no bike lane on ditch side, and through road traffic from Highway 99 to Ladner Village on the north side.



Between McNeely Way (that leads to the Ladner Harbour) and Ferry Road is a wide multi-use trail. This is the recommended portion, shown on the map.

McNeely Way to Ladner Harbour offers a working federal fisheries harbour visit along a quiet road. An optional trail goes through Ladner Harbour Park, circles past a children's playground and picnic area, continues through as a forested trail that can be muddy when wet and connects back with McNeely Way at Ladner Harbour by the net sheds. At the end of McNeely Way is a leash optional dog park.

In addition to the multi-use routes are walking trails through a lagoon area north of McNeely Way, not to be used by cyclists and currently not linked to Ladner Harbour Park due to a bridge having been removed and not replaced.

Destination: Ladner Harbour and Ladner Harbour Park



End of Report

Sandra Jones

