



Your Cycling Connection

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March 21, 2018

To: David Pollock, P.Eng. <dpollock@mapleridge.ca>
Jeff Boehmer <jboehmer@mapleridge.ca>
Maria Guerra <mguerra@mapleridge.ca>
Cc: Active Transportation Advisory Committee <clerks@mapleridge.ca>

Re: Downtown Enhancement Project
Lougheed Highway between 224 Street and 226 Street

Dear David, Jeff, and Maria,

Thank you, Jeff and Maria, for taking the time to speak with us at the Open House on March 14.

We understand that one of the objectives of the above project is to improve the safety of road users.

People on bikes are legitimate road users, and we believe that their safety should therefore be considered for this project, just as it is for pedestrians and people in cars.

We understand that, contrary to the [recommendations](#) in the input we provided for the 2014 Transportation Plan in June 2013, the City chose not to include Lougheed Highway in the cycling network in the Transportation Plan. The City instead preferred people on bikes to use Selkirk Ave. and the North Ave./Royal Crescent routes, so that car traffic flow and speed could be maintained.

The key points in our recommendations included:

- *Cyclists should not have to seek refuge on the sidewalk, especially in the Town Core and in and around school zones or other busy areas.*
- *Cycling routes should be on streets with destinations, and frequent stop signs preventing cycling ease should be avoided.*
- *Lougheed is an integral link in the cycling network in the Town Core, providing a direct and relatively flat route that should have separated cycling facilities to allow access to Town Core amenities and jobs.*

One of the most important ways that more cycling participation can be encouraged, is to ensure that people on bikes are given a safe option to take faster and more convenient routes aside from the indirect, stop-and-go bike routes currently offered, making cycling a more appealing option for more people.

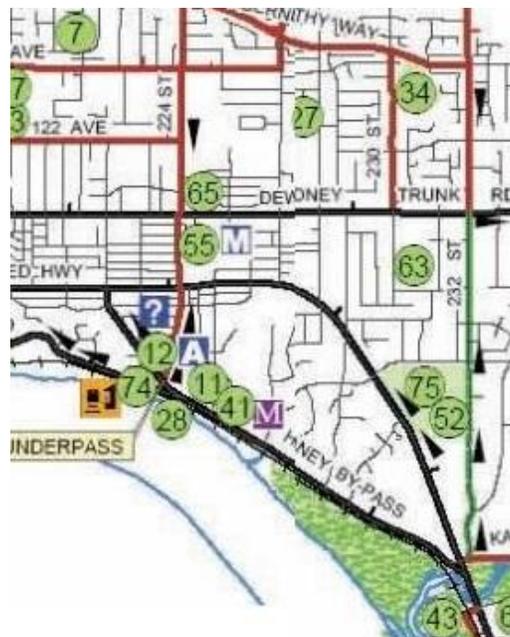
Policy 7 - 4 in the Official Community Plan states that "*Maple Ridge will place an emphasis on increasing choice for non-automobile transportation modes.*"

According to the 2014 Transportation Plan, "the designation of a street as a bicycle route does not exclude the use of other streets by cyclists. In fact, **all city roads** should be considered bicycle streets."

Lougheed Highway through the town core is marked as a "major street shared lane bike route" on the [Translink bike map](#), albeit "informal", which means that this route is "recommended by cyclists but does not have special treatment for cyclists":



It is also recommended as an "acceptable" bike route (marked in black) on this [bike route map](#), produced by the City, and presently only available on-line. This is a close-up of the downtown area of the same map (red routes are classified as "excellent", green routes are "very good"):



As you may know, HUB Cycling has made a region-wide [UnGapTheMap](#) inventory and [map](#) of the most important gaps in the cycling network. This is the gap-map of Maple Ridge's town core:



As you can see, our committee considers Lougheed Highway, including the section through the town core, a "gap" that should be made safer so that people on bikes have the option to quickly, conveniently and safely travel through the town core, as well as to conveniently ride to and stop at our local shops and restaurants, just like people in cars.

Changes planned for the Haney Bypass in 2019 to improve safety for people in cars include lengthening the acceleration/merge lane from River Road eastbound and eliminating the shoulder along the entire length of the acceleration lane. This will require people on bikes to share the merge lane with cars accelerating to a speed of about 70 to 80 km/h. If the project goes ahead as planned, the south side of the Haney Bypass will essentially be eliminated as a viable bike route for all cyclists, even for the strong and fearless (i.e. going in easterly direction only).

Since no changes can be made to the design of the acceleration lane on the Bypass and safety of people on bikes is also not addressed on Lougheed Highway through the town core in this Lougheed Enhancement project - the safety of people on bikes will be even more seriously compromised than it already is on the few fast, direct and convenient bike routes still recommended on the available bike maps to people riding in east-west direction in this area.

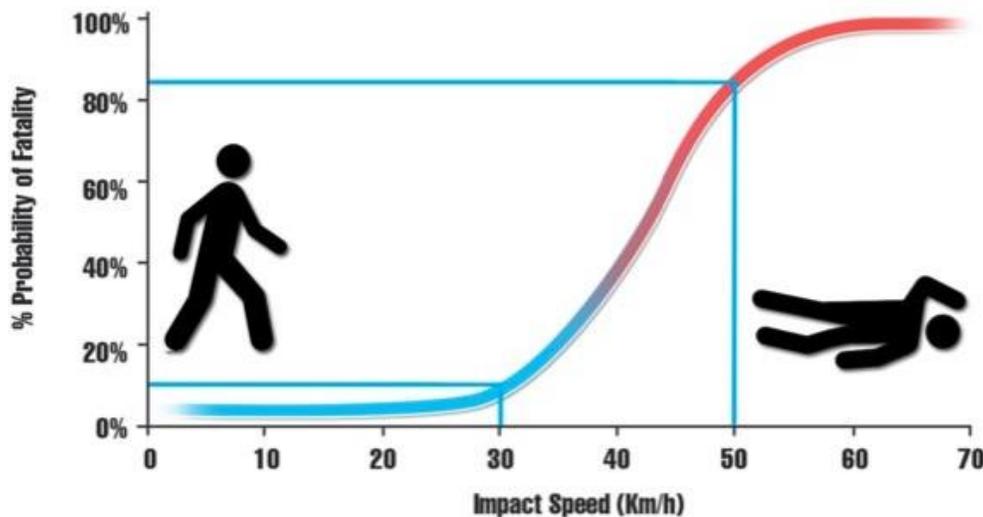
Unfortunately, the enhancements that were already completed on Lougheed Highway west of 224th Street and east of 226th Street have made cycling more dangerous due to narrower travel lanes without providing any safe space for bicycles.

After "improvements", 85% speed west of 224th is 49.3 km/h. East of 226th, 85% speed is 54.7 km/h. These speeds are too high for people on bikes to safely mix with car traffic without separation.



A similar road lay-out is proposed for the section between 224th and 226 Streets, where presently 85% speeds are 51.1 km/h. There is no reason to expect any meaningful reduction in speeds along this section.

The graph below shows the speeds at which crashes are likely fatal for pedestrians (and people on bikes):



In view of the high probability of death of a person on a bike in the case of a crash involving a car on Loughheed Highway (over 80% at 50 km/h), it's clear why our HUB Committee cannot, in good conscience, recommend Loughheed Highway as a fast and convenient bike route, neither with the existing, nor with the proposed road lay-out, as cyclist safety is seriously compromised.

In light of the fact that the Haney Bypass is a provincial highway, rendering the route undesirable for all but local residents, we therefore kindly request you to, once again ensure the needs of people on bikes are considered for the Loughheed Highway corridor through the town core. Preserving and improving this fast and convenient bike route will, at the same time, also achieve all the project's stated objectives regarding liveability, revitalization, beautification, enhancing the shopping experience, encouraging future investment in the town centre and improving pedestrian walkability.

With kind regards,

Barry Bellamy, co-chair
 HUB Cycling
 Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Chapter

JC/BB/LJ/DW