

February 1, 2021

To: The Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure,
Minister.Transportation@gov.bc.ca
Bowinn Ma, Minister of State for Infrastructure, Minister.SI@gov.bc.ca

Subject: Request for meeting to discuss Hwy 7 widening between 266th and 287th Streets,
Maple Ridge

Dear Mr. Fleming and Ms. Ma,

The purpose of this email is to request a meeting with you, to discuss our concerns about the proposed MoTI design for the Hwy 7 widening from 266th to 287th project.

Correspondence to date

We attended a design information session for the project, presented by MoTI on September 22, 2020. We subsequently provided our feedback in [this letter](#) to the Design Team. [The response](#) we received from MoTI did not adequately address our concerns. TransLink expressed similar serious concerns with the proposed design in [this e-mail to MoTI](#).

Project scope and design

Speeds on this highway are on average 90+ km/h and present volumes are 24,000 motor vehicles movements per day (projected to increase to about 35,000 over the next 25 years). Highway 7 presently already sees a high percentage of truck traffic of about 7%, which is expected to increase dramatically along the Highway 7 corridor once the planned Vancouver Intermodal Facility expansion by CP Rail is completed.

The project scope includes the widening of the highway to four vehicle lanes, a centre median barrier, and a 2 m wide shoulder with an outside concrete barrier.

The photo below illustrates where people are expected to bike and walk:



Our concerns

The proposed design for this project does not follow the design guidelines of your own BC Active Transportation Design Guide. Instead, the design follows guidelines from the Transportation Association of Canada, which are outdated and do not reflect current best practice. The proposed design will result in dangerous infrastructure for those who want to actively transport themselves along this important corridor.

Daphne Toumbanakis, a 23 year old woman, was killed this past year on Hwy 7, less than 1 km west of where this project begins. She was cycling on a 2m wide shoulder between 4 lanes of traffic and a concrete barrier - the exact infrastructure that is proposed for this new project! Had she been on the other side of the concrete barrier, in a protected bicycle lane, Daphne would likely be alive today. The bottom line here is that what is being proposed is dangerous for cyclists and other active transportation users.

Important regional and local designated bike route

According to MoTI and the City of Maple Ridge, Highway 7 is an important designated bike route and as such an integral part of the regional and local cycling network. TransLink designates this route as part of the Major Bikeway Network. As well, Metro Vancouver has determined that Highway 7 is an important part of the Regional Greenway 2050 network.

Our asks

Your government has produced important and inspiring policy documents, such as Move.Commute.Connect, which talks about making active transportation in our province an important part of improving health and the environment. Importantly, BC has also made the commitment to work towards eliminating traffic deaths in our Province with its Vision Zero strategy.

We ask you to fulfill the commitments made in Move.Commute.Connect and the Moving to Vision Zero document. To do this, we must build infrastructure that is safe so that people will feel safe to get out of their cars and use a form of active transportation.

1) Funding

It is important to not just talk the talk, but walk the walk: this means prioritizing adequate funding to facilitate the building of safe infrastructure along this stretch of highway. The time to start that is now! If it doesn't get built now, it likely won't happen for at least another 30 years.

2) Work to resolve constraints

Much effort has gone into resolving the physical constraints in order to fit in the two additional vehicle lanes and the median concrete barrier. The stated objective of this project is to improve safety of motor vehicle occupants, as well as to reduce anticipated congestion.

We ask that the safety and comfort of vulnerable road users be given the same consideration and effort along this important designated bike route, and that the Design Team be given the task to resolve any further constraints in order to provide an adequately protected space for cycling and walking along this stretch of Hwy 7.

We thank you in advance for providing a virtual meeting time for us to meet with you to discuss these concerns and look forward to hearing when you are available. We ask that you coordinate meeting details with Jenny Wright (jenwright@shaw.ca) and Jeff Leigh (jcleigh@telus.net).

Sincerely,

Ivan Chow, co-chair HUB Cycling Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Committee
Jackie Chow, member HUB Cycling Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Committee
Jenny Wright, member HUB Cycling Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Committee
Jeff Leigh, Chair, Regional Advisory Committee, HUB Cycling

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About HUB Cycling

HUB Cycling is a charitable not for profit organization that has spent over 22 years removing barriers to cycling in Metro Vancouver, while cultivating the health, environmental, and economic benefits that active transportation can bring. HUB has educated thousands of people, motivated thousands more, and championed improvements that [#UnGapTheMap](#) to create a connected cycling network. HUB Cycling's mission is to get more people cycling more often. HUB Cycling has close to 3,000 members and more than 45,000 direct supporters. HUB Cycling has 10 volunteer committees across Metro Vancouver that encourage cycling for all ages and abilities (AAA) in municipalities across Metro Vancouver. For more information, visit bikehub.ca.