



April 14, 2014

The Honourable Naomi Yamamoto, M.L.A. North Vancouver-Lonsdale
Ms. Jane Thornthwaite, M.L.A. North Vancouver-Seymour
Mr. Shane Simpson, M.L.A. Vancouver-Hastings
Mr. Richard Lee, M.L.A. Burnaby North

Cc: The Honourable Todd Stone, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
Patrick Livolsi, Regional Director South Coast Region, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Graeme Schimpf, Operations Manager North Shore, Howe Sound & Sunshine Coast, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Jay Porter, Senior Project Manager, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Ironworkers Memorial Bridge cycling access: risk of serious injury/death

Dear Ms. Yamamoto, Ms. Thornthwaite, Mr. Simpson, and Mr. Lee,

HUB is a charitable non-profit that encourages cycling for all ages and abilities in Metro Vancouver to improve the quality of our communities and local economies, our health and the environment.

HUB is very pleased that the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) is widening the sidewalks on the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge. The wider sidewalks will greatly increase bridge capacity and safety while promoting active transportation.

We are, however, very concerned about the high level of risk for injury or even fatality during construction and after project completion. All sidewalk users (both north and southbound) need to share one sidewalk during construction. On the North Shore, along the Main Street on-ramp, cyclists and pedestrians travel in both directions on a narrow, high curb sidewalk without a barrier that would prevent them from falling into the ramp vehicle traffic. Such conditions are more dangerous than on the Stanley Park Causeway sidewalks (where a cyclist fell in front of a bus in May 2013) because of the bi-directional cycling use and poor visibility due to the ramp curve.

When construction moves to the other side of the bridge in August 2014, the situation along the Dollarton off-ramp will be even worse because vehicle speeds are typically much higher as cars and trucks come off the highway, the sidewalk is even narrower and sight lines are poorer.

We have been continuously trying to address and resolve the safety issues with MoTI staff since before construction started in January this year. Warning signs for cyclists and pavement markings have been added, but the sidewalks are simply too narrow and exposed to the highway traffic for a viable bi-directional bike route. We were also unhappy to learn



that the current bridge fencing and sidewalk widening project budget does not include widening the sidewalks leading to and from the bridge.

We ask that the considerable risk to bridge users on foot and on bikes is mitigated by implementing the following measures:

1. Immediately widen the Main Street on-ramp sidewalk to at least 3.5 metres.
2. Widen the Dollarton Highway off-ramp sidewalk to at least 3.5 metres before August 2014.
3. Build a fence barrier along both sidewalks to prevent people from falling into motor vehicle traffic on the highway ramps, similar to the one being designed by MoTI for the Stanley Park Causeway.
4. Move the Dollarton Highway off-ramp crosswalk further east, where drivers can see people cross and sidewalk users can see approaching cars.

These measures will help to mitigate the immediate high risk during bridge construction in 2014 and 2015 and provide safe infrastructure afterwards. If MoTI does not provide a reasonably safe bike route across the bridge during construction, a shuttle bus service for people walking and cycling is needed. However, widening the sidewalks would provide a better and more long-term solution.

Further access and safety improvements are recommended at both ends of the bridge to make the province's investment into widening the bridge sidewalks meaningfully safe across the full route. HUB and the BC Cycling Coalition submitted a list of priority access improvements to MoTI in October 2012. MoTI completed a study of access improvements in 2013 that we hope will be released soon. A copy of the HUB/BC Cycling Coalition priority list is available here: http://wiki.bikehub.ca/northshore/images/c/c9/2012-10-30_HUB-BCCC_Ironworkers_Memorial_Bridge.pdf

A meeting within the next two weeks would be most helpful to discuss the bridge access issues and solutions. The number of people riding across the bridge is growing by the week with the approach of summer, which greatly exacerbates the risk of collisions and mishaps on the narrow sidewalk.

Sincerely,

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