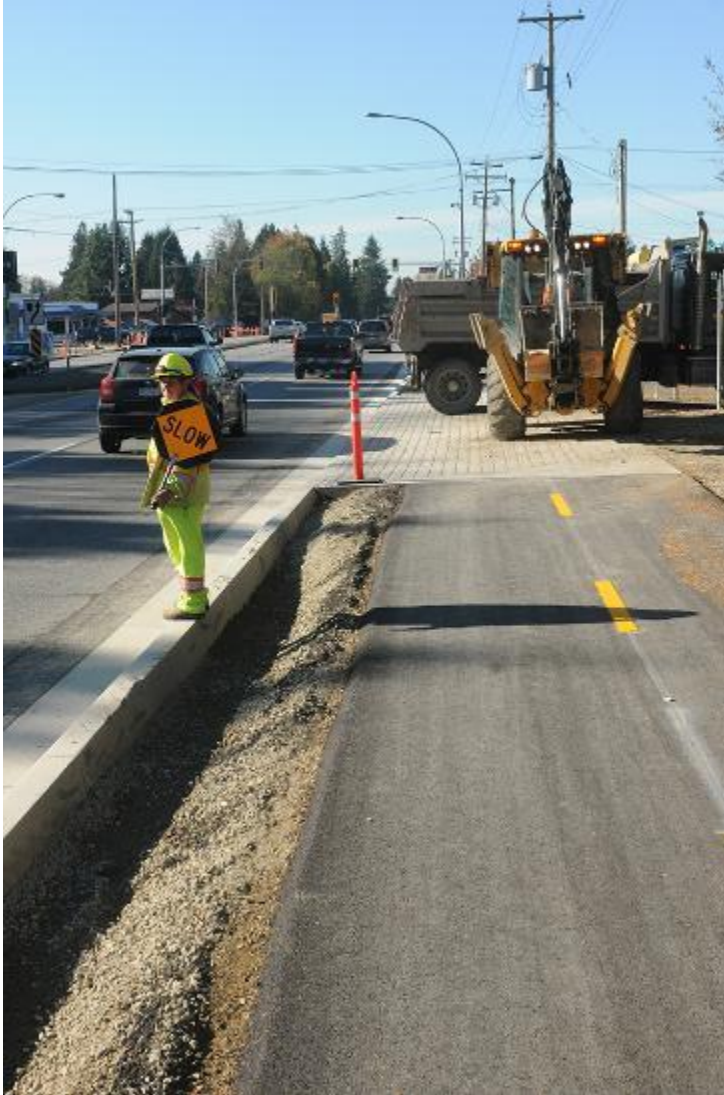


Only cars are not allowed on new path along Lougheed

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The new bike lane on Lougheed Highway extends from 216th to Laity streets.
— *Image Credit: The News/Files*

It continues to amaze me how some [vocal bike lane opponents](#) continue to be adamant that people on bikes do not deserve a safe place to ride.

The most common reason is that “they don’t pay for the roads.”

Don't they? Actually, most cycling is done on municipal roads, which are mostly paid for through property taxes. Whether you bike or drive, you pay property taxes if you own a home, and if you rent, your share of the property taxes are included in that.

Recently there have been some articles and letters in our local papers about the "astronomical cost of the bike lanes" along Loughheed Highway between 216th and Laity streets.

Our councillors, as well as district engineers often refer to the path as a bike lane or a cycle track (both for the exclusive use of cyclists), neither of which adequately describe the purpose of this path.

The correct term would be "[multi-use path](#)".

Everyone is able to use it, not only people on bikes or trikes, but also pedestrians, with or without dogs, roller blades, non-motorized scooters and so on.

Only cars are not allowed.

Slowly but surely the connectivity of our cycling network improves, and this particular path provides an important connection in the second east-west route for people on bikes.

We now no longer need to ride on the narrow River Road – angering some drivers and running the risk of getting clipped – to get around the hospital. Future signage will help people find their way along this route.

Something that many people don't seem to understand is that the multi-use path is only one part of a much bigger project.

The new storm sewer pipes along the length of the path, a culvert and a retaining wall, as well as improvements to the intersection at Laity St. are all considerable cost components.

A number of big concrete driveways were added, as well, which can hardly be called "bike path."

These are not merely meant to carry the weight of a bike and its rider, but they're pretty heavy duty since they need to be able to carry the weight of cars and trucks.

Cyclists wouldn't worry much about crumbling asphalt curbs either, but they were definitely ready for replacement.

Concrete curbs are also not a cheap item.

We will be getting lighting as well along this stretch of a pretty dark corridor, which will perhaps start looking a little more welcoming to those entering our town core.

A short stretch of “multi-use path” south of Loughheed Hwy. is still to be added, which is basically just going to be an extension of the existing sidewalk, that cyclists are allowed to use anyway in Maple Ridge.

For now.

The multi-use path itself only makes up less than one fifth of the total cost of the entire project. Yes, that’s right.

The cost of this multi-use path is approximately \$200,000.

We’re told that’s the way it works: sometimes cycling improvements, such as white lines to delineate bike lanes, piggyback onto other road construction projects.

And sometimes it’s the other way round, such as in this case.

Certain improvements are needed both moving forward with providing viable and safe transportation options, as well as future redevelopment, but also to improve the aesthetic appearance of this particular section of highway, which I would argue is important as a gateway to our town core.

One of these days I think I’ll write about the excessive spending on and subsidies of car infrastructure.

So stay tuned.

In the meantime, get out there and start riding or walking that beautiful multi-use path. Cyclists will be very happy to share it with you.