



132 Ave. improvements: gravel path and barriers

Mayor and Council,

With increased development in north and east Maple Ridge, our roads are getting busier, which results in more dangerous conditions for cycling. Separation between bicycles and motor vehicle traffic - especially along designated bike routes - is necessary in order to encourage more people to cycle more often, and reduce congestion.

As you know, 132nd Ave. is part of the cycling network, and as such should be prioritized for improvements to facilitate utilitarian as well as recreational trips by cyclists of all ages and abilities.

In our submission for the 2014 Transportation Plan we stated the following about 132nd Ave.:

"Depending on the cost involved and other competing priorities, we support in principle the proposal by the Alouette Valley Association and the Silver Valley Neighbourhood Association for a recreational roadway on 132nd Ave."

The proposal by the AVA for 132nd Ave. can be found [here](#), and includes a paved multi-use trail as well as a horse trail.

Due to lack of funding, a compromise was made between local residents and the District, and we saw the construction of the first section of a horse trail to be shared by all users other than cars: pedestrians, with dogs and strollers, horses, and cyclists of all kinds. We were assured that the asphalt tailings in the path surface would eventually - after some nice hot weather - compact into a nice smooth surface that would be suitable for cycling.

Despite some scorching hot days last summer, the surface is still coarse and loose in places, which impacts cycling safety, as well as use by strollers and wheelchairs. Recently we have seen the construction of more gravel path and installation of more barriers on 132nd Ave. east of 224th Street.



We already informed the Engineering Department (Michael Eng) last year after the construction of the first section of the path, that the coarse gravel surface of the path was unsuitable for bicycles other than mountain bikes. Road- and other cyclists need a more comfortable, safer and faster surface for their travels, but the barriers actually made it significantly more dangerous to cycle on the road than before. As a result, fewer road cyclists now use 132nd Ave.

The 2014 Transportation Plan shows 132nd Ave. as an arterial, and states *"long-term traffic volumes along this corridor are projected to reach almost 1,000 vehicles in the peak directions during the morning and afternoon peak hours."* As no shoulders are provided, this busy, high speed commuter road clearly presents dangers for people who bike on the road.

The improvements are listed in the Transportation plan as cycling improvements. According to the Transportation Plan *"The order-of-magnitude cost estimate for improvements along 132 Avenue west between 224 Avenue and 232 Street is estimated to be approximately \$3.8 million to \$4.3 million."* This means that this project is by far the most costly cycling project that is planned for the next twenty years.

We appreciate that local residents have been instrumental in making this horse trail happen, but we would appreciate it if these significant concerns of cyclists with regard to this important cycling project could be addressed.

One possible solution might be to lay a strip of asphaltic cement with a paving machine (not hand raked, which would produce too rough a path to ride at a decent pace).

Some photos of the path have been added below.

With kind regards,

Jackie Chow

HUB Cycling

Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Chapter





Your Cycling Connection

