



Your Cycling Connection

bikehub.ca



December 6, 2021

To: Mayor and Council
Cc: Forrest Smith, Director of Engineering
Mark Halpin, Manager of Transportation
David Pollock, General Manager Engineering Services
Sarah Freigang, Urban Systems
Allison Clavelle, Urban Systems

Dear Mayor and Council,

Now that we're in Phase 3 of the update of the Strategic Transportation Plan, and the City is requesting further feedback from the community with regard to the vision, goals and preliminary long-term networks, we would like to refer to our [initial feedback](#), dated May 28, 2021, which was already quite comprehensive.

In addition, we can offer the following comments.

Vision and goals

We agree in principle with the draft vision statement and goals.

The one goal that we feel needs further clarification is: *"A cost effective transportation system where municipal expenditures have a high return on investment."* This is a very loose goal, as it depends on how the ROI is defined, and which costs and benefits are considered. There's a growing body of research on the cost-benefit analysis of active transportation. One example is a just published report by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute¹. A British report² dating from 2010 concluded that ***"Almost all of the studies identified report economic benefits of walking and cycling interventions which are highly significant. The median result for all data identified is 13:1 and for UK data alone the median figure is higher, at 19:1."***

Convenience and directness

Convenience and directness are both very important aspects of a cycling network. In places where cycling is popular, convenience is most often given as the reason for choosing this mode. In order to encourage a modal shift, we would like to see both incorporated in the strategic directions for cycling.

Equitable transportation options

We're seeing increasing inequality in our society as a whole and locally in Maple Ridge. The draft [Transport2050](#) Plan calls for affordable transportation options for everyone. We would like this included in the strategic directions for Maple Ridge. Everyone should have access to affordable transportation options, regardless of income level.

¹ [Evaluating Active Transport Benefits and Costs - Guide to Valuing Walking and Cycling Improvements and Encouragement Programs](#) (Nov. 2021) - Victoria Transport Policy Institute

² [Value for Money: An Economic Assessment of Investment in Walking and Cycling](#) (2010)

Targets and performance measurement

Since our initial feedback earlier this year, in which we mentioned the need to set targets, the [CleanBC Roadmap for 2030 Plan](#) has been released. One of the actions listed in this plan is “an accelerated shift toward active transportation and public transit (30% by 2030; 40% by 2040; 50% by 2050). We need to do our part.

We need to have clear targets for each mode and measure our progress. Until now, performance of our road network - or Level of Service - has been measured only for cars. Performance for other modes needs to be measured as well, for safety, convenience, efficiency, connectivity, accessibility and comfort. What gets measured is more likely to get done.

Funding

We need to build for the users we want, not the users we have. The funding allocated to cycling should reflect our long-term targets.

15-minute neighbourhoods/complete communities

Neighbourhood and village commercial nodes and mixed-use development are important to establish 15-minute neighbourhoods where more people can access most of their needs within a short walk or bike ride from their home. Just as important is the infrastructure to allow people to safely and conveniently walk or bike to their destination. We cannot have one without the other.

Size of vehicles, speeding and noise levels from traffic

All of the above are significant deterrents to people choosing active transportation, and vehicles today tend to be large, noisy and fast. The municipality cannot regulate the size or design of vehicles, but it can help reduce speeding and noise levels, which will help make our streets more people-friendly. The most effective way is by designing our roads more like human habitat, i.e. for slow travel, rather than primarily for speedy travel by cars. Road design is truly key.

Reducing speeds will improve safety for vulnerable road users, who are disproportionately more often the victims of car crashes than car occupants. More than one hundred people die as a result of car crashes in Metro Vancouver every year. Two in five people killed are vulnerable road users. Tens of thousands more people are injured. According to the Transport2050 draft plan, *“the reality is that we can prevent these tragedies by taking a proactive, preventative, and systems approach that prioritizes traffic safety as a key public health issue”*.³ We already mentioned the need for a Vision Zero approach in our letter of May 28, but the importance of this cannot be overstated.

Noise from traffic leads to sleep disruption, increased risk of hypertension, coronary heart disease and diabetes⁴. Slower speeds mean reduced noise levels both from engines and tires.

³ [Draft Transport2050 Plan](#), p. 63, 4.1

⁴ [Turning up the volume on the health impacts of noise](#), Ryerson University Newsletter, Winter 2021

Speeding in our community is a very frequent topic of conversation and complaints on the various neighbourhood Facebook groups and it is one of the three top causes of car crashes. The City receives many requests for traffic calming in any given year, however between 2019 and (June) 2021 on average less than 0.5% of these requests reached the final stage of implementation:



Given that requests for traffic calming rarely result in traffic calming measures actually being implemented, we feel that the process and the criteria for dealing with these traffic calming requests need to be reviewed.

All traffic calming measures require the consideration for safety of all vulnerable road users, including people cycling. For example, curb extensions can and should be made permeable for people on bikes.

Preliminary cycling map:

A list of suggestions for the preliminary cycling map is attached.

Regional Greenway trails and local trails

Metro Vancouver’s Regional Greenway trails - which are supposed to be for walking and cycling, and, where possible, for horses - as well as some local trails can provide useful cycling routes or connections and should be considered for inclusion in the transportation cycling map where appropriate. Some of the trails that are shown on the preliminary cycling map are presently not accessible or suitable for all ages and abilities cycling.

Our HUB Local Committee has recently done a thorough assessment of the Regional Greenway trails in our area, which is attached to this letter. This assessment should be helpful to determine which trails should be included on the transportation cycling map, and which trails need to be improved for AAA cycling.

Trail development in Maple Ridge has for decades focused on trails for horses and mountain biking, but not so much for all ages and abilities cycling. We would like to see trail development become more inclusive. Considering that about 60% of the population is in the “Interested but Concerned”⁵ group, this is a large target market that can be better served on trails in our city.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our feedback.

With kind regards,

Barry Bellamy/Ivan Chow
Co-chairs
HUB Cycling
Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Committee

JC/BB/IC/SG/AdW/NC/JL

Attached:

- #UnGapTheMap gap list
- #UnGapTheMap gap map
- State of Cycling map
- List of suggestions for preliminary draft long-term cycling network
- Metro Vancouver Regional Greenways assessment by HUB Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows with maps

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.

⁵ [Cycling for Everyone, A Regional Cycling Strategy for Metro Vancouver](#), page 20