



March 18, 2020

Mayor and Council  
City of North Vancouver

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

**Re: Esplanade, Safe Mobility and Temporary Changes**

HUB Cycling is a charitable organization working to get more people cycling, more often and making cycling safer and better through education, action and events. More cycling reduces greenhouse gas emissions, relieves traffic congestion and means healthier, happier and more connected communities.

In our letter to the City of North Vancouver, dated November 4, 2019 we acknowledged that:

“We must prioritize financial resources and are pleased to see in the preliminary draft budget, significant funding in 2021 allocated for street improvements along the Esplanade corridor. This area serves many different roadway users, people cycling, walking, and driving, goods movement and delivery, and is a major transit route and home to many businesses. It is a complex corridor and requires a high level of expertise and care in design and implementation.”

We recognize the city’s efforts to implement a safe mobility lane along Esplanade in the future, perhaps in 2021 or 2022. However, we continue to receive feedback from people cycling about the dangerous nature of the existing Esplanade bike lanes and we would like HUB Cycling North Shore local committee’s position to be on public record.

The existing bike lane runs along parked cars with no buffer from the “door zone.” This is not considered a safe design. The local committee is requesting immediate, temporary changes to improve safety today while the new protected lanes are being designed.

## **Rapid Bus**

We are particularly concerned that the addition of the rapid bus line will make this already dangerous road section more unsafe for people riding in the existing bike lane. Have a look at the [video gathered by Brent Hillier](#) which records how buses and trucks interact with people using the existing non-buffered bike lane. If there is room, bus drivers often move over to provide more room. If there is no room to their left, they can't move, and the video shows the lack of room between a bus and traffic on the other side of the bike lane.

We are concerned about future potential conflict zones in April, when the new rapid bus route is in service along Esplanade. Because the off-street cycling facility along this corridor will not be built in the most ideal scenario until 2021, we see the need for extra caution when buses are added to the mix. To reduce the possible increase in conflicts, we recommend the temporary removal of all parking along both sides of this corridor except where safe, off-street facilities exist.

While buses and service vehicles will be turning right and left into and out of Rogers, people cycling may be crossing on the same green light. In addition, there will be a new pedestrian crossing at this intersection. We strongly recommend that different signals separate the movements for each type of road user: car, bus, pedestrian and bike.

## **Truck Route**

Esplanade is the truck route. Because people riding in the bike lane are exposed directly to wide 18-wheel trucks travelling beside them at less than arms length, we recommend the temporary removal of all parking along both sides of this corridor– except where off-street facilities exist.

Alternatively, we recommend a new traffic rule be implemented: “Trucks must travel in the middle lane unless accessing a turn lane.” This would reduce the chances for a truck / mobility lane user conflict. This rule should be extended beyond Esplanade to include Cotton Road and Main Street to the east and in conjunction with the District of North Vancouver.

## **Road Speed**

We understand that as an arterial, speeds on Esplanade are not in the City's purview. We recommend the city work with the necessary jurisdictions to reduce the posted speed for Esplanade to 30 kilometres per hour. In Vancouver, the posted speed on a 6-block segment of East Hastings Street, also a designated arterial, was reduced to 30 kilometres per hour in 2011.

## **Delivery Vehicles**

Delivery vehicles often block existing bike lanes on both sides of Esplanade. This might reflect a lack of delivery bays in the area. Policy regarding delivery times and vehicle types may help to amend this ongoing situation. Where the city has implemented flex posts on the lower part of Chesterfield, delivery trucks parking in bike lanes has stopped. Along Esplanade the same flex posts could be temporarily implemented along with parking removal, until safe mobility lanes are in place.

## **Public Perception**

The North Shore committee of HUB Cycling believes residents and businesses along the Esplanade corridor have reached a turning point in terms of their attitude toward traffic, parking, noise and danger. We do not think that people in the area would be “upset” about parking removal or other measures to improve the safety of people moving through the area. Rather, they would be in favor of measures that make Esplanade a more human landscape by lowering vehicle speeds and reducing traffic caused by drivers looking for on-street parking.

## **Summary Request for Immediate Temporary Changes**

To improve safety for all users, HUB North Shore requests the following changes to Esplanade immediately:

### ***North Side***

- Temporarily remove all parking stalls until the new off-street mobility lanes are in place two or three years from now
- Remove the shrub to the west of the pedestrian overpass to improve sight lines for all users to vehicles entering and exiting the parkade

### ***South Side***

- Temporarily remove all parking stalls until the new off-street mobility lanes are in place two or three years from now

### ***Entire Route***

- New rule for trucks to travel in the middle lane only unless accessing a turning lane
- Speed reduction to 30 kilometres per hour

Except for the speed reduction and separate signals for different modes, which should remain permanent, the measures we recommend regarding parking above are temporary, since planned new mobility lanes will be protected. Once safe lanes are implemented, parking can be restored.

Thank-you to the City for becoming a Vision Zero city (2016) and for taking safe mobility seriously. Please provide the leadership necessary to create safer conditions now along the Esplanade corridor before the implementation of safe off-street facilities in future years.

Yours sincerely,

Don Piercy,  
Chair, HUB North Shore Committee

Erika Rathje, Heather Drugge  
HUB North Shore  
City of North Vancouver Liaisons

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