

Subject: RE: Recent Meeting with TransLink Regarding Marine Dr Bike Lanes

Date: Sat, 27 May 2023 13:26:55 -0700

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Dear Shaun; thank you for your frank message. We welcome this opportunity to revisit the proposals for buffered bike lanes along Marine Drive between 25th and 31st Streets. Our analysis of the comments from Council members who spoke at the May 15 meeting echoes our initial reaction to the preliminary proposals. While painted lane separation does not offer the same level of protection as a curbed lane, in this case the narrowing of the vehicle lanes and resulting vehicle speed reduction would be a significant contribution to increased safety.

The appropriate level of expenditure of resources and goodwill is, of course, a matter for Council to decide. We also understand the need for pragmatism in use of public funds and recognize in this case the extensive adaptation required to widen the two-lane Marine Drive to accommodate protected bike lanes compliant with BCATDG standards, not to mention the disruption to the access arrangements to the 85 private properties fronting the roadway, could amount to a costly project for an indeterminate benefit.

Traffic Data. We must point out that the pertinence of our comments to date has been hampered by a lack of fundamental traffic data that would help justify any solution. As you know, fully protected bike lanes are recommended in high-volume, high-speed traffic situations. It would be important to know, as requested earlier, the actual circumstances pertaining to that section of Marine Drive which justify the proposed buffered lanes solution, with or without delineators.

Our perception, as occasional daytime users of that spacious but variable width section of Marine Drive between 25th and 31st streets, is one of moderate but high-speed motor vehicle volumes combined with random roadside parking and relatively infrequent bus and medium-sized truck use throughout the day. To be considered also is the relatively large volume of recreational cyclists using the road, especially at weekends and on some evenings, often in large groups, sometimes in peloton formation. The number of commuter or utilitarian trips appears to be growing but is still relatively low although often occurring at peak traffic periods.

More concretely, reported ICBC accident statistics for 2016 through 2020 show that Marine Drive throughout West Vancouver is evidently fraught for people on bikes. ICBC identifies 28 crashes on Marine Drive involving a person on a bike. Four (7%) of these occurred at or near the 29th and 31st Street intersections where the roadway narrows significantly.

At present, the section between 25th and 31st is not comfortable for people on bikes at most times of day. It is nevertheless better in width and sight distance than many other sections of Marine Drive to the west, and will provide users with a convenient opportunity to use the 31st/Westmount route option and avoid the hazards of western Marine Drive. The absence of street lighting along the western parts of Marine Drive increases exponentially the level of discomfort for nighttime use by people on bikes. Buffered or protected bike lanes would be a significant improvement at all times.

Demand It must be recognized that given the heavy use of Marine Drive by sports cyclists, often in large groups, the proposed bike lanes would not serve all people using bikes. Experienced riders may well continue to use the motor vehicle lanes. The main attraction of the bike lanes would be to offer a degree of

separation from traffic for people riding singly or in small groups who are uncomfortable sharing a busy vehicle lane. Even without delineators, the proposed bike lane width, often less than 1.8m, is inadequate for safe overtaking of one bike rider by another. That manoeuvre would require a potentially hazardous shift into the vehicle lane by one rider or the other. Not all drivers will comply with the proposed 1.0m minimum passing clearance required by the upcoming amendment to the Motor Vehicle Act.

Separation From a safety perception, use of vertical delineators would greatly enhance the appearance of physical separation as would a curb, although neither (other than a barrier curb) would prevent a motor vehicle from straying deliberately or accidentally into the bike lane. However, as you're aware, a continuous physical separation adjoining a single motor vehicle lane would make transit stops or service pick-ups and deliveries to the many roadside properties nearly impossible, that is without special access arrangements if other motor vehicles are not to be routinely obstructed. The BCATDG Part F emphasizes the unimpeded movement of goods and people along arterial routes as a priority. Also, as you recognize, maintenance of the bike lanes including sweeping and snow clearance would be more complicated by continuous physical separation. We're aware that removable posts have been found impractical by neighbouring municipalities which have adopted other solutions. We assume you are in consultation with the neighbouring municipalities regarding their experience with the extensive system of protected bike lanes adopted there.

Maintenance The apparent lack of appropriate maintenance equipment in the District fleet for separated bike lanes is a serious concern. Frequent clearance of the debris which typically accumulates at the fringes of roadways as well as snow clearance is essential to a functional bike lane. Our experience shows that flexible delineator posts are easily damaged if clipped by a motor vehicle and a fallen post can block the block lane unless replaced. Their replacement appears to be a high maintenance task.

The regular clearance of debris and snow from multi-use paths in District parks suggests that the technology which could be brought to bear does already exist in some form. If not, consideration must be given to obtaining a means of clearing narrow lanes, possibly include the application of brine in the rare snowy situations on the North Shore coast. That technology is used by DNV and CNV.

In conclusion, we welcome any effort to improve infrastructure for biking and naturally prefer options that significantly improve safety for people on bikes and which would encourage their use by those who are interested in cycling but concerned about their safety in doing so. Although we have not yet seen the detailed design, we appreciate that the planned use of flexible delineator posts could provide a measure of improved safety at approaches to intersections along the route especially in combination with the abovementioned short rigid separators. We therefore support proceeding as planned and only installing the delineators on the approaches to intersections as a trial at this time, which would provide feedback about practical future improvements. In that context, despite the absence of practical solutions to frontage property access and lane maintenance, installing more flexible delineator posts may be one way to satisfy the TransLink appraiser as well as the four Councillors who expressed a desire at the 15 May Council meeting to see some form of physical separation between the bike and automobile traffic lanes. That would certainly be regarded as beneficial to users on bikes.

We hope this response will be helpful to you. We appreciate your efforts and collaboration in making West Vancouver a safer place for people on bikes. With best regards,

Paul Stott, Peter Scholefield and Mike Cormack

Cc Don Piercy