



September 5, 2017

Judy Dobrowolski  
Capital Projects Communications  
BC Hydro  
333 Dunsmuir St.  
Vancouver, BC V6B 5R3  
(By Email)

Re: Proposed BC Hydro Pedestrian and Cycling Bridge across the Grandview Cut

Dear Judy;

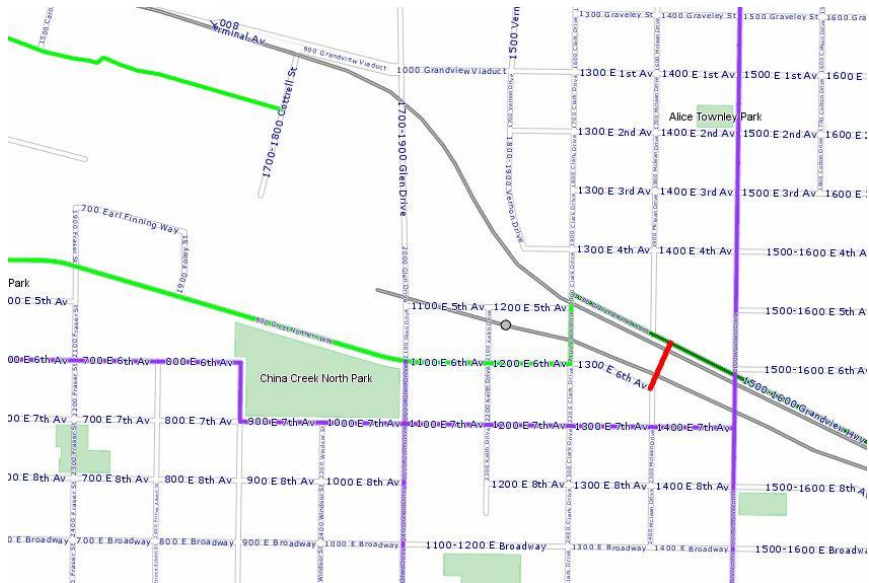
HUB Cycling is a charitable organization that works to make cycling better through education, events and collaboration. We are Metro Vancouver's leader in making cycling an attractive choice for everyone. We are writing with comments on BC Hydro's proposed pedestrian and cycling bridge across the Grandview Cut from N Grandview Hwy to 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, at McLean Drive.

## Overview

HUB Cycling representatives attended the recent pop up events that BC Hydro held, and spoke with representatives of both BC Hydro and the City of Vancouver. We also contacted the City engineering team about their plans to connect to this potential bridge. We appreciate the effort that was put into engaging the public in this proposal. In general, HUB Cycling is supportive of additional walking and cycling infrastructure. In this case, the proposed bridge does not appear to meet a specific need for people cycling, and so we are providing comments on the usefulness of the bridge to aid in your decision process.

## Context

The bridge would connect from the Central Valley Greenway, a popular recreational and commuting bikeway which runs along N. Grandview Highway, south to 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. For clarity in this communication, Grandview Highway is considered to run east-west. We understand there would be a multi purpose path (MUP) on the bridge, shared by people walking and people on bikes. One block east of McLean Drive is the Woodland local bike route, running north-south, which includes a crossing of the Grandview Cut. One block west is Clark Drive, with a bridge across the Grandview Cut running north-south, and which also includes a MUP for people walking and people on bikes. From the intersection of Clark Drive and Grandview Highway, people on bikes are currently required to jog one block south to continue west on 6<sup>th</sup> Ave and Great Northern Way. Apart from 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, people on bikes also use the 7<sup>th</sup> Ave local street bikeway. These routes are shown below in Figure 1, from the City of Vancouver's VanMap application.



**Figure 1 - Proposed BC Hydro walking and cycling bridge indicated in red.  
Protected bikeways in light green, painted bikeways in dark green  
Local street bikeways in purple**

What should also be considered in the context of this plan is the City of Vancouver’s recently adopted False Creek Flats Plan.<sup>1</sup> A map of proposed walking and cycling routes from the False Creek Flats plan is shown below in Figure 2.



**Figure 2 - Proposed False Creek Flats walking and cycling routes  
The connection to the Central Valley Greenway at Clark Drive  
and Grandview Highway is indicated with a red star.**

<sup>1</sup> <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/false-creek-flats-plan-2017-05-17.pdf>

In addition to new walking and cycling paths intended to open up the Flats, the approved City plan includes as a priority a crossing of Clark Drive at the foot of the Grandview Highway, with a bridge/ramp down to the Flats. This pedestrian and cycling bridge has not been designed yet, but would connect to the proposed MUPs running west and located behind the buildings along Great Northern Way, and also to the existing South Terminal protected bikeway running west from Cottrell towards Main Street. These proposed paths respect existing rail infrastructure.

## Desire Lines

Desire lines essentially describe where people want to go. For people riding west along the Central Valley Greenway, the desire lines follow the land contours and run west and north west. The new Providence Health complex on the Flats (St. Paul's Hospital) will be a significant destination, as will the new Active Bridge planned to run from Creekside Park at Quebec and Prior up to Dunsmuir Street to access the downtown peninsula after the removal of the viaducts. Both of these destinations lay to the north, and will lead people to avoid jogs to the south as using 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. currently does.

## Comments on the Proposed Bridge

- 1) HUB Cycling appreciates that BC Hydro has the Metro North Transmission Project underway, and that as part of this project a crossing of the Grandview Cut is required. We have no comment on the transmission project or crossing of the Cut.
- 2) The crossing location at McLean Drive is understood to have been selected due to the existing City street right of way there. If there were other possible locations for the crossing, there may be more value to people cycling. McLean Drive has north-south cycling infrastructure both one block east, and one block west, both crossing the Grandview Cut, so this bridge appears to add little to the network. This evaluation is from a cycling perspective; there may be local pedestrian benefits.
- 3) People cycling west on Grandview Highway would have to cross Grandview Highway midblock to access the bridge. If a proposed new bidirectional cycle track was constructed on the south side of Grandview Highway by the City, this concern would be alleviated. For people cycling east, there is less concern with connecting at Grandview Highway.
- 4) For people cycling west after travelling south on the new bridge, 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. is generally usable up to Clark Drive due to the low vehicle traffic volumes. However, crossing Clark is problematic. There are a high number of eastbound motor vehicles turning north, so crossing Clark Drive would involve three crosswalks. The City is considered unlikely to change this intersection due to the number of vehicle turning movements.
- 5) For people cycling west on Grandview Highway and wanting to access the 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. local bikeway, using Woodland represents a shorter distance and so the new bridge adds little.
- 6) For people cycling, 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. has a very steep hill west of Clark Drive. For people heading west, there is then an intersection at Keith Drive where people cycling have picked up speed on the descent. Heading east, there is the climb up to Clark. This makes 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Great Northern Way less attractive for cycling, and combined with the high number of

driveway entrances crossing the bidirectional MUP, causes some people cycling to avoid this route.

- 7) The proposed new bridge/ramp from Grandview Highway and Clark Drive down to the Flats alleviates many of these issues. It could be built at a shallower grade (typically 5%) with a longer run. It would include a safer and more direct crossing of Clark Drive. It would directly access the new paths heading west, without requiring a jog south to 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- 8) There is a concern that building a new bridge up to 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. may reduce the perceived need for the new bridge/ramp down to the Flats. The City has advised informally that the construction of this new bridge would not change their direction to install a new crossing at Grandview Highway and Clark Drive, together with a bridge/ramp, but we note that funding has not yet been allocated to that work.

Due to the above issues, we do not consider that the proposed bridge in this location adds significant benefit to the cycling network.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our thoughts. We would be pleased to meet and discuss the above at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Jeff Leigh  
Chair, Vancouver UBC Local Committee  
HUB Cycling  
[Vancouver@bikehub.ca](mailto:Vancouver@bikehub.ca)

cc: City of Vancouver Engineering