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December 6, 2017

City of Vancouver
Transportation Engineering and Planning
By email: cambiebridge@vancouver.ca

Re: Proposed Cambie Bridge Improvements

Dear Sir/Madam;

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 the proposed Cambie Bridge Improvements.

Overview

HUB Cycling representatives attended the Open House event that City staff held on November 30, 2017 regarding the Cambie Bridge Improvements project, and reviewed the display boards.¹ We regularly hear from HUB members and the general public about the congested conditions on the Cambie Bridge multiuse path (MUP) and fully support the creation of a dedicated and protected southbound bike lane to relieve pressure on the MUP. We do have suggestions as this project moves forward.

Context

HUB Cycling has created a Gap Priority List for routes within the City of Vancouver, and throughout Metro Vancouver. We itemize gaps in the existing cycling network, and evaluate them in terms of how much improvements to these routes would impact our goal of getting more people riding, more often. The Cambie Bridge is currently ranked high on our gap list due to the directness of the connection it offers to downtown, and because of its relatively low elevation change compared to other bridges. The Cambie Bridge also has the potential to provide a significant connection to the south shore of False Creek from the West End, with improvements to the Nelson and Smithe bike routes to extend them further west.

¹ Cambie Bridge Improvements Open House display boards <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cambie-bridge-boards-2017-11-30.pdf>



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Recommendations

- 1) We strongly support the creation of a protected lane across the bridge deck. We are concerned about the reduced level of protection planned for the south end down the ramp, given the history of vehicles damaging the plastic pylons utilized on the South West Marine Drive bike lane improvements. We ask that these pylons be monitored after construction and that damaged pylons be promptly repaired or replaced.
- 2) The connections to the new protected lane at the north end make sense. We recommend extending the Nelson bike lane further west to provide a significant additional catchment area for this route, and ask that this be planned for implementation soon.
- 3) Down the ramp to 6th, it is not clear if people on bikes will have physical separation from people walking. We encourage you to include physical separation here for the safety of all users.
- 4) The bike route connections to the new protected lane at the south end will require pavement marking and attention to detail to reduce conflicts between people on bikes, and both pedestrians on the sidewalk, and motor vehicles using the 6th Ave. ramp. Currently, people on bikes southbound on the Cambie Bridge utilize one of the two cross-bikes under or immediately east of the bridge deck. If people on bikes are directed east to cross 6th under the bridge deck, they will be crossing in front of vehicles on the ramp. If they are directed west to cross 6th, they risk conflict with people walking on the sidewalk in front of the Skytrain station. In practice, people on bikes will desire to travel both east and west from the T junction at 6th at the bottom of the ramp. We have reviewed preliminary drawings of the marked bike path west to Ash, and support this direction. We would also like to see improvements to the Cambie and West 2nd intersection crosswalks and cross-bikes.
- 5) We are unclear on how the MUP on the east side of the Cambie Bridge will be marked for people riding and people walking, in future. The creation of a protected southbound bike lane has the potential to greatly improve the walking experience and safety for people walking here, but only if people southbound on bikes are directed to the new protected bike lane. Continuing to allow southbound cycling on the MUP has the potential to annoy both people walking, and people driving, both of whom will likely wonder why any people seen riding south on the MUP aren't on the new protected path. Directing people on bikes to Beatty to access the southbound protected lane has the added benefit of reducing conflicts on the blind switchback ramps at the north end of the MUP.
- 6) We see several options for marking the MUP path:
 - a. Paint a centre line, and direct all people walking or on bikes to keep right except when overtaking. This is suggested by the current placement of the shared path signs (facing users on the right) but that is too subtle, and followed only by a portion of users.



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- b. Paint a demarcation line, and direct people walking to travel next to the bridge edge rail, and people on bikes to travel next to the vehicle lanes. This is as per the Stanley Park Causeway and Lions Gate Bridge.
- c. Leave it as is, unmarked, and hope for the best.

7) If southbound bike traffic is to continue using the MUP, then we recommend option a.

If signs are posted to direct southbound cyclists to the new lane, and the MUP is marked No Entry for southbound cyclists, then we recommend option b. We expect that the marked lane would have sufficient width for unidirectional northbound travel. We recommend relocating the benches that would be in the new marked bike lane, and adding reflectors to them for people riding northbound.

We consider option c to be the least desirable choice.

We recommend that any markings on the MUP on the bridge deck be carried on to the spiral ramp at the north end of the bridge. Ideally, with option b, the bike lane would be on the outside radius of the spiral ramp.

We do not consider it a hardship for people on bikes to have to travel to Beatty to access the southbound protected bike lane. We recommend looking at the painted crossing of Nelson at Beatty as some people on bikes will be arriving at that intersection travelling north from Pacific to Beatty, and will essentially be making a u turn onto the protected lane on the bridge. It may be possible to mark the southmost painted crossing of Nelson at Beatty as bidirectional.

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

Sincerely,

Jeff Leigh
Chair, Vancouver UBC Local Committee
HUB Cycling
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