

Concerns About HWY 7 proposed upgrade:

HUB will attend virtual public consultation session Set 22nd. We have been told in an email from Sheila Hui that:

"Hwy 7 is a lower volume rural area, so the project proposes a 2.0 m shoulder bikeways to maintain corridor consistency for the Hwy 7 corridor. Paved shoulders are the most practical and beneficial means to promote active transportation in this case. In addition, due to site constraints, additional widening is limited; however, the proposed shoulder bikeway will adhere to MoTI requirements for shoulder bikeways."

We have grave concerns about this. We want to acknowledge the recent tragic accident of Daphne Toumbanakis who through no fault of her own, was killed on HWY 7 in the area of the proposed upgrade, when a truck bounced off of a cement barrier and struck her. She was an experienced international cyclist who unfortunately was riding on a bike route that was not safe. In fact, the above proposition offered by Sheila, recommends the same infrastructure that is currently in place where she was killed.

We have asked Sheila for clarification on many things in her email, one being, how could HWY 7 in this stretch be classified as a lower volume rural area. We have asked to see the traffic study which includes volume of cars. The posted speed is 80km/hr.

Please take a look at the following tables listed in the BC Active Transportation Design Guide in Section F.1:

Table F25 - pg F7-There is no such classification as "lower volume rural area" so is unclear from this table what exactly this part of Hwy 7 is classified as

Table F26 - pg F10 - discusses both physically separated and within roadway facilities. Note under Rural Communities/Rural Environments column, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Accessible Shoulders are NOT recommended. In the least, a Painted and Buffered Bicycle Lane is advised and more appropriately Physically Separated From Roadway facilities are recommended, as we shall see in the next tables.

Table F27 - pg F11 - clearly footnoted, under Bicycle and Pedestrian Accessible Shoulders column and the row Rural \geq 70 km/hr speeds, that these are not recommended-(footnote 4)

Table F-29 - pg F17 - Please read the footnote on this table-Shoulders are not recommended due to posted speed!!

Page 16 - look at the 2nd column, and read the last 3 sentences above the title Rumble Strips. Again, bicycle shoulders are not recommended due to posted speed!

We see throughout this F.1 design guide, that accessible shoulders for cyclists are not recommended due to the posted speed of 80km/hr. Why then are we even considering this??? The reasoning that Sheila gives which states “to maintain corridor consistency” is absurd, because unfortunately, the rest of this highway from Maple Ridge to Mission (including the new widening in Mission) is completely unsafe for cyclists and certainly does not support the BC Government’s claim that they want to promote cycling for all ages and abilities. It is a unthinkable, in our minds, that the new stretch of the Mission Hwy 7, was not built with proper cycling infrastructure.

The statement that Sheila also makes, “due to site constraints, additional widening is limited” is not acceptable. If the BC government, your government, is serious about increasing active transportation, funding these projects properly is what is needed. The word constraints, in our mind, boils down to money and if these projects were funded by the government to a proper safety standard then you would see more people getting out of their vehicles and you would actually be moving toward connecting communities using active transportation, a phrase that is repeated over and over in your BCATS document.

We would encourage you to attend the information session on Sept 22nd as many of your constituents will be present expressing deep concerns about this provincial corridor.