



15 October 2015

Re: Proposed South False Creek Seawall Improvements

Dear David Rawsthorne and Joe McLeod;

HUB Cycling's Vancouver UBC Local Committee was happy to be involved in this South False Creek Seawall Improvements consultation by participating in the South False Creek Temporary Focus Group. It is rewarding to see that many of the group's suggestions are reflected in the proposals City staff have brought forward.

HUB supports the general theme underlying the proposed changes to this section of the Seawall: separating pedestrian and bicycle modes. HUB recommends the options currently proposed that provide the greatest degree of separation for people walking and biking. These changes will improve the comfort and safety of all users of the Seawall and it will bring this older section of the Seawall more in line with the experience of users on the north side of False Creek.

There are a small number of places along this part of the Seawall where pedestrians and people on bicycle are required to interact with motor vehicles, and we are encouraged to see proposals to separate Seawall users from traffic in some of these areas. In particular, the proposal for Creekside Drive is very positive. In the other areas, however, the effectiveness of the proposals is less clear.

The crossing of Anderson Street underneath the Granville Street Bridge at the entrance of Granville Island is a constant source of conflict between motor vehicle traffic and Seawall users, and the proposals do not adequately address this problem. An adjoining crossing with "elephant feet" that clearly indicates a crossing where people on bikes may cycle through would help clarify the interactions there. Additionally, studies have shown raised-crossings are safer for pedestrians and people on bikes, and this crossing seems like a good candidate for this improvement given the relatively low traffic speeds along the road. Further improvements such as improved lighting, crossing signals, or even a traffic-control light would also increase the comfort and safety of all users here.

The other place where interaction between Seawall users and motor vehicle traffic is a problem is the cul-de-sac of Moberly Road near Stamp's Landing. The City recommendations do not have a clear plan in this area, reflecting the complexity of the area and the chaotic nature of the current situation. While full details were not provided, the option which creates walking and cycling paths along the west edge of this area, keeping users out of the path of vehicles, appears to be preferable. The City's proposals make reference to the surface treatment in some areas being problematic. In particular, there are two segments of the Seawall where flagstones are used -- between Stamp's Landing and Charleson Park, and from the Spruce Harbour Marina to Island Park Walk. These flagstones are uncomfortable and dangerous for almost all users. The flagstones are uneven, causing discomfort for some users, balance-related problems for others, and are often difficult for people with mobility devices to navigate. Additionally the flagstones become slippery in wet conditions, and frost over in the winter. There were universal complaints about the flagstones in the Temporary Focus Group meetings, and overwhelming support for their removal. The City's proposals identify the flagstones as a problem but do not go so far as to recommend their removal. HUB strongly supports removing the flagstones and replacing them with safer, more accessible surface treatments.



Two of the Key Objectives of the project are to manage bicycle speeds and reduce conflicts between people on bikes and pedestrians. Given these two Key Objectives, we believe that there should be more emphasis on moving faster cyclists to the Seaside Bypass. HUB has identified a number of factors that lead to people not using the Bypass including poor signage and wayfinding, poor connections between the Seawall and the Bypass, and the generally poor condition of the road that carries the Bypass, particularly west of Alder Crossing. Encouraging bicycle commuters and other “through-traffic” cyclists to use the Seaside Bypass would go a long way towards achieving these objectives, and it is HUB’s position that any improvements to the Seawall must also include improvements to the Seaside Bypass.

HUB’s Vancouver UBC Local Committee has been very happy to be involved with the consultation process surrounding this process, and is excited to see improvements that will increase the comfort and safety of all users on the Seawall. We sincerely hope the project will continue its spirit of consultation and consider including solutions to the outstanding issues identified in this letter: clear separation and better safety measures in areas where users interact with motor vehicle traffic, removal of the dangerous flagstones, and improving signage, access, and the quality of the Seaside Bypass.

HUB Cycling is pleased to continue the discussion on improvements to the Seawall, and will continue to participate in the consultation process through the South False Creek Temporary Focus Group and other consultation opportunities. The HUB Vancouver UBC Local Committee can be reached at vancouver@bikehub.ca

Sincerely,

Lisa Slakov and Jeff Leigh
Co- Chairs, HUB Vancouver UBC Local Committee