

VACC Assessment Ride
Dumfries St. August 24, 2011

The assessment ride notes were put together by members of the VACC Van/UBC Committee however the VACC doesn't necessarily endorse all recommendations in them. For further information, please contact one of our Committee Chairs, Lisa Slakov or Heather Harvey at vancouver@vacc.bc.ca

Dumfries is the best of what is unfortunately a bad lot of choices to extend the Woodland Drive bike route south and provide a quiet alternative on the east side of Clark/Knight. While the assigned assessment section between 37th and 59th Avenue is a relatively straight shot, the section to the north suffers from a highly discontinuous street grid.

Dumfries North (14th Avenue to 37th Avenue) Status Check

We started at Woodland and 14th Avenue, where the "Mosaic Bikeway" turns off Woodland to travel east on 14th Avenue. The north section, between 14th Avenue and 37th Avenue, was not within the scope of this ride, but it was interesting to see the obstacles and progress against them as this section is under way. This section of the street grid is highly irregular, which poses the most problems.

There is currently a path through Clark Park toward Dumfries; though it appears designed to discourage cycling (or at least not designed to encourage it) currently, it is the most logical and straightforward way to connect Woodland to Dumfries. Detouring to Maddams Street, the only through street between Clark/Knight and Commercial/Victoria - and only then for one block - requires tackling the hill on 15th Avenue straight on.

Dumfries is, unfortunately, very briefly discontinuous between 20th and 21st Avenues, where tightly spaced homes prevent any quick solution. A jog to Fleming and back is required. Crossing King Edward and Kingsway is relatively simple now, thanks to (presumably newly installed) ped-bike half signals at both major streets. Dumfries crosses just to the west of the King Edward/Kingsway wye, making the distance between the two short enough that some type of coordination may be possible. For example, if pressing the first signal could trigger the second signal after a short delay, passage would be much simpler and quicker.

One other possible change would be to rotate the stop sign at 32nd Avenue, as it lies between another stop sign at 31st Avenue and a major crossing at 33rd Avenue (the new sidepath/signal combination there to deal with the jog is well executed) and at the bottom of a hill. The pavement toward the south end of this northern section is also becoming borderline.

Dumfries South (37th Avenue to 59th Avenue) Assessment

- Unlike the northern section, Dumfries has long blocks in a straight, continuous line between 37th Avenue and 55th Avenue. This may make it attractive to rat-running drivers, and some sort of calming should be included
- The intersection with the 37th Avenue (Ridgeway) route currently has stop signs for Dumfries; this should be evaluated along with the stop signs at 39th (the next block) and crossing of 41st Avenue (the block after)
- 41st Avenue desperately needs signals; a set is currently located one block east
- 57th Avenue similarly is nearly impassable without signals, either by Dumfries or the Fleming-Alley-Borden route to be described

Two routes south of 55th Avenue are possible; Dumfries jogs to the west, crosses 57th Avenue and then ends at 59th Avenue, requiring a jog back to the east to continue down Borden St to the Knight Street Bridge and associated bike routes. Alternatively, Fleming St lines up with an alley across 57th Avenue which in turn continues as Borden St from 59th Avenue. The former is rather straightforward, though circuitous. For the latter:

- The bike-ped signals at 57th Avenue would need to be placed between Fleming St and the Fleming-Borden Alley; this could be less desirable operationally (for peds, for example), other than the crossing being further from Knight St.
- Speed bumps in the alley are recommended, mainly on crossing alleys
- Sight distance at alley intersections is currently limited and may prove problematic

Once the routes rejoin on Borden, the main remaining problem point is the staff parking lot entrance and pick-up/drop-off activity at Sir James Douglas Annex Elementary (between 60th/61st Avenue along Borden). Traffic calming, and potentially a partial closure, is advisable.

We did not travel further, already having passed the recommended end point, but based on Streetview it seems that the medical centre at 63rd Avenue will not be a problem, though pavement may be rough and the crossing at Marine Drive may need signals (unclear whether changes have been made since the photography was made available).