

Low Level Road Feedback

Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition
Presentation to City of North Vancouver Council
April 18, 2011



VACC – North Shore Committee



The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition (VACC) is a non-profit society whose members work to improve conditions for cycling in Metro Vancouver. The VACC believes that increased bicycle use has the potential to:

- Reduce traffic congestion
- Improve our health
- Enhance our urban environment

We work to change the circumstances that discourage bicycle use: inadequate cycling facilities and lack of education for both cyclists and motorists. We do this by working with municipal, provincial, and federal politicians and government staff, and by offering advocacy support and education to groups and individuals in Metro Vancouver.



There are significant differences between cycling for recreation and transportation. We are here to comment on the use of the low level road as a main cycling transportation route.

VACC – Project Input

- Grades
- Barriers
- Access to Moodyville
- Traffic Calming

Grades



The current road has problems for cyclist – mainly caused by flooding... poor lighting and proximity to rail cars
However, the current low level road is reasonably FLAT.

It is the ONLY flat route for cyclists and pedestrians moving across North Vancouver



If the hill at the Western end of Esplanade / Forbes did not exist, the route across the North Shore would be entirely flat from Iron Workers Memorial to Lions Gate bridge and beyond.



This view of the proposed new low-level road makes the new route look reasonably level.



When I saw this view, I realized that the project will build hills on our only flat route across the north shore.

Ironic that they would want to build hills on the North Shore. We have a lot of those already.



A member of our group knows there have been further studies done and the route will not be anywhere near flat in future.

It will be undulating with ups and downs of between 2 and 6.4% -- not long hills not really steep hills, but hills nevertheless.

Gaining and losing and then regaining height is hard work for a cyclist and to be avoided if possible.



The North approach moving southbound on the Lion's Gate bridge is a 5% grade. Anything over a 5% grade is not built to wheelchair standards. 4% maximum.

Slide 11

HD1 Heather Drugge, 16/04/2011



The only alternative route is to grind up Third Street – which has a greater than 10% grade at the top

Separation Barriers



This will be the truck route across North Vancouver and vehicles will likely be travelling relatively fast.

The road is designed for 60Kmh.

If you have ever ridden on the highway, you will know that it is terrifying to be beside swiftly moving vehicles.

For safety we recommend physical barriers between motor vehicles and cyclists.



There are many different ways to incorporate barriers that can accommodate emergency vehicle pull over.

One of the other problems is the ability of maintenance equipment to get in behind the barrier for snow and debris removal.

New equipment is coming on the market for this purpose and we would hope that CNV and DNV together might jointly purchase such equipment to clear the spirit trail and new cycling paths.

It would be a shame to let maintenance be the reason for reduced safety.



Barcelona



The Dunsmuir Bike lane in Vancouver



Connection to Moodyville



Currently cyclists are “trapped” on the low level route for it’s entire length
On the North side for cyclists and peds moving east to west, you could include access points up the hill to help people gain and loose height in stages.



Speed Controls



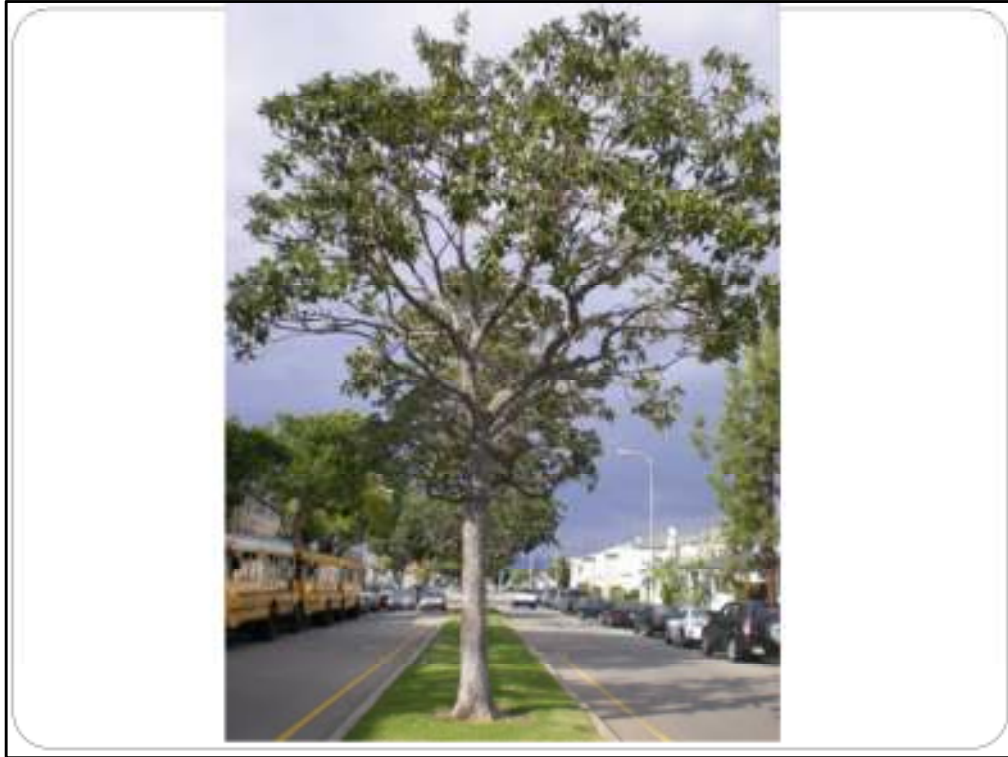
This design makes the new road look like a highway.

Building a long straight roadway with good site lines means people will speed up.

What can be done to reduce vehicle speeds to increase safety and reduce noise, and pollution?



There is no room for bump outs or rest areas, unless the pedestrian side walk is cantilevered (which was in one of the options).

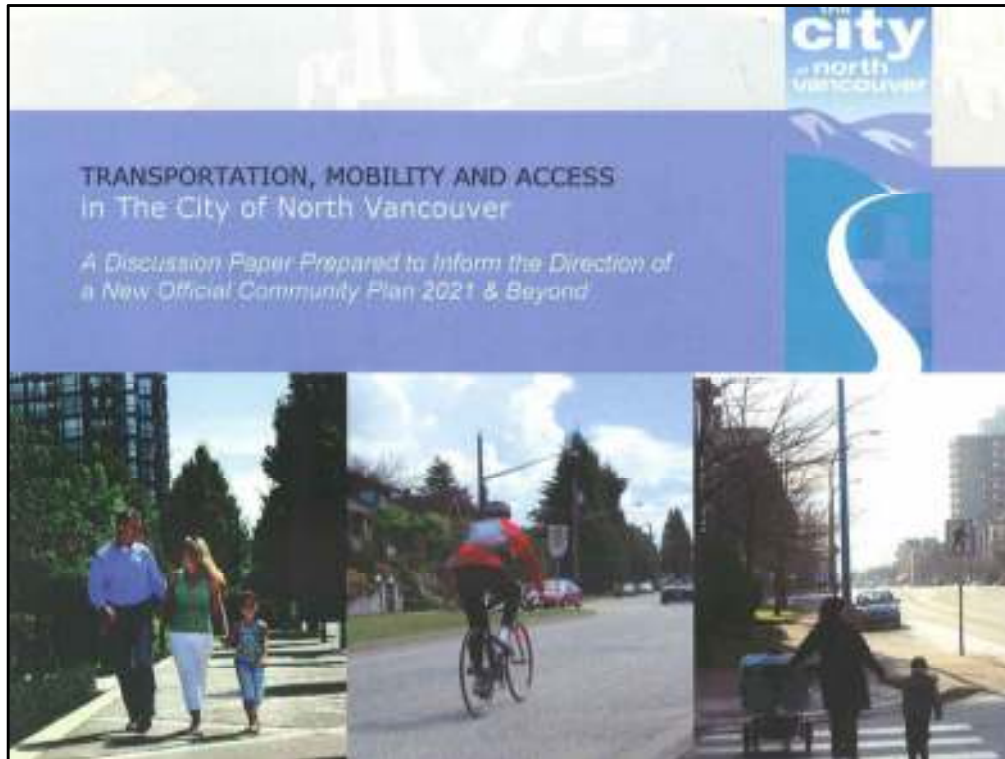


However Can we make this new road more appealing aesthetically, safer for cyclists and reduce traffic speeds?

Maybe the physical barriers could be green barriers such as slim trees?

Summary of Recommendations

- Build hills so that grades do not exceed 4%
- Include physical barriers separating vehicles from cyclists
- Create new connections to Moodyville
- Engineer design features that reduce vehicle speed



The City of North Vancouver has the right idea. Can we use the low level road project as an opportunity to really encourage cycling as a safe, viable form of transportation ?

Thank-you

