

November 15, 2024

Chris Darwent, P.Eng., Manager, Transportation Design, City of Vancouver
Winston Chou, P.Eng., Associate Director, Traffic & Data Management, City of Vancouver

Re: Extended Temporary Closures of Major Bike Routes

Dear Chris and Winston,

We are writing on behalf of HUB Cycling based on concerns raised to us by our members concerning extended temporary closures of major bike routes. Our members have observed several instances where major bike routes have been obstructed due to building construction, road work, or other circumstances for extended periods of time (weeks).

We are reaching out to the two of you because we understand there may be shared responsibility. If neither of you have this responsibility, please direct us to the appropriate staff member.

Closures specifically raised with us recently have been:

- E 5th Ave at Main St (on the Off-Broadway Bike Route) where building construction closed a street for several weeks. No detour for people on bikes was put in place. When we followed up on this site, we were told that they did not have a permit to close the road.
- Ontario St at 33rd Ave (on the Ontario Bike Route). Road work has closed the Ontario Bike Route for several weeks (to different degrees of “closure”). No detour was provided for people on bicycles, and “Cyclist Dismount” signs were in place. Use of these signs on a major bike route with no warning or alternative is a serious equity issue.
- E10th Ave between Prince Edward Ave and Guelph Ave (10th Ave Bike Route). This section of one of the City’s primary east-west bike routes was closed for many weeks, related to a fire on the block, without an appropriate detour. Recently, the fencing closing the road was moved away from the curb somewhat to allow for passage through, but signs still persist indicating that cycling is not allowed.

These closures have raised significant safety concerns as people on bicycles are often left navigating unsafe “impromptu” detours or riding on the sidewalks.

To understand why closures on these routes have not been accommodating people on bicycles, despite being located on major bike routes, we would appreciate your guidance on the following:

- 1) What obligations do the city, its contractors, or private contractors have when it comes to closing bike routes? It was our understanding that city policy requires traffic management plans that must include appropriate signage and safe detours for people on bikes. Are we mistaken?

- 2) We have regularly referred to the CoV publication “Construction on Bicycle Routes¹” last updated in 2020. Please advise if there is a more current version of this policy guide.
- 3) How can we check if these and other street closures are permitted, and ensure the conditions of the permits are being observed?
- 4) We are aware of the city website that informs residents about street closures (<https://maps.vancouver.ca/roadahead/>) but as of right now, only the E 5th closure is shown on this map. As we have previously been advised that this was an unpermitted closure, are we to assume that a permit has been granted now? Does that mean the other two are unpermitted?
- 5) What is the best way to provide feedback on these closures to avoid future safety hazards for people on bicycles? Is 311 the best and only method? We know that people had been calling 311 about the E 10th closure for weeks before any action was taken.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you on this issue, so that we can all work together to improve safe and comfortable cycling within the City, and to get more people cycling more often.

Sincerely,

Anthony Floyd
Jeff Leigh
Co-Chairs, HUB Cycling Vancouver-UBC Local Committee
vancouver@bikehub.ca

About HUB Cycling

HUB Cycling is a charitable not for profit organization that has spent over 25 years removing barriers to cycling in Metro Vancouver, while cultivating the health, environmental, and economic benefits that active transportation can bring. HUB has educated thousands of people, motivated thousands more, and championed improvements that [#UnGapTheMap](#) to create a connected cycling network. HUB Cycling’s mission is to get more people cycling more often. HUB Cycling has over 4,000 members and more than 60,000 direct supporters. HUB Cycling has 10 volunteer committees across Metro Vancouver that encourage cycling for all ages and abilities (AAA) in municipalities across Metro Vancouver. For more information, visit bikehub.ca.

¹ [CoV publication Construction on Bicycle Routes. updated 2020](#)