

September 1, 2021

To: Mayor and Council <mayorcouncilandcaol@mapleridge.ca>

Re: Transportation Advisory Committee meeting on April 28, 2021

Dear Mayor and Council,

We live in challenging times, and you, as our local elected leaders, have quite a number of tremendously difficult tasks ahead.

Over the summer season, the local HUB Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows cycling committee has put its observations about cycling infrastructure past, present and future in Maple Ridge, at the forefront of our discussions. With the reality of the impact of COVID-19, climate change, forest fires, heat waves, and the concerns about the environment, we have concluded that changing demographics and changing lifestyles have placed cycling into greater prominence than ever before.

As such, we wish to work hand in hand with the City of Maple Ridge on all matters that impact the cycling community whether it pertains to cycling for pleasure or cycling for work or cycling for school. We believe the best way forward is for HUB Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows to work more closely with the City staff, the Mayor and the Council, in partnership, professionally and constructively, to ensure all matters pertaining to cycling result in the best outcomes.

We believe we deserve a seat at the table. Apart from diligently providing feedback to the City on a variety of issues related to cycling, for over 12 years our HUB Local Committee has been very involved in the community, with a presence at various events such as our popular semi-annual Cycle Recycle, at GETI Fest and Earth Day, the promotion of Bike to Work Week (now Go by Bike Week) and various community rides. We send out e-newsletters to over 450 subscribers, and our HUB Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows facebook group has close to 250 members. Our Local Committee's rmcyclist.info website had 666 pageviews by 412 users in the month of July.

Over the past several years, however, we have experienced a rather unfortunate development in our mutual efforts to work together with the City in developing policies and plans specific to cycling such as greenways, cycling lanes, cycling paths, cycling trails and basic cycle parking requirements in and around new and existing developments. We are feeling a general tension and animosity creating an 'us-them' friction. This is resulting in what seems to be an ever-increasing community concern about the state of cycling infrastructure and related matters in our City.

From our part, we take our role as advocates for safer, more convenient and more equitable transportation options for all very seriously. As you know, when giving feedback to the City on road infrastructure projects or development proposals, we base our comments on the available

research and the most up to date guidelines, as well as on our own experience using various types of cycling infrastructure locally and elsewhere, including in very successful cycling cities. We collectively have many decades of riding experience under our helmets but we also bring a strong understanding of the average cyclist's needs and thoughts.

We believe that our input deserves sincere consideration by the City, just like the input from other expert groups in our community should, such as ARMS and KEEPS. We're alarmed by this Council's move in general towards less inclusive representation of expert groups and individuals on its advisory committees.

Years ago, when Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows had a joint Bicycle Advisory Committee, HUB (VACC at the time) had official representation on the BAC. That ended with the disbandment of the BAC in 2013. In 2017 Maple Ridge established an Active Transportation Advisory Committee. One member with a cycling interest was appointed, but the ATAC also had a very strong youth member who advocated for better cycling especially on behalf of his age cohort. In 2019 the Committee was rebranded Transportation Advisory Committee, and membership was cut back drastically. When Ms. Wright reaches the end of her term on TAC, the position of the member with a cycling interest will cease to exist altogether and there will be no cycling representation left.

Again, this Council has significant challenges to deal with. A critical one is transportation. Cities and countries around the world are realizing that active transportation is an integral piece of the puzzle to achieve many of their objectives. This is why it's very disappointing that Maple Ridge Council does not see the value in input from the cycling community.

This was again made very clear to us at the Transportation Advisory Committee meeting on April 28, when Council liaison Gordy Robson expressed abject hostility in having to deal with our HUB Committee for the past decade: "it has to stop!!".

Councillor Robson's angry outburst appeared to be ignited as a result of the work that was done by the Active School Transport subcommittee that was formed last year, led by TAC member with a cycling interest, Jenny Wright. Ms. Wright was not appointed to TAC as a HUB member, but as an individual with a cycling interest. She did not represent HUB on TAC and HUB had no involvement whatsoever in her work on TAC. Nevertheless, our HUB Committee proudly supports the work she was doing to help make active school transportation in all forms safer and more convenient. Apart from Ms. Wright, two other HUB Local Committee members were in attendance at this particular meeting. Unfortunately it was not the first time for HUB representatives to be met with this kind of hostility from Councillor Robson.

With respect to [Council's Code of Conduct](#), as agreed to and signed by every member of Council at the beginning of your term, in this particular incident Councillor Robson broke almost every rule that he committed to abide by.

We do believe that Councillor Robson is sincere in his desire to do what he can to mitigate the effects of Climate Change as a City Councillor, but it's our position that the progress of any

functional committee is reflective of the egalitarian nature of a volunteer group and not the agenda or terms of any one individual.

We continue to be willing to collaborate from our side, but we do hope that Councillor Robson will make a sincere effort on his part to be more open-minded and welcoming to those who may have viewpoints which differ from his own.

We also hope that HUB's continued feedback will be sincerely considered by others on Council. Our HUB Committee members are dedicated to making our community a more welcoming and inviting place to live, work and play for everyone. We believe that safe cycling for everyone is not a means to an end, but it's most definitely an important aspect of a successful city where everyone is afforded the ability to thrive, regardless of socio-economic status, income level or age.

With kind regards,

Barry Bellamy, Co-chair
HUB Cycling
Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Committee

JC/BB/AW/SG/JW/EoM/JL/NC

About HUB Cycling

HUB Cycling is a charitable not for profit organization that has spent over 22 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 close to 3,000 members and more than 45,000 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.