



19 December 2013

Graeme Schimpf  
Operations Manager North Shore, Howe Sound & Sunshine Coast  
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Lower Mainland District

### **Highway 1 bike route between Taylor Way and Capilano River Bridge**

Dear Mr. Schimpf,

The HUB North Shore Committee was made aware earlier this year by members and others who commute by bike between North and West Vancouver that a newly constructed fence has eliminated an important connection between Highway 1 and West Vancouver. We did an assessment ride of the area in October to look at potential alternative connections with the West Vancouver bike network. At the same time we noted other opportunities to make cycling safer along this stretch of highway.

Below please find our recommendations for improvements of the Highway 1 bike route between Taylor Way and the Capilano River Bridge.

#### **Background**

Highway 1 is a bike route through West Vancouver west of the Capilano Road exit. The highway bridge across the Capilano River is the only east-west connection in this area. The only other Capilano River crossings are down at sea level (Marine Drive, Park Royal Mall) and up at the Cleveland Dam. All alternative crossings require a detour of more than 30 minutes and add significant elevation change.

Therefore convenient and safe cycling access to and from the highway are crucial on both sides of the highway bridge across the Capilano River. The highway bridge has sidewalks on both sides with barriers to the highway traffic and is reasonably safe to cross by bike and on foot.

This letter focuses on improving existing connections and adding new connections the west side of the Capilano River.



An informal but well used path between the highway and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (south of the highway) was blocked in 2013 when the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure built a new fence.

There was no notification or consultation with HUB, or any other cycling organization as far as we know.

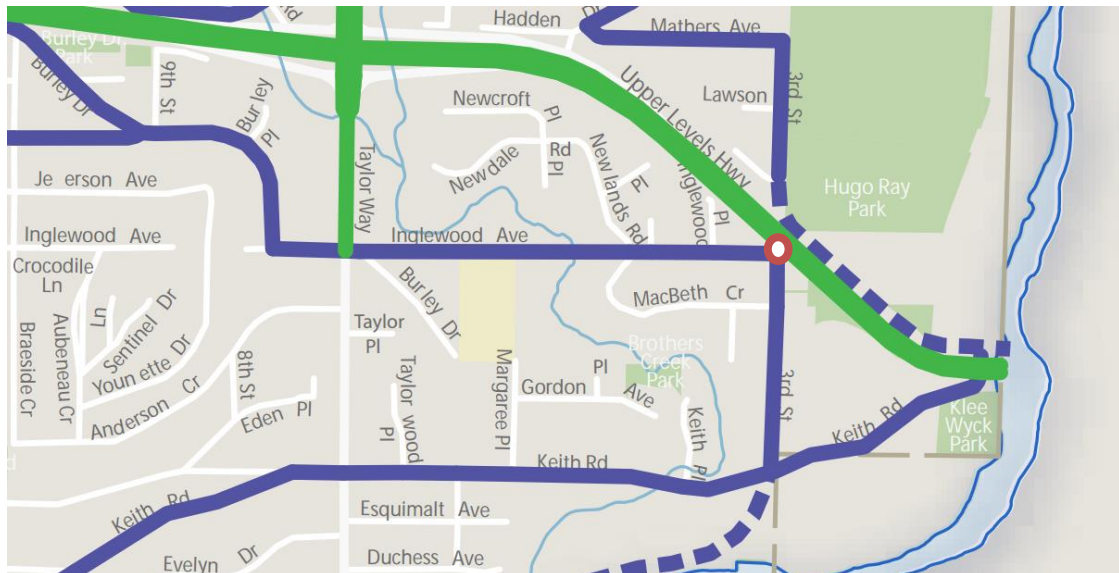
The fence has cut off the connection to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Inglewood Avenue and Keith Road, all of which are designated bike routes in West Vancouver's Cycling Implementation Plan.

Taylor Way, north of Inglewood Avenue, is now the only access, east of 15<sup>th</sup> Street, to and from the highway for eastbound cyclists. Taylor Way is a major arterial road with insufficient cycling infrastructure for a designated bike route. Many people who are interested in cycling will not take this route because it feels unsafe and uncomfortable to them, and they have no alternative option.

**Figure 1: Designated bike routes near Highway 1 west of Capilano River**

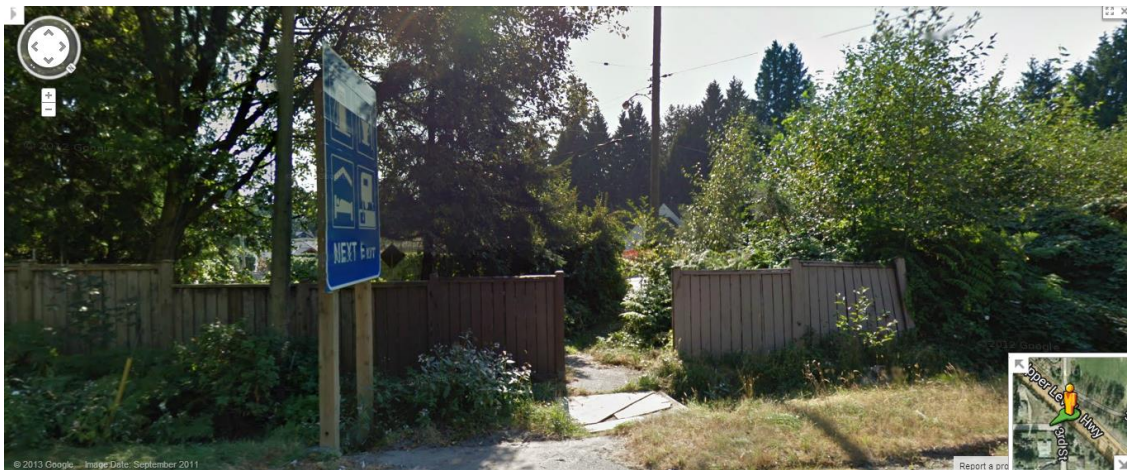
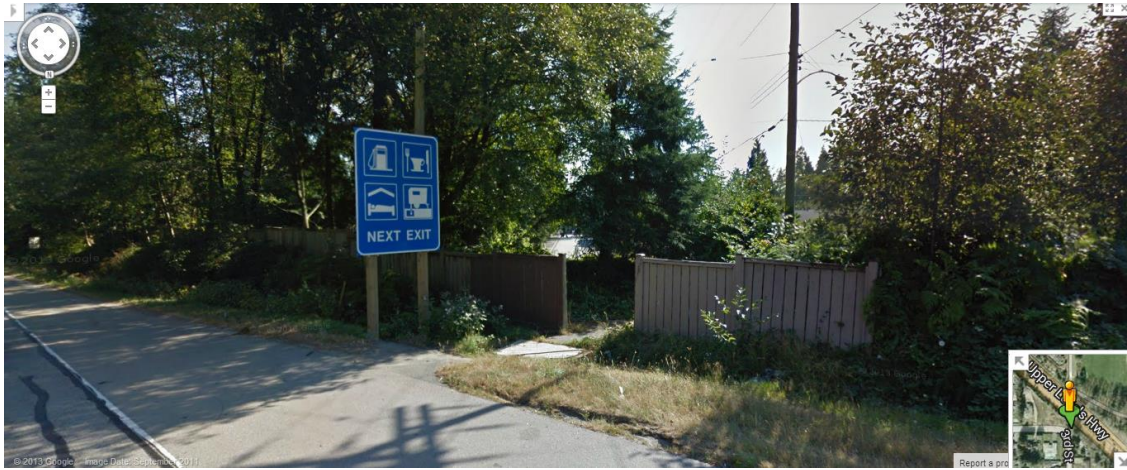
(from West Vancouver Cycling Implementation Plan 2012)

- Red circle: new fence blocks access to and from highway
- Blue: West Vancouver bike routes
- Green: MoTI bike routes





**Figure 2: Path from Highway 1 eastbound to 3rd Street/West Vancouver prior to construction of new fence in 2013 (from Google Maps)**



## Recommendations

### 1. South side of highway

HUB recommends reinstating highway access at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and providing an additional access path closer to the Capilano River bridge at Keith Road. Other potential access locations have drawbacks such as steepness (informal path at Capilano River bridge) and potential user conflict (Cedardale Park). We have the following specific suggestions (see also map in Figure 3):

#### a. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street access

- 1) Stagger fence panels to create access while retaining noise reduction (same design as access points in the new highway fencing east of Capilano Road).
- 2) Build path from fence to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.
- 3) Provide crossing of highway ditch.



- 4) Possibly install Jersey barriers along highway shoulder to prevent highway drivers from stopping at this location. This would reduce the potential for break-ins and other criminal activity in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street neighbourhood.
  - b. Keith Road access
- 5) Build a switchback path west of Capilano River bridge on the south side down to Keith Road to improve cycling and walking connectivity across the river.

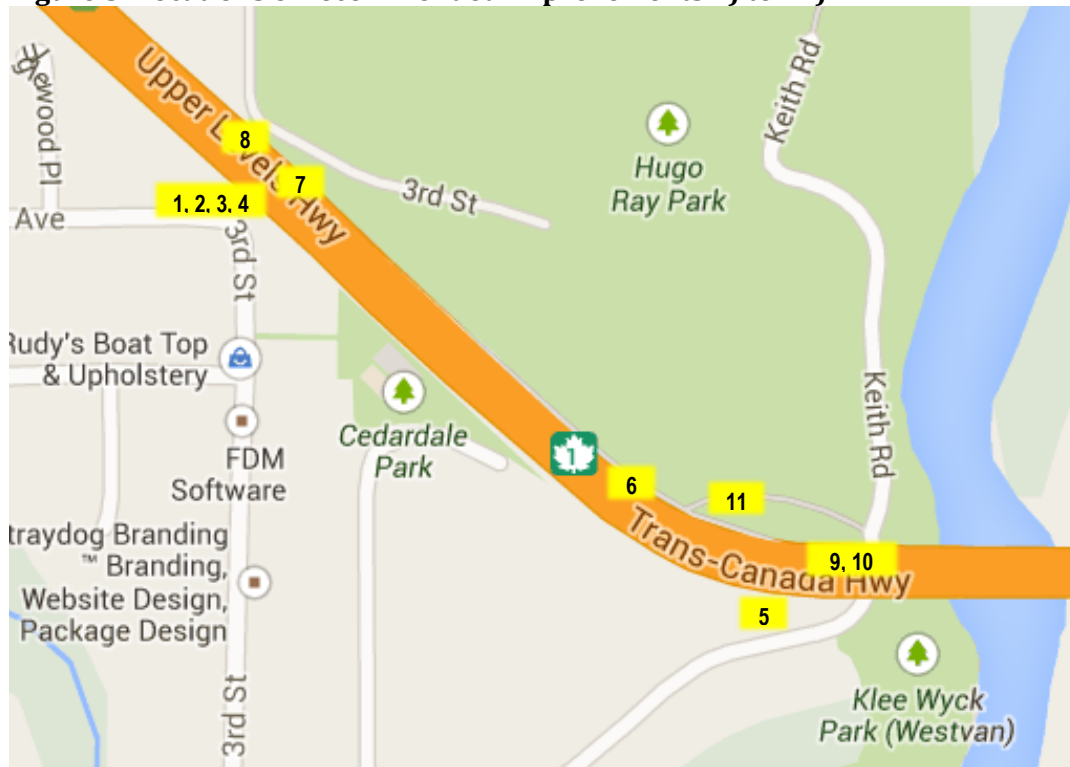
## 2. North side of highway

The highway shoulder on the north side of the highway is used by cyclists in both directions between the Capilano River Bridge and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. This is because there is no east-west alternative in the park north of the highway and no highway overpass or underpass in this area, except Keith Road. We therefore recommend extending the existing Jersey barriers to provide a protected path on the highway shoulder from the Capilano River Bridge to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for safer two-way cycling. We have the following specific suggestions (see also map in Figure 3):

- 6) There is a gap in the Jersey barriers west of the bridge close to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street that we recommend being closed to allow for safer two-way cycling. If Jersey barriers are not feasible, consider plastic posts/delineators or other types of barriers.
- 7) Widen shoulder north of Jersey barriers close to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to at least 2.5 metres. Currently the pavement on the north side of the Jersey barriers is too narrow.
- 8) At 3<sup>rd</sup> Street itself, there needs to be a gap in the existing jersey barriers to provide suitable access for cyclists to the paved highway shoulder for westbound travel.
- 9) Remove the metal post in the middle of the paved shoulder just west of Capilano River Bridge. The post is hard to see in the dark and makes it difficult to enter the protected shoulder behind the Jersey barriers.
- 10) Add bike stencils or signage to the shoulder north of the Jersey barrier so it is more obvious where to ride.
- 11) Pave or re-gravel dirt road that leads from the highway onto the Keith Road bike route under the Capilano River Bridge. Maintain the road (sweeping, removal of branches and other large debris).
- 12) Maintain the paved shoulder north of the Jersey barriers. It is often so full of debris that it is hazardous to use on regular street and road bikes.
- 13) If possible, widen the paved shoulder to at least 1.5 metres for cyclists proceeding west from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street past Hadden Drive towards the Taylor Way exit.
- 14) Install cautionary signs or pavement markings for motorists and cyclists at the Hadden Drive intersection with the Taylor Way exit.



Figure 3: Locations of recommended improvements 1) to 11)



We would appreciate a meeting to discuss the recommended improvements. We recognize that the District of West Vancouver may need to be consulted regarding the highway access at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and the recommended connections to the Keith Road bike route.

Sincerely,

Antje Wahl  
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