

117 Ave. multi-use path

From: Jackie Chow (jchow23708@yahoo.ca)
To: fsmith@mapleridge.ca
Cc: mhalpin@mapleridge.ca; bromeo@mapleridge.ca
Date: Friday, March 18, 2022, 08:49 a.m. PDT

Hi Forrest,

Thanks for your e-mail of March 14. Please find our HUB Local Committee's response below.

There continues to be uncertainty as to whether or not our various concerns will be resolved.

Raised intersections are not going to be part of the solution due to high cost. At the least bike symbols should be used on the crossings at side streets, in both directions.

You mentioned in your presentation at Council Workshop that the 117 Ave. MUP will be "a safe space for those learning to ride their bikes, or for those short weekend bike trips". You did not include people riding their bikes or otherwise rolling for daily commuting or utilitarian purposes, including those using e-bikes and e-scooters. Will the path serve their needs for faster safe travel? Will pedestrians be safe if they decide to use the path, especially as numbers of people cycling increase?

It's important that we all have the same understanding of what AAA (All Ages and Abilities) means: AAA facilities should be suitable not only for a) kids learning to ride their bikes and people riding their cruiser bikes at slow speeds, but also for b) people who use their bikes as a daily mode of transportation for all kinds of purposes, including commuting. For utilitarian trips, regular bikes tend to travel at speeds between 15 and 20 km/h. Road bikes tend to go faster. The speed of e-bikes is up to 32 km/h.

Due to constrained width (signage and lamp posts mostly in the pathway resulting in an effective width of 2.5 m), the multi-use path is suitable for slow bike travel only. There are numerous driveways, frequent side streets, and travel by all alternative modes in both directions.

Our committee members are all in agreement: 117 Ave. between Laity and 207 St. is, right now, the best section of east-west bike route we have in town. We would like to at least keep it that way, for all people cycling.

The priority is the needs of local residents to have a sidewalk and a safe place for kids to learn to ride their bikes under parental supervision, with safer pedestrian crossing opportunities. We acknowledge and applaud the hard work of staff to meet these needs.

It's important to also consider the needs of people cycling on the road for utilitarian and commuter purposes, so that more people will be motivated to get out of their cars by making active travel more efficient, more convenient and safer, and thus more competitive with car travel.

Despite the fact that the curb extensions planned for this project are called "traffic calming", we understand that their effect in terms of reducing car speeds is expected to be minimal. Do you have any data showing curb extensions reduce speeds? The fact that 2 east-west stop signs will be removed could even possibly lead to increased speeds, and more rat-running.

Curb extensions make it significantly more challenging for people cycling to ride on the road, as they will have to take the lane to pass by the curb extensions. With car speeds of close to 50 km/h (and 15% of motor vehicles traveling even faster), this is not safe.

We are concerned that 85% speeds are being used to justify the speed limit for this urban street. The rationale for this is based on very complicated technical documents that few would understand. Experts at NACTO ([City Limits - Setting Safe Speed Limits on Urban Streets](#), see p. 18-21 "Designed to Fail, The Problem with Percentile Based Speed Limits") and at Strong Towns ([Understanding the 85th Percentile Speed](#)) are of the opinion that the 85% speed is not a good tool to use to determine safe speed limits on urban streets.

Mayor and Council have basically given their nod of approval to this project. However, we would much appreciate if the issue of traffic speeds and on-road cycling safety could be addressed to ensure that safety of people cycling on the road is not compromised as a result of this project. A speed limit of 30 km/h would be appropriate for this street. Slower speeds will also improve safety at the MUP crossings. Fast east-west motor vehicle travel is already accommodated on River Road (car-first, no cycling) and on Loughheed Highway (car-first, no cycling), and a little further to the north Dewdney Trunk Road (car-first, no cycling). 117 Ave. could be a "people-first" street (part of the vision of Transport 2050).

We hope to discuss this with you further, and will hold off on sending our final comments to Council for the time being.

With kind regards,

HUB Cycling

Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Committee