



June 7, 2022

Jennifer McLean, Transportation Investment Corporation,
Surrey Langley Skytrain Project Team,
Surrey Transportation Planning Department

Re: Surrey Langley SkyTrain (SLS) Project: Feedback regarding protected cycling paths along Surrey Langley Skytrain on Fraser Highway.

We are happy to see that active transportation will now be provided with this project and specifically that protected cycling facilities are proposed for the corridor.

As we stated in our [earlier letter](#) the Surrey-White Rock Local Committee recommends protected bike paths be installed for opening day of the Surrey Langley Skytrain. We urge that stations are designed to protect cycling facilities from motor vehicle traffic and to allow cycling without creating conflict with people getting off and on buses.

Some of our key concerns are:

- Active transportation will be constrained at the stations.
- Protected cycling facilities are limited to one side of the street and that the alignment switches sides a number of times. This forces people cycling to switch sides of the road with the guideway changing sides.
- Constructing on top of the existing protected cycling facilities in the agricultural land reserve will force people cycling to use the inadequate bike lanes or share lanes with vehicle traffic during construction.

Comments on the Proposed Approach

We are happy to see that bike paths are now being proposed for under the guideway, which will provide protection from weather and more importantly protection from traffic.

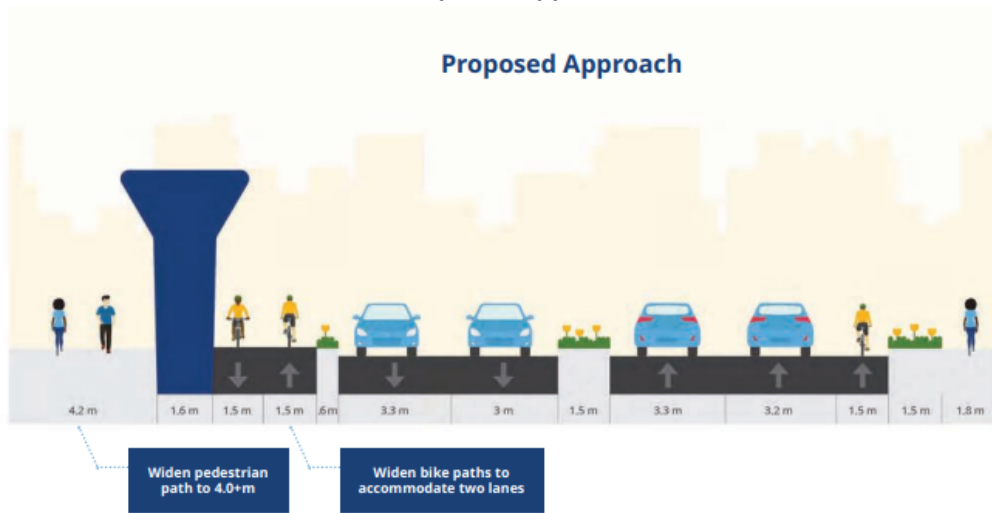
A narrow painted lane on the opposite side of the street remains which may affect access to local businesses for people who are uncomfortable cycling on unprotected cycling facilities. The current bike lane shown is too narrow and vehicle lanes are also narrow. There isn't adequate room between passing vehicles and people using the bike lane. Despite these risks, the painted bike lane will likely still be used by people who are bike commuting that do not want to switch sides with the cycling facilities moving from one side of the street to the other with the changing alignment of the skytrain, and by people accessing homes and businesses on that side of the roadway. Or, people may cycle on the sidewalk which will decrease safety along the corridor for other road users. For these reasons, we would like to see the painted bike lane converted into a protected bike lane.

We suggest that the existing bike lanes be rebuilt higher with a curb between traffic and the bike lane, somewhat similar to what was done on Fraser Highway between 144 Street and 148 Street. We suggest that covered troughs could be used to lead drainage to the existing catch basins under the bike path to save money on providing protected cycling.

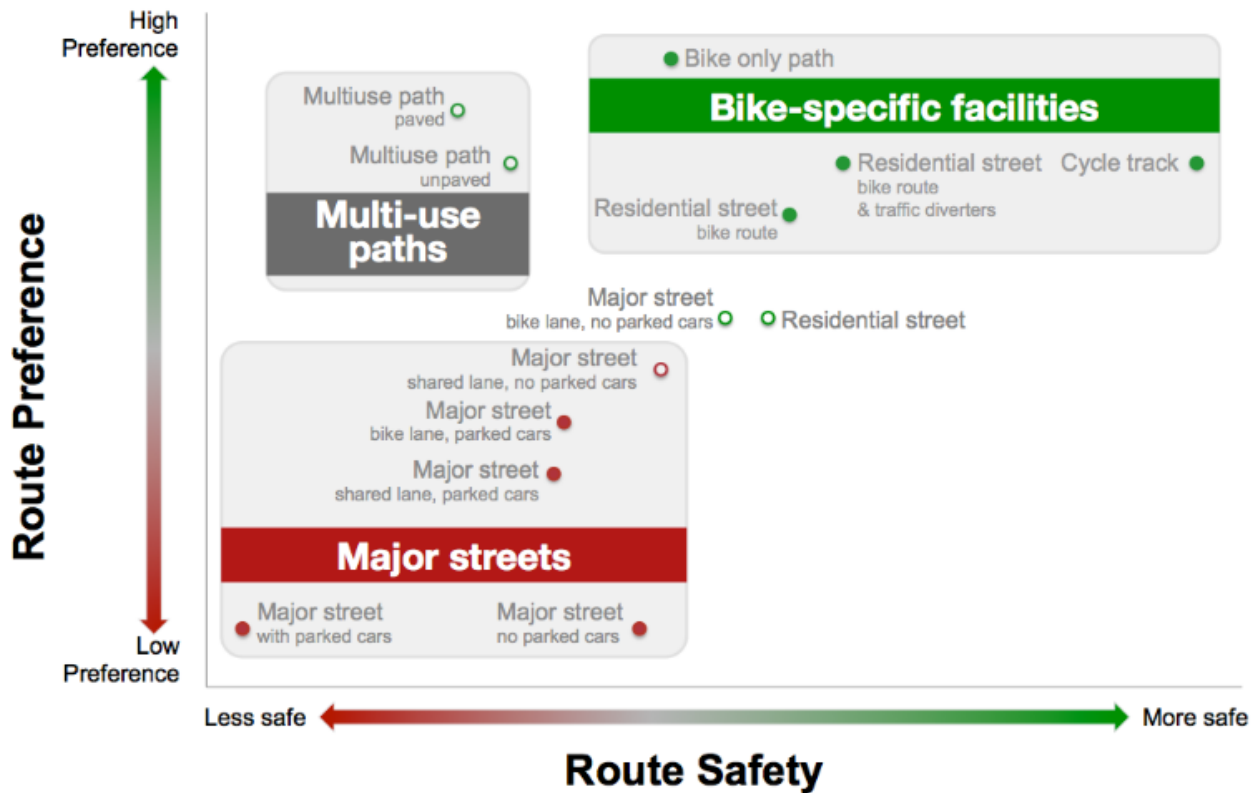
Example of a drainage trough in Phoenix, Arizona that leads to a drainage swale.



Proposed Approach

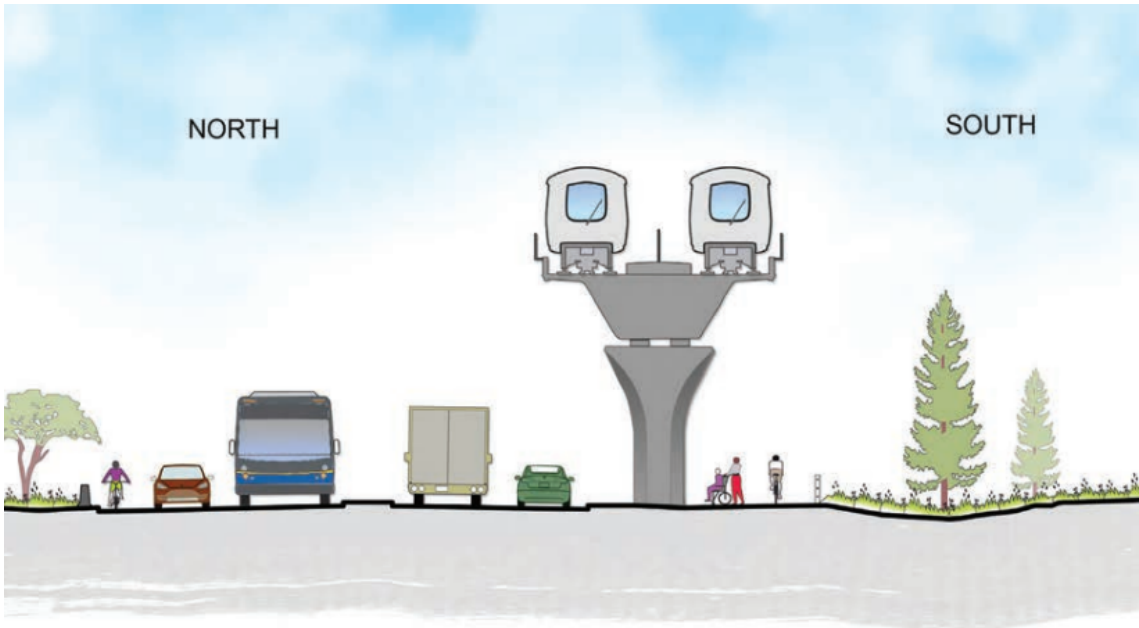


The proposed approach only seems to be used for sections of the guideway in Fleetwood and Clayton, whereas the cross sections provided for the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and Industrial Avenue only show a multi-use path. Higher volumes of path users increase the risk of conflicts between path users. We anticipate that the numbers of people walking in the ALR will remain fairly low but numbers of people walking along Industrial Avenue will be much higher. We foresee conflicts between people walking and people cycling. UBC’s Cycling in Cities Research notes that while people enjoy walking and cycling on multi-use paths, the safety of people cycling and walking is lower than when there is dedicated cycling infrastructure. *“Crashes on off-street bike paths and paved multi-use paths were more likely to involve obstacles and to involve other people (walking or cycling) or animals.”*



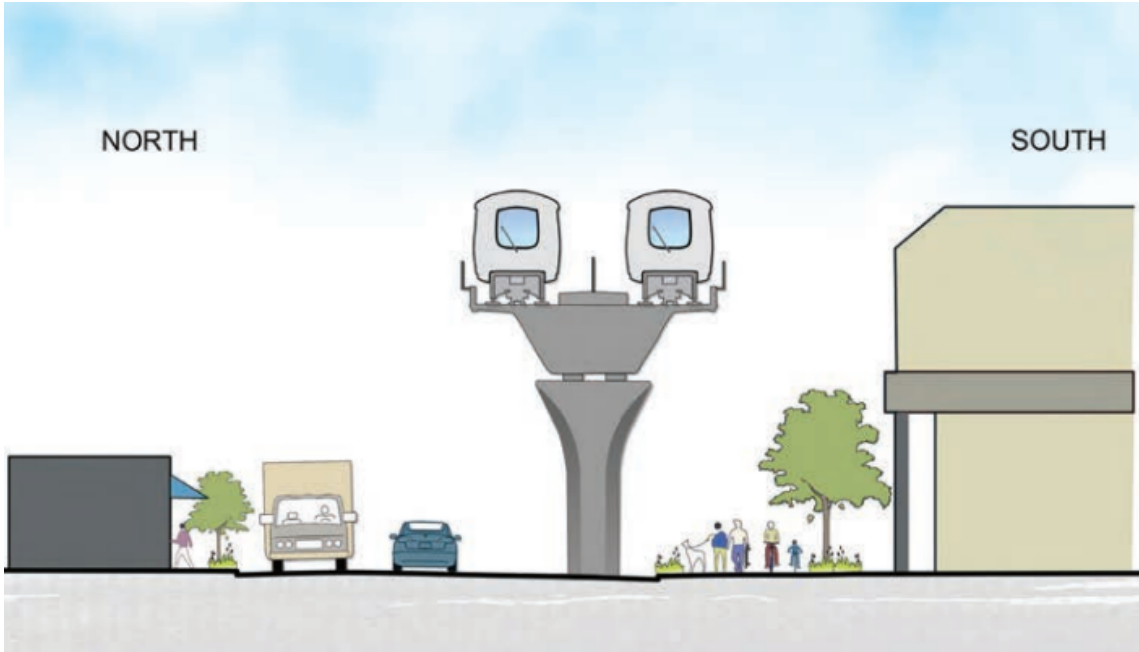
<https://cyclingincities.spph.ubc.ca/injuries/the-bice-study/>
<https://cyclingincities-spph.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2019/03/Landscapes-Paysages-2018.pdf>

Multi-use paths also are not very good for commuting, electric-assist bikes or faster recreational riding and are better suited for low speed riding. This means that a large segment of riders are not served by multi-use paths and travel times of people using them also suffers. The issues with multi-use paths are evident with the BC Parkway in Metrotown where people cycling are basically forced to use the roadway instead due to the narrow width of the path and high pedestrian traffic. Building sections with only a multi-use path will go against the projects stated goal for active transportation: *“Enhance local active transportation facilities that are safe, accessible and convenient”*. For these reasons we recommend separating people walking from people cycling including the section in the ALR but especially the section shown on Industrial Avenue and any other areas where a multi-use path is the only active transportation section that is being considered with a cycling facility and a walking facility, as what is shown in the “proposed approach” figure.



CROSS SECTION OF TYPICAL SOUTH RUNNING GUIDEWAY THROUGH THE AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE (ALR)

The example cross section provided for Industrial Avenue looks narrow, and has potential conflicts between people cycling and those walking and with their animals.



Alignment Switching Sides

The alignment switches sides a number of times. We are disappointed that safety, convenience and travel times for active transportation users were not considered in the alignment choice.

As the alignment of the route switches sides the cycling facilities underneath will switch as well. When the cycling path switches sides, active transportation users, particularly people cycling, are forced to switch sides of the road in order to stay on protected cycling facilities. This switching of sides leads to more exposure to traffic and decreases safety as the protected path users need to ride (or walk) across 4 or more lanes of traffic and increases travel times.

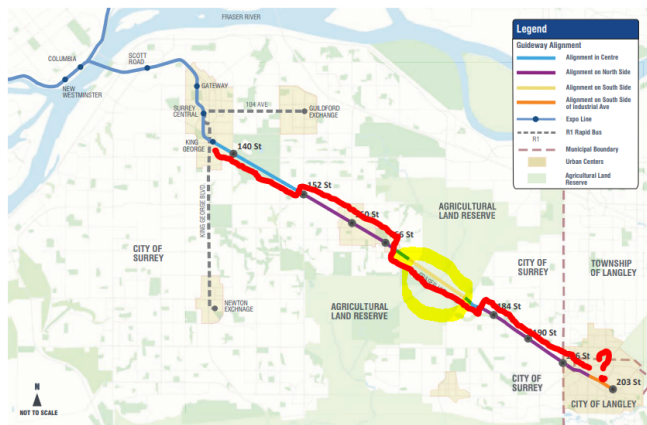
In the example below, a person cycling between the City Centre and Langley would be cycling on a protected one way bike path between King George and 152 Street. They would then need to cross to the north side of Fraser Highway between 152 Street and 166 Street. Presumably they would then cross the street to a two way path between 166 Street and the beginning of the ALR on the south side, then cross over to the north side again at or before 184 Street until Langley where it does not look like there will be any cycling facilities constructed between 198 Street and 203 Street.

The alignment on the southside of Fraser Highway in the ALR area also means that protected cycling will not be available during construction and will create a large gap in the protected cycling network severing the connection between Fleetwood and Cloverdale/Clayton that exists now.

We request that the alignment be kept on the northside of Fraser Highway from 152 Street to Langley and that safety and convenience of active transportation be one of the considerations for determining the alignment.

Alignment

“Alignment” describes the route and physical location of the SkyTrain extension. On different sections of Fraser Highway, the elevated SkyTrain guideway will run on the north or south side of the roadway, or in the centre above the median.



Considerations in determining the guideway alignment included:

- Environmentally sensitive areas
- Property impacts
- Project-related costs
- Ease of construction
- Number of Fraser Highway crossings
- Traffic flow

Lack of Protected Cycling Facilities shown in Station Renderings and Site Plans

As stated in our previous letter, we are concerned that station design is not considering protected cycling. The site plans and renderings still do not show protected cycling paths at the stations nor enough room for such paths. The proposed design shows a 3 metre wide bike path and a 4 metre wide pedestrian path. The site plans and renderings, however, are not showing anything near those required widths and in fact still show painted bike lanes on the streets and bus or station line ups on the boulevard.

We suggest the design team seriously consider the needs of active transportation users who are not stopping at the stations and want to travel past stations.



We are thankful to be part of the process and thank you for inviting us to a special information session, it was much appreciated.

Sincerely,



Tim Yzerman
Chair, Surrey Local Committee, HUB Cycling
Email: surrey-whiterock@bikehub.ca

c/c: Mayor and Council, City of Surrey
Peter Klitz, City of Surrey
Stacey Lee, City of Surrey
Rex Hodgson, Translink System Planning
Lisa Josephson, Translink System Planning

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 2,500 individual members, more than 44,000 direct supporters and 1,200 plus dedicated volunteers. HUB Cycling has 10 volunteer committees across Metro Vancouver that advocate for cycling for people of all ages and abilities (AAA). For more information, visit bikehub.ca.