



Your Cycling Connection

bikehub.ca



July 18, 2022

To:

Vancouver Fraser Port Authority <pittmeadowsroadandrail@portvancouver.com>

MP for Pitt Meadows-Maple Ridge Marc Dalton <Marc.Dalton@parl.gc.ca>

BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure:

Ashok Bhatti, Regional Director, South Coast Region <Ashok.Bhatti@gov.bc.ca>

Thomas Chhun, A/District Manager, Lower Mainland District <Thomas.Chhun@gov.bc.ca>

Transport Canada:

Robert Dick, Assistant Deputy Minister, Pacific <robert.dick@tc.gc.ca>

Canadian Pacific Railways <community\_connect@cpr.ca>

TransLink <mrpm@translink.ca>

City of Pitt Meadows, Samantha Maki <smaki@pittmeadows.ca>

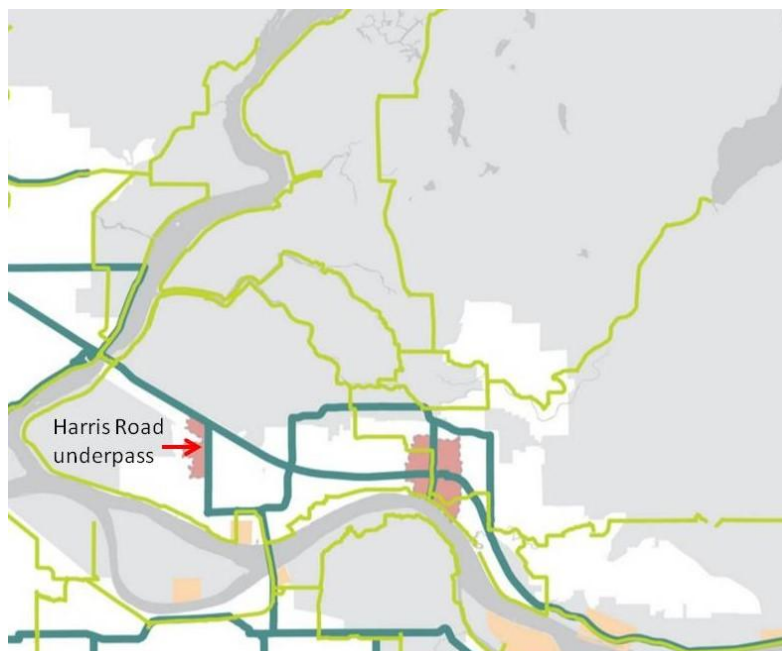
Mayor and Council, City of Pitt Meadows <council@pittmeadows.ca>

**Re: Pitt Meadows Road and Rail Improvements project;  
Harris Road underpass pedestrian and cycling facilities**

To whom it may concern,

We refer to our letters dated [August 19, 2019](#) and [October 25, 2021](#), in which we laid out the importance of getting the active transportation facilities right in this major project along Harris Road, right in the heart of the community of Pitt Meadows.

Harris Road is Pitt Meadows' "main street". It is also the spine of the cycling network in Pitt Meadows and it forms part of TransLink's Major Bike Network:



TransLink's Major Bike Network

We can't afford to waste this once in a lifetime opportunity to get it right. The tremendous benefits for the community of high quality, safe and attractive facilities for vulnerable road users through the underpass can not be overstated.

With the adoption of the regional Transport2050<sup>1</sup> plan, we're seeing a major shift in direction when it comes to transportation in Metro Vancouver. Part of the vision is to transform our streets into "people-first" streets. The underpass should comfortably accommodate the expected growth in use of active transportation, including faster e-bikes and e-scooters as well as cargo bikes and other new micro mobility options over the coming decades and beyond.

The Province's CleanBC Road Map to 2030<sup>2</sup> aims to reduce driving in B.C. by 25% by 2030 and to increase trips by walking, cycling and transit to 30% by 2030, 40% by 2040, and 50% by 2050. These goals can only be achieved if we build comfortable, inviting, attractive and safe infrastructure to facilitate it.

We need the Port of Vancouver, CP Rail and all levels of government to show their commitment to make this project the best it can be for the people of Pitt Meadows when it comes to offering high quality active transportation infrastructure.

We understand that the Port Authority and CPR do not take lightly the privilege of operating a railway that cuts right through the community. We appreciate that significant effort will be made to mitigate the noise and vibration issues that impact the residents who live along the rail line. Important heritage buildings will be preserved and moved to their new location, where they will line a new streetscape that will be designed with great care. The underpass will eliminate the many hours that residents presently spend waiting at the rail crossings and it will allow emergency vehicles to reach their destinations in a timely manner.

We appreciate the improvements that have been made so far to pedestrian and cycling facilities since the initial design. We can now expect a shared, elevated pathway, with spaces for people walking and cycling separated by a white line. Travel by bike is now uni-directional, and signage and pavement markings will be added for guidance and clarity.

However, when it comes to the combined width of the shared pathways through the underpass, nothing has changed since the initial design. Still at a combined 3 m width on each side, the design **does not meet the absolute minimum standards** as per the BC Active Transportation Design Guide.

#### **[BC Active Transportation Design Guide:](#)**

For a multi-use path with a separated cycle path (uni-directional) and pedestrian path:

- for the bike path: "desirable" width is 2 m, "constrained" width is 1.8 m, and "absolute minimum" is 1.5 m (only to be used for segments less than 100 m in length)

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<sup>1</sup> Transport2050: <https://view.publitas.com/translink/transport-2050-regional-transportation-strategy/page/1>

<sup>2</sup> CleanBC Road Map to 2030: <https://cleanbc.gov.bc.ca/>

- for the pedestrian path: "desirable" width is 2.4 to 3 m. "Constrained" width is 1.8 m. The Guide doesn't give an absolute minimum width.
- Lateral clearance between bike path and railing: 0.5 m. Railings that protrude more than 100 mm should be cane detectable at or below 685 mm for people walking.

#### Transport Association of Canada guidance:

- for the bike path: "recommended upper limit" is 2.5 m, and "recommended lower limit" is 1.8 m. The "practical lower limit" is 1.5 m.
- for the pedestrian path: similar to the BC Active Transportation Design Guide.

For both design guides, the recommended widths are the same:

- The combined "constrained" or "lower limit" width of the bike path and pedestrian path, including recommended 0.5 m lateral clearance between the bike path and the railing is 1.8 m + 1.8 m + 0.5 m = **4.1 m**.
- If the "absolute minimum" or "practical lower limit" for the bike path is taken as a guide (1.5 m), and if an absolute minimum of 1.5 m would be assumed for the pedestrian path, the combined width would be 1.5 m + 1.5 m + 0.5 m = **3.5 m**.

Note that the recommended minimum height of a railing for people cycling is 1.4 m.

#### Our recommendation:

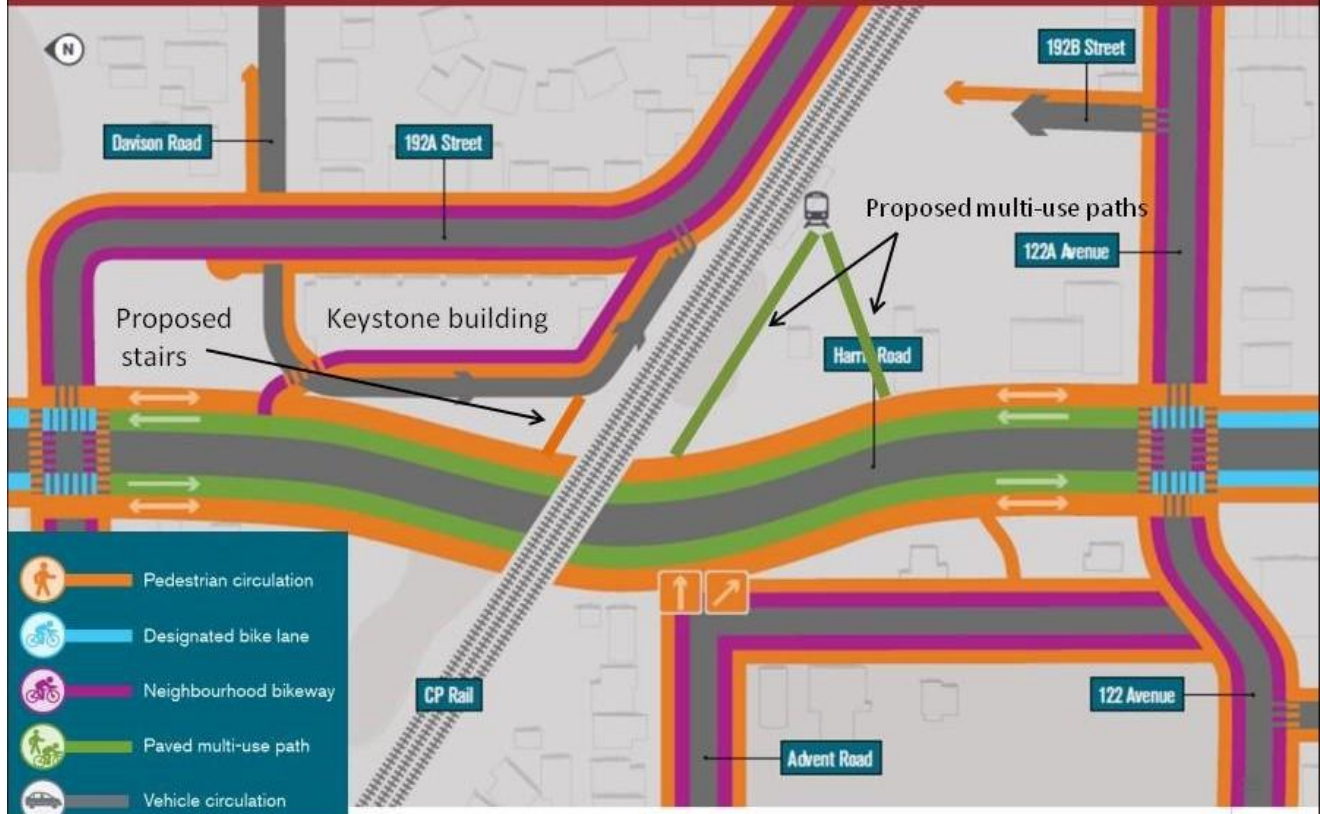
We continue to strongly support at a minimum 4 m for shared facilities on each side. This is already a compromise from the recommended width.

We challenge the project team to do better than the absolute minimum, and aim for a design of adequate width that will safely and comfortably accommodate active transportation needs well beyond 2050.

#### Further suggestions:

- We recommend visual separation of walking/slow speed rolling and cycling - by using stencils to show which side is which and different colour asphalt. This will improve clarity, safety and comfort for all users.
- We recommend stairs for pedestrians from the south side of the Keystone building connecting to the Harris Road multi-use path (see below diagram).
- Please ensure clear, adequate signage for travel around the Keystone building to discourage bi-directional travel on the east side Harris Road multi-use path.
- If feasible, we also would appreciate consideration of a multi-use ramp along the south side of the railway, from the West Coast Express station to the Harris Road multi-use path, in addition to a multi-use pathway connecting to the Harris Road multi-use path further to the south to avoid elevation change as much as possible (see below diagram).

## Harris Road underpass Future road and active transportation network



- People cycling from/to the West Coast Express station would have to connect to Harris Road south via 192B Street and 122A Ave. We would appreciate it if protected bike lanes could be provided between the West Coast Express entrance to the 122 Ave./122A Ave./Harris Road intersection.
- Horizontal railings next to the bike lanes should be mounted on standoffs, to prevent contact between the bicycle handlebar ends and the vertical elements. These horizontal railings basically function as a buffer and should be of a height such that contact is made with an adult rider's upper arm. Contact made too close to the wrist can cause a bicycle to turn into the railing, resulting in a crash. The railings implemented by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on the Stanley Park Causeway and Ironworker's Memorial Bridge were designed to achieve these aims.



Canada Line Bridge



Ironworkers Memorial Bridge

- Please ensure that any utility poles and lighting are integrated into the walls and ceiling of the underpass as much as possible in order to avoid any obstacles in the path of travel of people cycling or rolling.
- We support the incorporation of mural paintings or other artwork by local Indigenous artists.

We hope to see a design that is truly welcoming to people walking, rolling and cycling for generations to come.

Yours sincerely,

Jackie Chow  
Co-chair  
*HUB Cycling*  
*Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Committee*

JC/EoM/EH/JL/CA

### **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](http://bikehub.ca).