



Your **Cycling** Connection



Environmental Assessment Office
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RE: Fraser River Tunnel - Environmental Assessment Recommendations

Thank you on behalf of the HUB Cycling TFN Delta Committee and the HUB Cycling Richmond Committee for the opportunity to provide input into the Environmental Assessment process for the proposed Fraser River Tunnel Project. This project represents a significant infrastructure investment that will have lasting impacts on regional mobility, including for people walking, biking, and using other forms of active transportation. We appreciate the chance to contribute our perspectives to ensure that the safety of vulnerable road users is prioritized, and that the final plans actively support a shift toward sustainable travel modes. In doing so, the project can play a key role in helping to reduce traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions across the region.

1. On the whole, do you feel like potential impacts (whether positive or negative) to your community have been reflected accurately in the application?

We acknowledge that the Environmental Assessment identifies a range of potential impacts. However, we wish to highlight several issues that we believe require further attention:

- Please ensure people are aware of the construction traffic corridor across a new trestle bridge that will be there throughout construction and will intersect directly with the Millennium Trail east of highway 99. Due diligence for safety is essential. Once a decision is made on how traffic will be controlled, we are requesting it be communicated publicly to ensure safety of all users.
- The existing unsafe conditions at the Steveston Interchange during construction must be addressed. We are particularly concerned about the current dangerous access from Sidaway Road towards Rice Mill Road. Given the experience to date with that part of the Tunnel build, pedestrian and cycling safety measures must be better managed going forward.

It is imperative that pedestrians, people on bikes and other vulnerable road users be safe during Tunnel construction on both the Delta and Richmond side.

2. Do you have feedback about the potential positive or negative impacts of the project detailed in the application? Do you have specific knowledge that leads you to believe something in the application is inaccurate or incomplete?

We are concerned that the application lacks sufficient detail regarding safe active transportation access to the new tunnel infrastructure.

- Safe and direct connections to the tunnel on both sides must be part of the core design and not left as future add-ons. Active transportation infrastructure must be built into the project from the beginning to ensure usability and safety for people on bikes, mobility devices and pedestrians.
- There is concern for the switchback configuration on the pedestrian / cycling tunnel entry/exits be designed carefully to ensure sightlines are clear for all users. Please ensure all potential user groups are adequately consulted through the promised one-on-one workshops.
- Some linkage ideas are sketched into the plan drawings, but there is not sufficient information provided to safely separate speedier commuter cyclists from recreational cyclists and other small wheels users into existing local on-road bike lane and trail networks such as the Millennium Trail.
- There was talk in the past of a bicycle highway alongside Highway 99 heading south from the new Tunnel. Is this still part of the Ministry of Transportation and Transit plans?
- Provision for safe active travel mode connections to Deas Island Regional Park are shown on the plans. This is good news but there is no detail yet on how pedestrian, cycling and horseback riding will be safely integrated. The concern is for small wheels modes (biking, scootering etc. at low speeds) to be re-instigated in the park in an environmentally-sensitive manner. We look forward to working with Metro Vancouver Parks to make this happen as the ability to cycle in the Park is sorely missed. The linkage from Tunnel ped/bike infrastructure is an opportunity to enable healthy family nature experience on a doable loop from homes to Park and back home.

3. Do you have any feedback about the project that is not listed in the application?

While we commend the Fraser River Tunnel Project for addressing the current traffic congestion at the Massey Tunnel and look forward to being able to safely use bikes and other mobility devices to move through the tunnel, we are concerned that without coordinated improvements to other regional crossings (such as the Oak Street, Knight Street, and Arthur Laing Bridges), existing congestion may simply be displaced and be moved down the highway.

Unless these other routes are enhanced for all users — including those walking, accessing transit stops and biking — the overall goal of reducing congestion and improving regional mobility in the area along the corridor into Vancouver will remain unmet.

The Tunnel is part of the proposed Great Blue Heron Way (that starts on Tsawwassen First Nation) connecting the Traditional Territories of Coast Salish Nations along the Salish Sea Coast and up the Fraser River Valley. Incorporating Indigenous Culture through artwork, messaging and sustainable nature connection is an important opportunity for Reconciliation. While acknowledging this projects' outreach to First Nations on many aspects, particularly on food and river use protection, it is important First Nations are considered an important partner for continuous active travel access also. The

Tunnel is an important active travel gap to fill; the river, foreshore and the Deas Island area have been part of Indigenous travel since time immemorial.

- It is concerning to see trees removed from conservation areas in the Park, on the south foreshore (currently for surveying purposes) and the impact this has on local ecosystems, on land, river and air. At the Open House it was said BC Hydro prefers to have their wires strung above the river and no longer through the tunnel. (the wires are in the current old tunnel). Wires should be placed in the new Tunnel for bird safety and the natural environment view. Walkers appreciate the tranquillity, birdlife and every aspect of the healing natural environment of Deas Island Regional Park and this fits in with the First Nation direction to mitigate impacts, bring back safe and sustainable ecosystems and provide places close to home that are mentally healing natural environments to walk and use small wheels in.
- The Tunnel name could signify bringing First Nations back together, particularly the Tsaawwassen and Musqueam Nation communities that this river crossing can help reunite along the Great Blue Heron Way as part of a greenway on waterside trails between the Tsawwassen BC Ferries Terminal and the YVR Airport.

4. We're also interested in hearing how you felt about previous opportunities to give feedback about this project that you may have participated in.

We appreciate past opportunities for public engagement, and we encourage continued and meaningful consultation with active transportation groups throughout all phases of the project. Ensuring transparent communication about construction timelines, impacts, and mitigation measures will be key to building trust and ensuring safety for all road users.

In building trust, it is imperative that spokespersons for this project give consistent messaging. In in-person meetings at the project office and the public open house, two representatives gave assurances the Millennium Trail will remain open during Tunnel construction aside from short periods when safety is an issue due to work being carried out. A recent (June 12) Delta Optimist article reports that project executive director Trapp says "... it is not certain if that trail will be closed during the five-year-construction period". Who is ultimately in charge? The Delta Optimist in the same article reports a statement from the Ministry of Transportation and Transit is quoted as saying the trail is "well-used by the local community and an important part of the local network. The project team will work with its design-builder to identify ways to manage impacts and maintain this connection as best as possible." We ask that this directive from the Ministry of Transportation and Transit be met.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback and please do not hesitate to reach out to HUB Cycling TFN Delta Committee of HUB Cycling Richmond Committee with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Neil Pope, Chair, TFN Delta Committee and Devyn Cairns , Chair, Richmond/YVR Committee

About HUB Cycling

HUB Cycling is a charitable not for profit organization that has spent over 26 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 50,000 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.