



March 16, 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing today regarding the Granville St. Redesign project. Of the remaining designs on the table, we support staff's recommendation to go ahead with the "Modified Enhanced Existing" concept. We oppose the "consideration" option of a modified flex boulevard, and we oppose the DVBIA's proposed design.

Our two priorities in this project are to continue to provide cyclists easy access to Granville St., preferably via the car-free mall, and to expand bicycle parking.

Cyclists are legally allowed to use the car-free sections of Granville Mall. These are fairly comfortable for cycling, since the buses do not move quickly and are driven safely by trained staff. However, for cyclists and buses to pass each other smoothly, the lanes must be at least 3.7m wide. For this reason, we oppose the modified flex boulevard, which has 3.2m bus lanes. Under that proposal, cyclists would be able to use the flex lanes, but these would not be open at all times and cyclists would often be forced to use the narrowed bus lanes.

Facilities for bicycle parking on Granville St. have been poor for many years, and recent redevelopment has reduced the supply even further. This deserves attention here and in all of our city's commercial districts. During the detailed design phase of this project, we urge the city to expand the bicycle parking supply.

We are strong supporters of the city's transportation priority hierarchy: pedestrians first, cyclists second, transit third, then goods movement and finally private vehicles. For this reason, we oppose the DVBIA's proposed design, which ignores that hierarchy and puts the needs of a small number of private vehicles over the vast majority on this street who travel by transit and on foot. While cyclists are not seriously harmed by the DVBIA's proposal, it clearly violates the city's transportation priorities.

We are disappointed that proposals to expand the bus mall were never considered seriously in this redesign project. Given the comfort the bus mall provides to cyclists, we would have preferred to see such a proposal go forward.

Sincerely,

Hans-Jürgen (Jack) E.H. Becker
Chair, VACC Vancouver Committee
Director, Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition