

May 16, 2023

Mac Fitzgerald, Transportation Planning
Richard Burberry, Project Delivery Office
District of North Vancouver

Re: Mountain Highway Safety Improvements

Dear Mac & Richard,

HUB Cycling is a charitable not-for-profit organization working to get more people cycling, more often and making cycling safer and better through education, action and events. More cycling reduces greenhouse gas emissions, relieves traffic congestion and means healthier, happier and more connected communities.

We appreciate that the District of North Vancouver is soliciting public input on the plan to make travel on this important corridor safe for all users - on Mountain Highway from Lynn Valley Road to Arborlynn. Many of us use this route often, both with and without family members and children. Here are our suggestions to make it safer for all users, including people driving cars.

1. Mountain highway is an arterial roadway, with a bus route and high traffic volumes. Thus per BC Active Transportation Design Guide, it will be necessary to have fully separated mobility lanes with physical protection for this entire section of Mountain Highway. It also has a large number of driveways, and this will create more chances of conflict between people using different modes.
2. Starting at Lynn Valley Road:
 - **LV Road to Mtn Hwy intersection** - We strongly suggest removing the slip lane turning right from LV Road. Slip lanes are shown to result in higher vehicle speed on corners and endanger people walking much more than a simple corner. Consider no right on red here as many people and kids walk across this intersection. There is a library and many schools nearby, as a key cornerstone of the LVTC. Most crashes and injuries occur to people both walking and on bikes at intersections.
 - **Ross Road to 27th** - This section is currently in desperate need of a separated bike lane all the way northbound to LV Road. The currently painted lane simply ends so that cars can have a right turn on Ross Road. This northbound section is very dangerous starting at 29th, which has only a simple painted lane.
 - The painted lane doesn't even begin at 27th so people cycling are forced to share this route that is comfortable for very few people with vehicles for the first 30 meters of Mtn Hwy north of 29th.

3. Southbound, there should be a physically protected lane the whole way from LV Road to Hwy 1, especially south of 27th, where vehicle speeds increase - often 80km/h plus. Deliberate actions to reduce speed, eliminate traffic violence and make streets safer for all modes of transportation should be incorporated into this section - as on all District Roads.
 - On the curvy hill southbound below 14th, it's especially important to have concrete barriers to protect both people on bikes and people walking from a car/truck sliding on a slippery road into the walking and biking space.
 - Important - it should have *a place to exit the protected lane at 16th, 15th, and 14th and re-enter at Arborlynn*, along with signage explicitly allowing re-entry = **"Bikes may take the lane"** from 15th southbound to Hwy 1. This allows people confident on their bikes to be on the street and not pass at speed the less confident people on bikes in the protected lane. The signage will hopefully mitigate some of the aggression from ill-informed drivers who think bikes "should be in the bike lane."
 - This provides consideration for both confident and less confident people on bikes.
4. Northbound, the whole way needs a lot of work. Currently, in a couple of places with painted lanes, that end and start poorly, as detailed in #2. Northbound needs a lot of improvement for school use and for people unfamiliar with alternate routes, especially on the northbound route from 14th to LV Road.

To recap, the key schools in this area that should have safe routes for kids to walk and bike to and from are:

- Eastview Elementary at 18th Street
 - École Ross Road Elementary off Ross Road
 - Lynn Valley Elementary just across LV road
 - École Argyle Secondary, where hundreds of students walk before, after and during school hours in the LVTC area
 - Multiple daycares along and near this corridor
5. The northbound section from Arborlynn to 14th is a particularly challenging route to plan for. Climbing those steep grades without electric assist is very challenging. A wide bike lane allowing some switch-backing is needed for people climbing that hill on a non e-bike. It's also prone to be noisy and with choking exhaust fumes.

We would like to highlight a nearby and excellent alternative route for people on bikes, which is to take **Arborlynn, to Appin, to 20th, to Viewlynn, to 27th, to LVTC.**

We think it's worth considering that a northbound mobility lane on Mountain Hwy from Arborlynn to 14th may not appeal to many people on bikes, especially the "Interested but Concerned." We would like to suggest a few relatively cheap and non-contentious improvements to guide people on bikes headed uphill onto this quieter route along Arborlynn.

Some improvements to this route are needed to make it comfortable for most, specifically:

- No eastbound vehicles on 14th and 15th from Mtn Hwy (physical vehicle obstacles)

- 30km/h on Arborlynn from Mtn Hwy to Appin (it's a 30km zone after that already), and remove all street parking, on at least one side, to add bike lanes
- Add a safe crossing mechanism Arborlynn into Appin
- 30km/h all along Appin
- Add a protected bike lane uphill and 30km/h zone on 20th from Appin to Mtn Hwy.
- Make Viewlynn all 30km/h (a good chunk of it is already, due to a playground)
- 30km/h on 24th to the new Emery place developments
- 30km/h on 27th to Mtn Hwy
- Wayfinding signage to make all the above obvious and easy to follow for first-timers to the North Shore

Mountain Highway is an important connecting route. As a high-traffic volume corridor, protected lanes are needed, with special attention paid to intersections, as always, as these are where most crashes occur.

We hope the alternate route along Appin is given serious consideration. While the specific improvements detailed above will make for a very safe and well-used route for people on bikes, the **most essential points for this alternate route are 30 km along the entire route, an uphill protected route on 20th, and effective wayfinding signage.**

Thank you for taking the time to solicit input on the improvements along this important corridor, and for taking the time to read and incorporate our input. We look forward to continuing to work with you as a key stakeholder interested in making our roads safer for all users, as well as more equitable, sustainable, and healthier.

Yours sincerely,

Duncan Wilcock & Stephen Lake
 District of North Vancouver Liaisons,
 HUB Cycling, North Shore Committee
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Addendum:

Some additional thoughts about bike infrastructure that apply to Mountain Highway as well:

- Dedicated Bus lanes. If buses have to wait in the same traffic - they are not a viable & better alternative to the car. Make it work so buses get to pass the cars, and car volume will decline as people choose the faster mode - as a result, all users benefit. Now repeat all across the DNV & Northshore. Prioritizing transit, and de-prioritizing private car use - will reduce traffic volumes and ultimately make all road users safer - including those still in cars/trucks, and many who no longer have to use a car. (I drive a car when I need to too!)
- Use a true Vision zero approach, where you - the DNV, the staff, and the Mayor and Council - accept responsibility for designing streets where one small mistake by anyone doesn't have massive consequences. If crashes, injuries or even fatalities occur - redesign that section of the street again & again until there are zero injuries. This is not a pipe dream - it is a true Visionzero approach as practiced in the Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway. Our residents and community deserve no less.
- Where the width of the road allowance permits, make the mobilitylane+sidewalk a “continuous at grade” route - showcasing road safety as [Nanaimo has done on Metral drive](#). The lack of drop-downs for driveways & minor road crossings has advantages for mobility challenged users, for prioritizing people on bikes on a route like this, just as much as for people walking.