

April 22, 2021

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
George Massey Crossing Project Team (By email: GeorgeMasseyCrossingSCR@gov.bc.ca)

Re: Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC) #T17-01 Review Process

Dear Project Team:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the above EAC review.

By way of background, we were very involved in 2016 and 2017 with the consultation for the George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project (GMTRP) and were part of the joint working group set up by Minister Stone at the time, to address the lack of active transportation (AT) connections on that project. Following many meetings and discussions, Minister Stone commissioned that team to respond to our request that Active Transportation infrastructure be included, as per Ministry policy, for the length of the project corridor (Oak St Bridge to Hwy 91 interchange), and not just for the new bridge deck portion. A challenge that our joint working group faced at the time was that the project boundaries had been predetermined, and in some cases it was challenging to incorporate AT infrastructure. We have not seen detailed designs for the new GMC project, but write to request that the gaps identified in the earlier project be considered upfront this time.

Our thoughts follow on the project scope and route selection by section, proceeding north to south along the previously identified corridor, but considering travel in both directions.

From River Drive to Sea Island Way

The most logical AT connection at the north end of the project is to the Multi Use Path (MUP) on the Canada Line Bridge, not to the Oak Street Bridge sidewalks. A right of way exists under this bridge, and would provide the safest and most comfortable access for this section, avoiding the busy intersections along Garden City Road.

From Sea Island Way to Shell Road/Alderbridge Way

Understanding that there may be width constraints along this section, it may make more sense to route the AT route off the Hwy 99 ROW, while still maintaining a corridor alignment and with good connections at both ends. For example, the route could connect to the potential MUP at Sea Island Way, and potentially to Shell Rd, where potential routes could run parallel to, but west of the Hwy 99 ROW. Realizing that agreements have not been reached with Richmond for improvements to a path along that alignment, it would be reasonable to plan for potential connections, to future proof the design.

From Alderbridge Way to Steveston Hwy

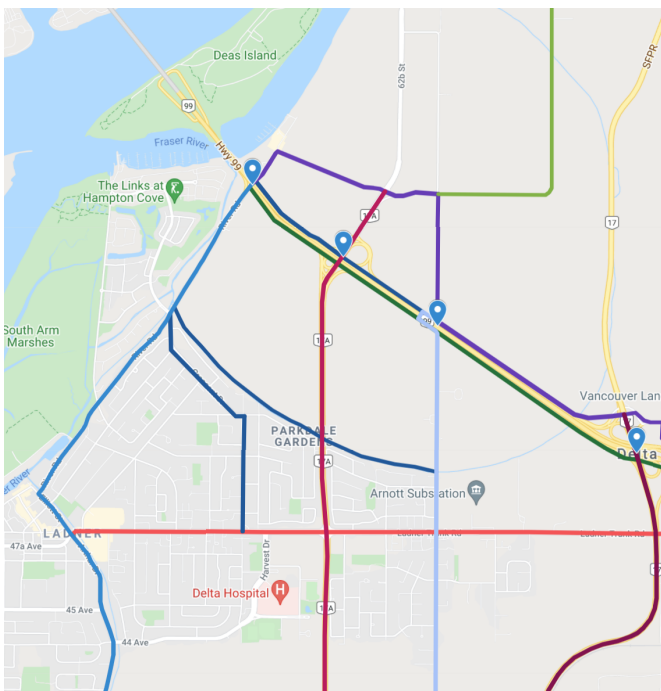
Given the challenges associated with the width of the Hwy 99 ROW, and competing initiatives including YVR fuel pipelines, BC Hydro easements, etc, a parallel route to Hwy 99 located to the west makes some sense. It will be necessary to consider interconnectivity at either end of this segment, to return people walking or cycling to the new GMC entrance, nominally around the Steveston Hwy interchange. That interchange should include direct connections for AT users. The prior GMTRP initiative mapped out very circuitous connections that disadvantaged people walking and cycling.

The new crossing

A critical design objective should be to provide crossover points at either end of the crossing. While it may be possible to accommodate this within the existing permit areas, without safe and comfortable ways for people walking and cycling to access to the opposite side of the river crossing, we often find people travelling counterflow, putting others at risk.

From the new crossing to Hwy 17A

A prime destination for AT users of the new crossing will be the BC Ferries terminal. For these people and for others heading towards White Rock and the US border, Hwy 17A will be a key connection. Forcing people who are walking and cycling to reverse their course back to River Road is counterproductive, but that was the main AT route focus of the prior GMTRP design. That team explored ways of getting people walking and cycling to the Hwy 17A interchange, ideally along a bidirectional path on the south side of the Hwy 99 ROW, but this was reportedly constrained by the width of the ROW. The following diagram shows the alternate routes that were evaluated by the joint working group, simply to address the challenge of connecting from the south end of the crossing, to the Hwy 17A interchange. It is apparent how challenging some of them would be, from the difficulties associated with narrow roadways, to the challenges of using a dyke path, to the additional distance added. We see this as a very important connection and one that should be considered in permit revisions. We do not see Hwy 17 as being a viable alternative to Hwy 17A for active transportation, given the road design and lack of protected infrastructure.



From Hwy 17A to Hwy 91

An area of concern will be the Hwy 99 interchange with Ladner Trunk Road, which provides connections on either side of the interchange for active transportation users, along Ladner Trunk Road, and along Hornby Drive.

Summary

While we do not have access to design drawings at this time, we maintain that it is critical to ensure that an active transportation route is envisioned along the full length of the project corridor, whether it is constructed within the Hwy 99 ROW or parallel to that ROW. It is also important to recognize that a single approach is unlikely to be appropriate for the full corridor; there are places where it is entirely possible and logical to include

AT infrastructure within the ROW, and other places where it may make sense to directly fund a parallel route on municipal land, in cooperation with local authorities.

Given that the current review is of the Environmental Assessment Certificate, we ask that consideration of the above project requirements be included in your EAC amendment, so as to address roadblocks that were identified on the GMTRP due to scope restrictions imposed by earlier permit processes.

We understand that you have full access to the work done by the joint MoTI/HUB Cycling/municipal working group several years ago. We are available to discuss all of this at your convenience. Please address all correspondence to the undersigned, representing the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) of HUB Cycling.

Sincerely

Jeff Leigh
Co Chair, Regional Advisory Committee, HUB Cycling
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cc: The Honourable Bowinn Ma, Minister of State for Infrastructure
Delta Local Committee, HUB Cycling
Richmond Local Committee, HUB Cycling

About HUB Cycling

HUB Cycling is a charitable not for profit organization that has spent over 20 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 40,000 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, and a board Regional Advisory Committee. For more information, visit bikehub.ca.