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To:

Jay Porter
Senior Project Manager
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

cc:

Erin Moxon, Project Manager, District of North Vancouver
Ingrid Weisenbach, Transportation Planner, District of North Vancouver
Mayor and Council, District of North Vancouver
Bowinn Ma, MLA for North Vancouver-Lonsdale
Jane Thornthwaite, MLA for North Vancouver-Seymour
Jonathan Wilkinson, MP for North Vancouver

RE: DNV – MOTI – Lower Lynn Interchanges Phase 3 – Main-Dollarton Interchange and the North Vancouver Bike Network

Dear Jay,

HUB Cycling is a charitable organization working to get more people cycling, more often. We believe that more cycling means healthier, happier, more connected communities.

Thank you for meeting with Tony Valente, Antje Wahl, and Giacomo Falorni of HUB Cycling North Shore on June 4th to discuss Phase 3 of the Lower Lynn Interchanges Project. We would also like to thank you for meeting with the committee regularly to provide updates on plans for the various projects in this program. This letter summarizes and documents the feedback on the interchange items discussed at our meeting, and is also intended to serve as a reference for the HUB North Shore Committee and for our membership.

Phase 3 is perhaps the most critical of all the Lower Lynn Interchanges projects as it has the potential to address serious safety concerns for those using the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge and for those biking east-west along Dollarton Highway and Main Street.

Recommendations:

1. A safe and convenient east-west bike route past the Ironworkers bridgehead on Dollarton Highway / Main Street
 - Dedicated bike paths will reduce conflict/injuries with pedestrians. Specifically, two-way bike paths on both sides of Main Street provide better connectivity and reduce wrong way cycling (which is bound to occur on a major street which is difficult to cross like Main Street).
 - On the south side of Main Street, a convenient and safe two-way connector path is needed between the Barrow bike route and Dollarton Highway.
2. Elimination of the crossing of the Dollarton Highway off-ramp and Main Street on-ramp by building tunnels underneath the ramps as previously studied by the Ministry

- The feasibility and cost of pedestrian/bike tunnels under the ramps have been assessed for the Ministry in an earlier consultant report.
- The Dollarton ramp crossing in particular is unsafe and deters new cyclists from biking for transportation.
- In addition to the crossing risks, there are not sufficient safe waiting / queuing areas for bikes at both ramp crossings. There is currently barely room for one bike to queue at the Dollarton off-ramp crossing. The curb let downs need to be widened and the waiting areas should be larger to allow more than one or two bikes to cross at a time.

Rationale

Currently, people on foot and on bikes are required to make crossings of both the southbound and northbound highway on and off-ramps to the bridge. This affects people using the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge and people biking east-west along Main Street. At the Main on-ramp crosswalk two lanes of accelerating vehicles attempting to merge with highway traffic. At the Dollarton off-ramp, northbound pedestrians and people on bikes must cross the path of cars that should be decelerating from highway speeds but often travel at 70km/h or faster.

We have much anecdotal evidence of very close calls and previous HUB North Shore communications to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure documenting concerns about safety regarding the crossing of the Dollarton off-ramp. The growing number of cyclists using the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge has the potential to impede highway traffic if drivers stop for cyclists at the crossing. Currently many drivers choose not to stop and those that do create variations in vehicle speeds on the highway and on-ramp that increase the risk of collisions and vehicles mounting the sidewalk, as has happened on several occasions.

Conclusion

The Lower Lynn Interchanges program of projects and specifically Phase 3 is a once in a generation opportunity to greatly improve the cycling access to the Ironworkers Memorial bridge and address east-west connectivity issues on Main Street and Dollarton Highway. These connections are critical to improve the safety of all road users, better connect new and growing town centres, reduce impacts to traffic entering or exiting the highway, and encourage more people to bike for transportation. We hope the Ministry will work with the District of North Vancouver to include these improvements for cycling when building the Highway 1 interchanges improvements north of the bridge.

Thank you.



Tony Valente,
Chair, HUB North Shore
HUB: Your Cycling Connection
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Peter Scholefield
Vice-Chair, HUB North Shore

Map of north end of Ironworkers Memorial Bridge showing existing path along south side of Main Street, highway ramp crossings, path from Main on-ramp sidewalk to Barrow bike route

