Your Cycling Connection

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November 16, 2023

To: Transportation Engineering Department, Township of Langley

Re: Ranking of the Three Options on the Heritage Section of Old Yale Road - 216th Street to Langley City Boundary

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.

HUB Cycling's Langley Local Committee is grateful for the opportunity to provide feedback on the rankings of the three options on the Heritage Section of Old Yale Road.

These three options were first presented for public input in 2015, with no subsequent follow up. Since then, Western Canada, including the Lower Mainland have experienced the following Climatic impacts:

- 2016 - Devastating wildfires destroyed nearly all of the City of Fort McMurray,
- Alberta 2017 - Air quality advisories issued in Lower Mainland due to wildfire smoke
- 2018 - Air quality advisories issued in Lower Mainland due to wildfire smoke
- 2019 - Township of Langley Declares Climate Emergency
- 2020 - Air quality advisories issued in Lower Mainland due to wildfire smoke
- 2021 - Much of Western Canada experiences two weeks of extreme heat, with the Lower Mainland covered by the Heat Dome
- 2021 - The Village of Lytton is nearly completed destroyed by fire
- 2021 - An Atmospheric River causes severe flooding in the Fraser Valley in the fall
- 2022 - Air quality advisories issued in Lower Mainland due to wildfire smoke
- 2023 - Air quality advisories issued in Lower Mainland due to wildfire smoke
- 2023 - West Kelowna wildfires destroy 190 properties and force the evacuation of thousands of people.
- 2023 - 14 temperature records are broken across BC in the summer months
- 2023 - Recorded world-wide as the hottest year in the last 128,000 years.

In response to declaring a Climate Emergency, the Township developed a **Climate Action Strategy**. In conducting an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions in the Township, transportation, via the burning of fossil fuels in gas and diesel-powered vehicles, was identified as the largest contributor - at 54%. The Strategy recognizes that the emissions can be reduced by developing infrastructure that encourages alternate forms of transportation - walking, cycling and rolling by way of a variety of micro-mobility mechanical means.

It is with the goals of the Climate Action Strategy in mind that the Langley HUB Local Committee approaches the review of the options presented regarding Old Yale Road Improvements.

While the Options presented are varied, each fails to recognize the Heritage Designation of the road. This designation restricts any changes to the physical characteristics of the road, both in materials and in appearance. In the same way that a 100 year old heritage building cannot be clad with aluminum siding, this section of Old Yale Road cannot be changed under the Heritage Designation. The Murrayville Heritage Conservation Area Boundaries, clearly referred to in the introduction to the storyboards, take in all of the three areas - Urban, Urban/ Rural interface and Rural. We recommend that these limitations be kept in consideration for all future developments of this roadway.

As the original concrete panels laid were 16 feet (4.9 meters) in width by 30 feet (9.2 meters) in length, the lane width throughout the study area, whether the panels are still in place or not, technically must remain that width to meet the conditions of the Heritage Designation. Thus the lane width recommendations at 3.5 meters need to be scaled back to the historical width of 2.45 meters. Perhaps a variance can be allowed to increase the lane widths to 3 meters to take into account the wider vehicles of this era.

The design options need to go back to the drawing board and the best ideas should be developed into forward looking concepts. New ideas and needs created a changing history for the roadway, from horse-drawn travel, from dirt and gravel to concrete for rubber wheeled mobility. Now is the time for a new history, with the idea that Old Yale Road becomes a key Active Transportation route from the Murrayville area to the near future Surrey/Langley Skytrain station. People in automobiles already have routes via 48th Avenue and 216th Streets, most recently an expensive repaving of 216th Street from 40th Avenue to Fraser Hwy and beyond. This is an opportunity for the Township to create a new role for this section of Old Yale Road, incorporating the past and creating a New Future - adding an Active Transportation Route to the City of Langley's Bike Routes and the Skytrain system. We should not squander the opportunity to build for the future by being distracted by the exhortations of a single transportation option - often the single occupancy motor vehicle or truck operator.

There is also a need for the options to take into account that likely in the New Year, the Provincial Legislature will enact changes to the Motor Vehicle Act that will require motorists to give people cycling a minimum of 1 meter space on passing. If the cycle lanes are not protected, and not maintained, such that debris collects and reduces the usable portion of the bike lanes, will the 1.5 meter lanes recommended in most of the options be sufficient space to meet these Motor Vehicle Act requirements?

The discussion presented on the Options did not discuss the impact of the current road conditions in its various sections on vehicular speeds. The Committee undertook a survey of speeds using a reliable radar unit on a small sample of traffic in each section to point out the variances. The posted speed limit in all but the Urban section near 216th Street, is 50 kms per hour. The condition of some of the sections actually acted as a traffic calming feature, especially in the Urban section east of 214A Street. The samples were taken as follows: the entry into the Urban area west of 214A Street, the Urban/Rural Interface section (concrete panels, less rough) and the rural area beyond the concrete panels. The speeds in the east urban section, posted at 30 kms/hr, a particularly rough section, were not taken. The average speeds in the three areas were 48, 56 and 60 kms/hr respectively.

HUB Cycling's Langley LocalCommittee does not recommend any of the submitted designs as our preferred option.

If the Township Council is determined to only accept one of the Three Options presented, then the HUB Langley Local Committee accepts that from a cycling and historic preservation perspective, the Conservation option is the best choice. It retains a section of the original road, has a multi-use path and reduces traffic on the road, both of which will improve comfort and safety for people cycling, walking and rolling, at least in the sections identified by the yellow and blue sections of the Existing Conditions Plan mapping schematic.

While HUB Langley recognizes that Option 1 would provide the most protection to the vulnerable users of the road in the Urban/Rural and Rural sections of the road, because of reduced traffic volume, it would not honour the history of the roadway as a throughway from the City of Langley to Murrayville.

Each of the Options are evaluated against the positive and negative attributes of the designs. It is hoped that with this feedback, the planners and designers would propose a "best of" Option to Mayor and Council for their consideration. This evaluation is contained in the appendix to this letter.

Submitted on behalf of the HUB Cycling Langley Local Committee
John Evanochko, Chair
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Appendices - Analysis of Each Option

Conservation Option

Urban Section - Board 4

Positive:

- Removal of on street parking in order to expand and provide the pedestrian and cycle pathways
- Provision of a multi use path on the north side, preferably designated for Active Transportation use
- Provision of a southside sidewalk for people to walk and roll removes conflict between people walking, rolling and bicycling the Multi Use Path on the north side.

Negative:

- Lanes do not conform to the Heritage Designation standards.
- The north side multi-use path now potentially places the pedestrians, rollers and cyclists in conflict.
- Considering the space available, a sidewalk should be provided on the north side as well, so that people walking or rolling can safely access the Derrick Doubleday Arboretum via the future trail located at the junction of the Urban and Urban/Rural Interface.
- This future trail should be developed in conjunction with the redevelopment of the road so that walkers do not have to depend on sidewalks beyond the junction of the urban/rural interface. This should also remove the conflict between rollers ie bicylists, scooters and walkers on the proposed multi use pathways.
- Lack of a barrier to physically separate and protect bicylists and other mobility users from traffic.
- No design consideration is given as to how people on bicycles or other mobility devices heading eastward on the north side multi-use path are supposed to get over to the right side of the roadway to safely enter the 216th Street roundabout.
- Lack of a protected bike lane on the south side of the street to address the above issue. • If the decision is made to provide on street parking, ensure that the bike path is on the inside of the street parking i.e. parked cars provide the buffer between the multi use path and the traffic, unlike the current practice where bike paths are the buffer between parked cars and traffic.
- The current concrete slab lane width is 2.45 meters wide. Proposal is to increase the lane width to 3.5 meters. If this is a conservation effort, widths should remain the same which will contribute to reduced speeds as motorists will pay greater attention to their driving behavior. It is the opinion of the Committee that the removal of the delineators on 96th Avenue, installed under the Connecting Communities Programs, were very much driven by the complaints of motorists that the lane width reduction were dangerous when in reality they felt constrained. Drivers could no longer rely on the road shoulders to give them that extra bit of road space should they drift out of the driving lane.

Urban/Rural Interface - Board 3

Positive:

- Provision of a multi use path on the north side, preferably designated for Active Transportation use

Negative:

- Lanes do not conform to the Heritage Designation standards.
- Since pedestrians and walkers will now be able to access the Trail system and Derrick Doubleday Arboretum of the future trail located at the head junction of the Urban and Urban/Rural Interface, conflicts between the pedestrians and cyclists in conflict will be negated.
- Open ditches reducing the available space to expand the width of the road to provide wider, protected cyclist, roller paths and possibly future pedestrian sidewalks. • There is sufficient space on the south shoulder to install a pedestrian walkway, thus reducing conflict between cyclist, motorist mobility scooter, other rollers and pedestrians • Lack of bike lane physically separated from traffic by a barrier such as a concrete or asphalt curb.
- The current concrete slab lane width is xxx meters wide. Proposal is to increase the lane width to 3.5 meters. If this is a conservation effort, widths should remain the same which will contribute to reduced speeds as motorists will pay greater attention to their driving behavior. Because of the current rough conditions of the road surface, motorists are used to driving slower. Narrowing the lanes to 3 meters would not be that much of a burden upon them as they are used to driving slower. Increasing the width of the lanes will increase speeds, necessitating greater infrastructure protection for cyclists and pedestrians.

Rural - Board 2

Positive:

- Absence of traffic because of the closure at the rural-rural/urban interface junction means that the not much work needs to be done in this section as prople walking, rolling and cycling can use the roadway as car-free pedestrian and cyclist “free-way”

Negative:

- Lanes do not conform to the Heritage Designation standards.
- While preferable from a vulnerable user of the road perspective, closure of the roadway is not an viable nor acceptable option to the majority of current road users, considering that historically, the road was upgraded to cement surface to accommodate motorized traffic.
- While considered a feature of rural areas, open ditches reduce the available road bed to expand the width of the road to provide pathways accessible to people of all ages and abilities for walking, rolling and cycling.
- The current concrete slab width is 4.9 meters. Proposal is to increase the lane width to 3.5 meters (7 meters lanes width). If this is a conservation effort, widths should remain

the same which will contribute to reduced speeds as motorists will pay greater attention to their driving behavior. Because of the current rough conditions of the road surface, motorists are used to driving slower. Increasing the width of the lanes will increase speeds, necessitating greater infrastructure protection for cyclists and pedestrians.

- Increasing lane widths usually leads to higher speeds and as a result, will require physical separation between people cycling/rolling and driving.
- Any separated bike lanes need to be wide enough to be maintained by lane sweeping equipment currently or planned to be obtained by the Township. Eg… if the design provides for a 1.5 meter wide pathway, does the Township own or plan to own equipment that can clean that pathway?

Comments:

- The impact on the trees on both sides is actually low since most of the trees of heritage value are behind the fence line and those on the south side are alder that have crept beyond the property lines. The major obstacle to road widening on both sides of the roadway are utility poles that will need to be removed and services run underground if road widening is to be undertaken.

Commemoration Option

Urban Section - Board 4

Positive:

- Removal of on-street parking in order to expand and provide a sidewalk for people to walk and roll and cycle pathways
- Provision of a multi use path on the north side, preferably designated for mechanized Active Transportation use
- Provision of a sidewalk for people to walk and roll on the south side removes the conflict with people cycling, motorized mobility scooters, etc on the Multi Use Path.

Negative:

- Lanes do not conform to the Heritage Designation standards.
- The north side multi-use path places people walking, rolling and cycling in conflict while people driving get smoother, wider travel lanes.
- Lack of physical separation between people walking, rolling and cycling and people driving.
- No connectivity for people cycling/rolling, eastward onto 48th Avenue from the north side multi-use path at the 216th Street roundabout.
- Lack of a protected bike lane on the south side of the street.
- If the decision is made to provide on street parking, ensure that the bike path is on the inside of the street parking i.e. parked cars provide the buffer between the multi use path and the traffic, unlike the current practice where bike paths are the buffer between parked cars and traffic
- The current concrete slab lane width is 2.45 meters wide. Proposal is to increase the lane width to 3.5 meters. Widths should remain the same which will contribute to reduced speeds as motorists will pay greater attention to their driving behavior.

Urban/Rural Interface - Board 3

Positive:

- Removal of on street parking in order to expand and provide the pedestrian and cycle pathways
- Provision of a multi use path on the north side, preferably designated for mechanized active transportation use - motorized mobility scooters, rollers, bicyclists

Negative:

- Lanes do not conform to the Heritage Designation standards.
- The north side multi use path as the route is now designed, potentially places people walking, rolling and cycling in conflict
- Open ditches reduce the available space to expand the width of the road to provide wider, protected bike/roller paths and sidewalks for people walking.
- There is sufficient space on the south shoulder to install a walkway for people walking and rolling, thus reducing conflict between different modes, including people walking, cycling and driving.

- Lack of a physically separated bike lane
- The current concrete slab lane width is 2.45 meters wide. The proposal is to increase the lane width to 3.5 meters. Widths should remain the same which will contribute to reduced speeds as people driving will pay greater attention to their driving behavior. Because of the current rough conditions of the road surface, motorists are used to driving slower. Increasing the width of the lanes will increase speeds, necessitating greater infrastructure protection for people walking, rolling and cycling.

Comment:

- Why does Board 3 show designs for both the urban and the urban-rural interface roads, one with open ditches and one with enclosed ditches.

Rural - Board 2

Positive:

• None

Negative:

- Lanes do not conform to the Heritage Designation standards.
- While considered a feature of rural areas, open ditches reduce the available road bed to expand the width of the road to provide wider, protected paths for people walking, rolling and cycling.
- The concrete panels have been removed and the entire width of the road has been paved. Proposal is to increase the lane width to 3.5 meters, which they already are. Widths should be reduced to their heritage widths which will contribute to reduced speeds as motorists will pay greater attention to their driving behavior. Increasing the width of the lanes will increase speeds, necessitating greater infrastructure protection for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Increasing lane widths usually leads to higher speeds, and as a result, will require physical separation between people cycling and driving.
- Any separated bike lanes need to be wide enough to be maintained by lane sweeping equipment currently or planned to be obtained by the Township. Eg… if the design provides for a 1.5 meter wide pathway, does the Township own or plan to own equipment that can clean that pathway?
- Proposal is to increase the asphalt pavement width from 8 to 10 meters with an actual reduction of the unprotected shoulder width from what appears to be 1.5 meters to 1 meter does not reflect a concern for the safety of vulnerable users of the road, considering that traffic speeds and volumes will be substantially increased as traffic diverts off 216th Street and 48th Avenues for a short cut to the Fraser Hwy.

Comments:

- The impact on the trees on both sides is actually low since most of the trees of heritage value are behind the RoW line and those on the south side are alder that have crept beyond the property lines. The major obstacle to road widening on both sides of the roadway are utility poles that will need to be removed and services run underground if road widening is to be undertaken.

Reconstruction Option

Urban Section - Board 4

Positive:

- Sidewalks provided for people walking and rolling on the north and south side of the road
- between the roundabout and 214A Street.
- Bike lanes provided both sides of the road, thus enabling cyclists to easily integrate with
- the roundabout at 216th Street
- Removal of on street parking in order to expand and provide sidewalks for people walking and rolling and cycle pathways
- Separation between people walking, rolling and cycling removes conflicts between these
- modes.

Negative:

- Lanes do not conform to the Heritage Designation standards.
- “Marked bike lanes” on the road do not meet the safety standards required for a route that is comfortable for most people. In addition, wider roads usually lead to higher speeds..
- Unprotected bike lanes adjacent to traffic. Lack of bike lane physically separated from traffic by a barrier such as a concrete or asphalt curb or a flex post.

Urban/Rural Interface - Board 3

Positive:

- Removal of on street parking in order to expand and provide the cycle pathways • Wider shoulders to accommodate bike lanes

Negative:

- Lanes do not conform to the Heritage Designation standards.
- Unprotected bike lanes adjacent to traffic.
- Wider lanes usually result in additional traffic, at higher speeds.

Rural - Board 2

Positive:

- Wider shoulders to accommodate bike lanes

Negative:

- Lanes do not conform to the Heritage Designation standards.
- Trees worthy of preservation are not an impediment to road widening, yet utility poles are not shown in the drawings, as shown in Board 4.
- Proposed Road Section and Existing Road Sections show open ditches where

currently both sides of the road are covered.
- Unprotected bike lanes adjacent to traffic.
- Wider lanes usually result in additional traffic, at higher speeds.

Comments:

• The impact on the trees on both sides is actually low since most of the trees of heritage value are behind the RoW line and those on the south side are alder that have crept beyond the property lines. The major obstacle to road widening on both sides of the roadway are utility poles that will need to be removed and services run underground if road widening is to be undertaken.